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# Draft UBC Faculty of Arts Strategic Plan 2025–2030

May 14, 2025 (*Final designed version to be released Fall 2025*)



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
Faculty of Arts

[arts.ubc.ca](https://arts.ubc.ca)

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## Land Acknowledgement

The UBC Faculty of Arts is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded<sup>1</sup> territory of the hən̓qəmin̓əm̓-speaking Musqueam peoples.

Unceded means that these lands were never sold, traded, or given up through treaty or other agreement. The University's location and history requires that we critically reflect on the ongoing effects of settler colonialism and structural racism and question what it means to teach, learn, and conduct research on these lands.

## Dean's Message

In November 2023, the UBC Faculty of Arts embarked on a transformative journey with the launch of its Re-envisioning Arts strategic planning process for 2025–2030.

Looking back over the five years since our [last strategic plan](#) was initiated, we have made tremendous strides together. We've strengthened our leadership in research, teaching, and community engagement. We've created spaces for interdisciplinary collaboration, advanced reconciliation<sup>2</sup> with Musqueam, and championed equity<sup>3</sup>-focused initiatives that reflect our collective commitment to justice<sup>4</sup> and inclusion.<sup>5</sup> Our students have flourished in hands-on, experiential learning environments, and our faculty have pushed the boundaries of knowledge and creativity, sparking innovation that will shape the world for generations to come.

At the same time, we are deeply aware of the challenges before us—including climate change, economic and political uncertainty, global conflict, and the evolving role of higher education as it relates to these challenges. These issues demand bold action, critical reflection, and a renewed commitment to our shared values. As we look ahead, we reaffirm our vision to lead in inclusive academic excellence, to empower critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration, and to build a thriving future that is more just, sustainable, and full of possibility for all.

The Arts Strategic Plan 2025–2030 aligns with UBC's mission of advancing ground-breaking research and inspiring teaching, in order to prepare students to tackle the world's most pressing problems. It reflects the heart of our community's aspirations and is shaped by the voices of all who have contributed to this vision, including faculty, staff, students, and community members. The plan underscores our deep commitment to academic freedom, accessibility, decolonization,<sup>6</sup> reconciliation and Indigenous resurgence,<sup>7</sup> and justice, equity, inclusion—while also embracing technological advancements and strengthening public engagement. Our core values of collaboration, curiosity, innovation, and integrity will guide us in all that we do, ensuring that we remain a place where free inquiry and meaningful impact thrive.

Over the next five years, our work will be guided by five strategic directions: excelling in research and creative practice, advancing transformative education, engaging communities for greater impact, generating sustainable futures, and integrating digital innovation. At the core of these priorities lies our unwavering dedication to academic freedom—the freedom to explore, to challenge, and to push the boundaries of knowledge in the pursuit of truth and innovation. Together, these strategic directions will ensure we remain adaptable, forward-thinking, and responsive to the ever-changing needs of society.

Despite the challenges that lie ahead, I remain filled with hope and optimism. The Faculty of Arts stands uniquely poised to shape the conversations, policies, and innovations that will define our future. By remaining steadfast in our values and nurturing a culture of inclusive excellence, we will continue to make a profound impact—locally, nationally, and globally.

This plan reflects not just a vision but a shared responsibility—one that depends on the active involvement of every member of our community. Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners all have a critical role to play. Together, let us shape a future that is just, sustainable, and full of possibility.

With deep gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Clare Haru Crowston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a period at the end.

**Dr. Clare Haru Crowston**

Dean, Faculty of Arts

University of British Columbia

## Acknowledgements

The Faculty of Arts acknowledges and is grateful to the many individuals and communities who contributed their time, insights, and perspectives to this strategic plan.

We extend our gratitude to the Musqueam people, on whose unceded, ancestral territory the Faculty of Arts at UBC is located. Their generosity, knowledge, and partnership continue to guide our efforts toward meaningful relationship-building, decolonization, reconciliation, and Indigenous resurgence. We are especially grateful for the time, knowledge, and wisdom Musqueam community members shared with us in our engagement session.

We are thankful to the students, faculty, and staff who shared their experiences, priorities, and aspirations for the future of the Faculty of Arts. Your voices have been instrumental in defining the vision, mission, values, commitments, goals, and actions outlined in this plan. We also thank the broader community, including alumni and campus partners, who engaged with us throughout this process and helped us consider the broader impact of our work.

We extend special thanks to the members of the working groups, Advisory Committee, Musqueam Engagement Advisor, Equity Advisor, facilitators of focus group sessions with members of historically and systemically marginalized communities,<sup>8</sup> and administrative teams who dedicated their expertise and time and ensured accessibility,<sup>9</sup> inclusion, and care throughout this process. Your commitment to thoughtful engagement and critical reflection has ensured that this plan reflects the needs and ambitions of our diverse communities. We also extend our profound gratitude to the UBC Strategy and Decision Support team for their expertise and guidance throughout the process of developing this plan.

## Our Faculty

The Faculty of Arts is a vibrant intellectual community that brings together the Creative and Performing Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Geographical and Information Sciences to tackle society's most pressing challenges. With more than 16,000 students, over 2,200 faculty and staff, and more than 90 departments, schools, and programs, we are the largest—and one of the most diverse—faculties at UBC. Our network extends beyond campus, with over 100,000 engaged alumni, esteemed Professors Emeriti, and strong partnerships across local, national, and international communities.

Over the past five years, the Faculty of Arts has strengthened its reputation for excellence in teaching, research, and community engagement. Support for scholarly activity, new funding initiatives, and interdisciplinary collaborations have expanded our research impact, allowing us to mobilize knowledge beyond the academy. Curriculum renewal has introduced new breadth requirements, strengthened experiential and work-integrated learning, and embedded Indigenous knowledge and perspectives across disciplines.

Our commitment to student success has led to expanded academic advising support, the development of the Arts Compass and Arts Service Centre Student, enhanced learning spaces, and increased funding for graduate students. At the same time, we have made significant strides in equity-focused hiring and training initiatives, aligning with the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan (ISP) and Strategic Equity and Anti-Racism (StEAR) Framework. Our alumni networks, community partnerships, and international learning programs continue to grow, creating meaningful connections that extend beyond graduation.

## What Sets Us Apart

As higher education responds to urgent global challenges—including the climate emergency, economic and social inequality, and political instability—the Faculty of Arts is uniquely positioned to lead critical conversations and drive meaningful change. Located at the UBC Vancouver campus, on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people, we strive to ground our work in ethical, place-based scholarship and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities.

With world-renowned units in the Creative and Performing Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Geographical and Information Sciences, a faculty deeply committed to teaching and research, and strong interdisciplinary collaboration, we create a dynamic learning environment enriched by life-changing experiential opportunities. Our students, faculty, and staff are shaping digital innovation, drawing on strengths across disciplines to advance responsible, human-centered, and inclusive uses of technology. Creativity and critical thinking underpin our efforts, ensuring ethical and interdisciplinary approaches to today's most pressing societal issues.

Our contributions to higher education—creativity, adaptability, service, ethical leadership, critical thinking, intercultural awareness, interdisciplinarity, and more—are critical in addressing societal challenges and enriching our communities, both locally and globally.

**We are distinguished by:**

**Disciplinary Diversity and Interconnections**

With our award-winning faculty and outstanding staff and students, we bring together the best of empirical and quantitative research, humanistic inquiry, and artistic expression under one umbrella to advance a better world. We are unique in our disciplinary breadth and depth, encompassing a remarkable range of disciplines—from the humanities, creative and performing arts, and social sciences, to sciences and professional programs. We thrive on this disciplinary diversity, celebrating the richness of different perspectives while fostering meaningful interconnections across fields.

**Public-Facing and Place-Based Research**

We advance research excellence with a strong focus on interdisciplinary, community-engaged scholarship, and on work that shapes policy and informs public debate. Our public-facing work sparks important conversations, strengthens community connections, and addresses complex societal challenges. Grounded in place-based learning, we honour and incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems and engage with communities to create meaningful change—both locally and globally.

**Transformative and Interdisciplinary Learning**

The Faculty of Arts is one of the most global academic communities in the world, with students from over 100 countries who contribute to our dynamic and thriving environment. An Arts degree provides a broad and well-rounded education that integrates foundational knowledge with collaborative research, experiential learning, and multimodal pedagogy. We empower students to shape their academic journeys and develop critical thinking, creativity, empathy, and problem-solving skills. Committed to equity, accessibility, and decolonization, we connect learning to real-world challenges—equipping students for meaningful careers across a wide range of fields.

**Inclusive and Reciprocal Engagement**

We cultivate knowledge exchange by leveraging our scholarly expertise and fostering collaborations locally, nationally, and internationally. Our cultural units—including the world-renowned Museum of Anthropology, the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, and the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts—serve as vital hubs where research, artistic expression, and public dialogue converge. By strengthening partnerships, including with Musqueam and other Indigenous communities, we promote ethical, reciprocal relationships, ensuring that knowledge flows meaningfully between the university and broader communities. This enhances our impact and enriches both scholarship and society.



### **A Human-Centered Approach to Sustainability**

We embrace a human-centered approach to sustainability, focusing on the social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions of climate change. Through our research and teaching, we shape sustainability practices at institutional and societal levels. We honour Indigenous knowledge systems and relationships to the land and leverage our cultural assets to drive public dialogue, climate action, and social transformation.

### **Critical Engagement with Technology**

We are at the forefront of critical interdisciplinary engagement with technology, applying an ethical lens to digital transformation. Through digital humanities, computational social sciences, and innovative creative practices, we bridge research with real-world applications, develop inclusive tools, and foster collaboration across disciplines. By activating knowledge, expanding creative possibilities, and engaging communities, we help shape socially responsible and sustainable digital futures.

### **Looking Ahead**

We will continue to build on these strengths and areas of distinction to foster academic and inclusive excellence, expand research impact, enhance teaching and learning, and deepen our role as a hub for public dialogue and community engagement. By championing diverse perspectives, advancing social and environmental justice, and equipping students with the skills to navigate an ever-changing world, we strive to shape the future of higher education and society.

# Our Process

## Strategic Planning Process



This strategic plan presents a visioning framework shaped by contributions from the Faculty of Arts community. The process took place over six phases from November 2023 to May 2025, with an iterative approach that prioritized continuous feedback and refinement throughout.

The Listening Phase focused on gathering input to help shape the Faculty's future. Special attention was given to equity,<sup>7</sup> justice,<sup>8</sup> inclusion, and our relationship with Musqueam. To ensure broad participation, we used a mix of in-person and online focus groups, surveys, and dedicated sessions for members of historically and systemically marginalized communities, with the goal of creating safer, more inclusive spaces. Our objective was to listen deeply, center diverse voices, and lay the foundation for equitable and meaningful change. The insights gathered during the Listening Phase informed the creation of a strategic framework, including the shared vision, mission, values, and commitments for the Faculty of Arts.

During the Development Phase, working group discussions brought together students, faculty, staff, and community members to shape the plan's goals and actions. Building on insights from the Listening Phase and considering the current context and external trends, these discussions explored the Faculty's strengths, challenges, opportunities, risks, and key differentiators. They sparked creative ideas and helped define focused goals and actions to guide the Faculty over the next five years. Regular meetings among working group co-leads fostered cohesion, aligned discussions, and ensured coordination across all groups.

Beyond the working groups, we actively engaged Musqueam, alumni, employers, and our Advisory Committee. This broader engagement, supported by ongoing feedback loops, played a crucial role in

refining our framework and ensuring the strategic plan reflects the diverse needs and perspectives of our community.

The process culminated in the Drafting Phase, where we developed the final report and implementation plan. Throughout, the Dean of Arts and members of the Faculty of Arts' leadership team, Advisory Committee, Musqueam Engagement Advisor, and Equity Advisor provided critical guidance, ensuring the plan remained equitable, responsive to the Faculty's needs, and aligned with its long-term vision. Ongoing feedback and re-prioritization during the Implementation Phase will ensure continued progress and accountability as the plan is put into action.

## Participation

### Listening Phase

- 270 faculty, 181 staff, 132 students, and 9 community members, totaling 644 engaged participants\*
- 26 focus groups (18 general sessions, 8 for historically and systemically marginalized community members) engaged 289 participants
- 72 participants joined dedicated staff, Heads and Directors, and Faculty Council sessions
- 284 responses to the Listening Phase Survey
- 43 students shared priorities in the Arts Undergraduate Society Survey
- 9 Musqueam administration staff and community members participated in an engagement session, resulting in a Musqueam Engagement Report

*\*Total includes number of survey responses provided by participants who did not specify their affiliation(s)*

### Development Phase

- 5 working groups focused on research, teaching and learning, engagement, sustainable futures, and digital innovation
- 98 working group members, including 47 faculty, 30 staff, and 21 students
- 22 working group meetings, including 1 joint meeting inviting all members
- 3 Advisory Committee meetings including 19 members
- 2 engagement sessions with external community members including alumni and prospective employers
- 219 responses to the Goals Validation Survey

## Strategic Plan Framework

The Faculty of Arts Strategic Plan 2025–2030 builds on UBC’s core vision, purpose, and values, reaffirming our dedication to academic freedom, integrity, and the pursuit of excellence. We embrace excellence as an evolving and inclusive pursuit that values diverse voices and perspectives, fosters creativity, and drives meaningful change. With a long-standing commitment to achieving the best in research and teaching, we take pride in our national and global reputation for excellence and commit to even greater achievement in the years to come.

Situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people, we recognize the privilege of learning from Musqueam knowledge and ways of being. We are committed to meaningful engagement that advances Musqueam perspectives and priorities, and acknowledge their stewardship, insights, and contributions to the work we do together.

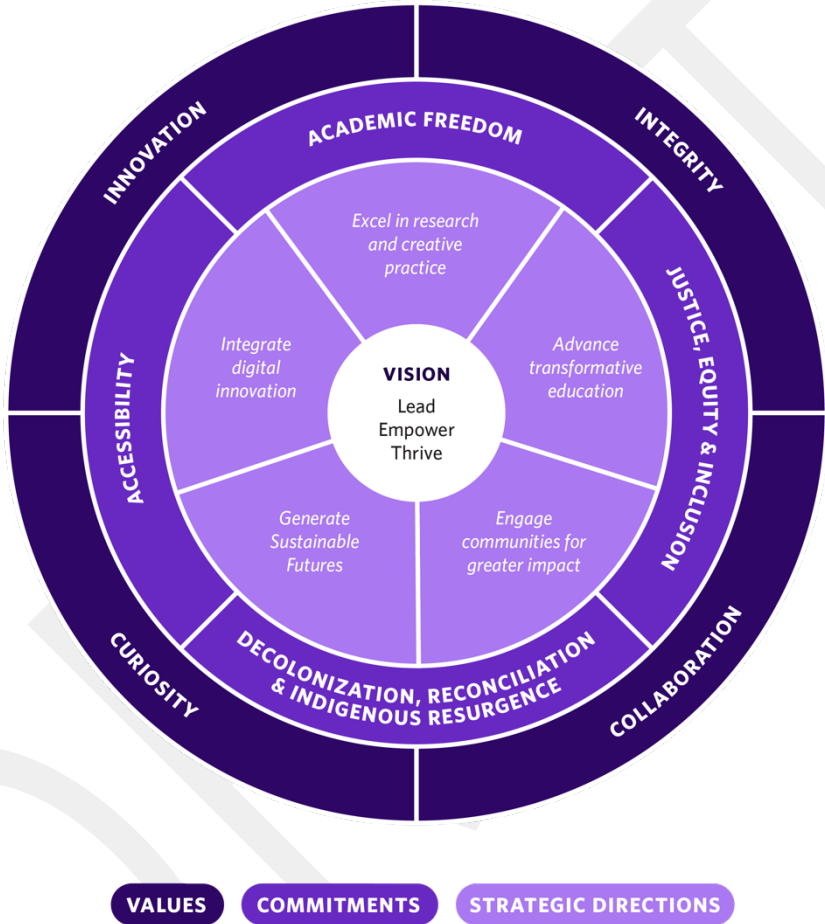
During a time of increasing social, political, and environmental uncertainty, we renew our commitments to academic freedom, accessibility, decolonization, reconciliation and Indigenous resurgence, and justice, equity, and inclusion. These commitments guide us as we navigate challenges to democratic values, human rights, and environmental sustainability worldwide. The Faculty of Arts remains a space for rigorous debate, open dialogue, and the free exchange of ideas, ensuring that teaching and research continue to serve the mission of higher education and the wider public good.

Our commitments align with key institutional and global frameworks, including the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan and Strategic Equity and Anti-Racism (StEAR) Framework, as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Okanagan Charter. These principles strengthen our foundations and guide our ongoing efforts toward meaningful change.

As part of a university recognized for its leadership in environmental sustainability, the Faculty of Arts plays a critical role in addressing the climate emergency and advancing climate justice. Through teaching, research, and engagement, we equip the next generation of leaders with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives needed to navigate complex global challenges and shape a more just and sustainable future.

At the same time, we recognize the transformative impact of technology and the vital role of Arts disciplines both in driving digital innovation and in critically examining the impact of digital transformation on society. We equip students and community members with adaptability, competencies, and ethical foundations to navigate a digital world and empower them to be changemakers who are prepared to thrive in future-focused careers and build a society where digital advancements foster inclusion, equity, accessibility, and sustainability.

The Faculty of Arts cultivates a dynamic intellectual environment that values disciplinary expertise as well as interdisciplinary collaboration, reflecting UBC’s core values of excellence, integrity, respect, academic freedom, and accountability. Through these principles, we foster a culture of inclusive academic excellence, recognizing that the innovation, creativity, and continuous learning essential for excellence in scholarly achievement is only possible through the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences.



Vision

Lead. Empower. Thrive.

The Faculty of Arts, grounded in our connection to Musqueam land and community, will lead in inclusive academic excellence to empower critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration, and to build a thriving future that is more just, sustainable, and full of possibility for all.

## Mission

The Faculty of Arts' mission is to:

- Foster path-breaking research and creativity within the Faculty of Arts and enhance knowledge mobilization on local and global scales.
- Empower students to build a better society through teaching and learning that uses human-centered, critical, and creative approaches.
- Elevate our impact by addressing complex societal challenges and actively engaging within UBC, with Musqueam, and with other external partners.
- Build a sustainable, respectful, and inclusive culture by advancing decolonization, reconciliation and Indigenous resurgence, equity, and accessibility; embracing diverse perspectives; and upholding academic freedom.
- Integrate digital innovation across research, teaching, learning, engagement and operations, emphasizing ethical integrity, accessibility, equity and sustainability.

## Values

### Collaboration

We foster a collaborative culture rooted in respect, reciprocity, and responsibility. By encouraging interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary partnerships, we create space for new ways of thinking and actively explore divergent perspectives. We care about the wellbeing and connectedness of our students, faculty, and staff. Through this profound sense of collegiality and belonging, we create community.

### Curiosity

We serve society by cultivating curious minds, advancing intellectual inquiry, and promoting critical thinking. We value learning from the wide-ranging and diverse ways of thinking, doing, and being that thrive in the Faculty of Arts. We foster open and respectful dialogue that challenges assumptions and inspires intellectual growth.

### Innovation

We promote creative thought and expression, encouraging experimentation, agility, and risk-taking to meet the challenges of tomorrow. We cultivate a dynamic environment where new ideas and innovative approaches flourish, viewing problems as opportunities for transformation.

### Integrity

We hold ourselves responsible for fulfilling our commitments with honesty and transparency, and for maintaining the highest ethical standards. By fostering a culture of accountability, we build trust and credibility, demonstrating authenticity and intentionality in our endeavours.

## Commitments

Aligned with the UBC Strategic Plan, the Faculty of Arts is committed to academic excellence. Open inquiry, academic freedom, and a diversity of viewpoints are essential to our mission. Our commitments to academic freedom, accessibility, decolonization, reconciliation, and Indigenous resurgence, and justice, equity, and inclusion, enrich our scholarship and strengthen our community. By advancing these commitments, we cultivate a dynamic environment that supports thoughtful inquiry, meaningful engagement, and a broad range of perspectives and approaches. These commitments serve as our contract with society and ourselves. They are cross-cutting and are woven into our work and the fabric of our communities.

### Academic Freedom

We commit to scholarly freedom, engaging in open inquiry and expression. We value curiosity, critical thinking, and open-minded engagement with different viewpoints, and navigating complexity through civil discourse. Scholarship and learning thrive when students, faculty, and staff challenge assumptions, embrace multiple ways of knowing, and engage in rigorous, constructive debate within a brave and inclusive space. By prioritizing thoughtful dialogue, compassion, and intellectual curiosity, we cultivate a community where independent thought, knowledge creation, and public engagement can flourish.

### Accessibility

We commit to advancing access, accessibility, and disability justice across our community, recognizing the need to identify and reduce environmental, attitudinal, and systemic barriers to full participation. This means confronting ableism and stigma and fostering a more inclusive environment for persons with disabilities, individuals who are neurodivergent, and all those facing barriers to access. We recognize that true accessibility extends beyond physical and digital spaces to include equitable access to learning, resources, and opportunities for academic success. We will encourage education and dialogue about accessibility and take action to embed accessibility and disability inclusion into our systems, practices, and culture, ensuring that our teaching, research, and community engagement reflect these commitments.

### Decolonization, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Resurgence

We commit to taking tangible, measurable, and sustainable actions that support Indigenous students, faculty, and staff. We honour the unique knowledge systems held by Musqueam and foster reciprocal, supportive relationships with the Musqueam community in the ways they ask of us. We acknowledge the significance of Musqueam land in shaping our shared future and support initiatives that strengthen and respect Indigenous knowledge within our research, teaching, and community practice, while recognizing diversity across our disciplines.

### **Justice, Equity, and Inclusion**

Our commitment to justice, equity, and inclusion encompasses actions to ensure that every member of our community, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, age, ability, socio-economic status, gender identity, or gender expression can flourish. This means broadening academic excellence and changing the foundation of systems, operations, and structures to work toward a better Faculty of Arts. We create equitable and inclusive spaces—both physical and digital—where all students, faculty, and staff are empowered to explore new possibilities in research, teaching, and community engagement. As technology continues to shape our academic and social landscapes, we also recognize the need for ethical frameworks that guide our use of digital spaces and tools in ways that uphold justice and equity.



## Strategic Directions

Our five strategic directions reflect UBC's core areas while addressing the Faculty of Arts' distinct focus. As we look ahead to the next five years, our focus will be on:

- Excelling in research and creative practice
- Advancing transformative education
- Engaging communities for greater impact
- Generating sustainable futures
- Integrating digital innovation

The first four directions are directly aligned with the [Shaping UBC's Next Century](#) plan, ensuring that our faculty upholds the broader university mission. The addition of Integrating Digital Innovation highlights our commitment to using technology to enhance learning and research, while bringing Arts perspectives to the forefront of digital transformation.

The following section details our goals and actions to advance each of these strategic directions and help guide our work through 2029. To drive early progress, we have prioritized actions for implementation in Year 1, based on impact, urgency, and feasibility. These priority actions are marked by an asterisk (\*).

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### Strategic Direction 1: Excel in research and creative practice

We strive to be a global leader in research excellence across the Creative and Performing Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Geographical and Information Sciences. By fostering collaboration, equity, and open inquiry, we create an environment where inclusive excellence and the recognition of different ways of knowing are cornerstones of high-impact research. Committed to academic freedom and cultivating the value of diverse perspectives, we support both independent scholarship and collective efforts to address complex societal challenges, ensuring our research has a lasting impact locally and globally.

#### Goal 1: Promote innovation and excellence in research and creative practice

**\*Action 1.1.1:** Advance the ethical conduct of research and promote responsible and rigorous research practices, including in community-led<sup>10</sup> and community-based<sup>11</sup> research and emerging fields such as artificial intelligence (AI), by supporting and adopting guidelines on appropriate best practices.

**\*Action 1.1.2:** Support funding applications and award nominations for research and creative practice by addressing gaps and leveraging underutilized federal and foundation funding and development opportunities.

**\*Action 1.1.3:** Enhance and expand opportunities for undergraduates, graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows to develop research skills.

**Action 1.1.4:** Foster Faculty-wide conversations on the meaning of standards in research and creative practice in today's context, recognizing and embracing diverse approaches and knowledge systems.

**Action 1.1.5:** Celebrate and recognize research excellence by identifying and implementing initiatives to highlight student and faculty achievements.

## **Goal 2: Engage in knowledge exchange beyond the academy**

**\*Action 1.2.1:** Foster Faculty-wide conversations on meaningful ways to recognize knowledge mobilization and public scholarship.

**Action 1.2.2:** Support researchers and community partners to enhance public engagement through the translation of research into publicly accessible and relevant forms of knowledge that will shape public policy, inform public debates, and contribute to solutions for complex societal issues.

**Action 1.2.3:** Promote community participation throughout the research lifecycle by identifying and implementing ways to meaningfully involve community members throughout the research process.

**Action 1.2.4:** Establish a new award in recognition of public scholarship.

## **Goal 3: Champion equity-led<sup>12</sup> and equity-based research<sup>13</sup>**

**\*Action 1.3.1:** Foster Faculty-wide conversations on meaningful ways to recognize the importance and value of equity-led and equity-based research.

**Action 1.3.2:** Proactively identify and disseminate funding opportunities for historically and systemically marginalized groups, recognizing that equity work is a shared responsibility.

**Action 1.3.3:** Create opportunities for researchers from historically and systemically marginalized communities to connect, collaborate, and build a sense of community.

**Action 1.3.4:** Establish a new award in recognition of equity-based and equity-led research.

## **Goal 4: Support Indigenous research**

**\*Action 1.4.1:** Recognize and support the diversity of Indigenous research, including decolonization, reconciliation, Indigenous resurgence, community-identified priorities, data sovereignty, and Indigenous-led collaboration.

**Action 1.4.2:** Support community-based and community-led research practices that incorporate robust ethical considerations and appropriate collaboration frameworks.

**Action 1.4.3:** Create Faculty-wide forums led by Indigenous scholars, students and community members for knowledge sharing, with a focus on building on existing strengths, reducing barriers to Indigenous-led research, fostering relationships with Indigenous communities, and supporting Indigenous methodologies.

**Action 1.4.4:** Establish a new award in recognition of Indigenous-based and Indigenous-led research.

### **Goal 5: Cultivate interdisciplinary research**

**\*Action 1.5.1:** Facilitate interdisciplinary dialogue, practice, and collaboration by supporting research centres, cultural units, and emerging partnerships.

**\*Action 1.5.2:** Support interdisciplinary research funding applications and share funding opportunities.

**Action 1.5.3:** Support faculty-led interdisciplinary research hubs by assisting in securing external partnerships and grants.

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## **Strategic Direction 2: Advance transformative education**

We support teaching and learning communities across an exceptionally wide range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in the Creative and Performing Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Geographical and Information Sciences. We are committed to inclusive and culturally informed education that centers ethical engagement, perspective-taking, innovation, and creativity, while preparing students for a rapidly changing world. Our learning spaces and systems, including co-curricular programming in the cultural units, reflect real-world priorities, integrate digital methods, and seek to innovate across disciplinary silos so that we remain relevant to contemporary contexts. We take action to integrate Indigenous knowledge systems within our classrooms, prioritize accessibility, and support students' personal and professional journeys within and beyond the classroom.

### **Goal 1: Support student outcomes through multiple forms of teaching and learning, encouraging creativity, critical thinking, curiosity, and real-world applications**

**\*Action 2.1.1:** Review the undergraduate degree outcomes as they relate to undergraduate research, experiential, digital, and other capstone learning opportunities.

**\*Action 2.1.2:** Broaden how we measure student success to reflect the diverse teaching methods, learning environments, and curricular pathways of the Faculty of Arts and use these measures to inform new academic initiatives and student services.

**Action 2.1.3:** Affirm and enhance Arts Instructional Support and Information Technology (ISIT)'s mandate to support teaching innovation and collaborations that build on existing expertise and best practices.

**Action 2.1.4:** Seek the means to expand experiential learning and co-curricular opportunities, including Community-Engaged Learning, Arts Compass, Co-op, and Go Global.

**Goal 2: Promote a culture of interdisciplinarity in teaching and learning within the Faculty of Arts and beyond**

**\*Action 2.2.1:** Review and assess interdisciplinary offerings and collaborations within and beyond the Faculty of Arts, identifying opportunities and barriers for interdisciplinary collaboration.

**Action 2.2.2:** Explore the development, sustainment, and promotion of interdisciplinary offerings within and beyond the Faculty of Arts by advocating for appropriate resource allocation and support to ensure their long-term viability.

**Goal 3: Deepen the ongoing work of decolonization, reconciliation, and Indigenous resurgence**

**\*Action 2.3.1:** Work collaboratively with academic units to review and renew curricula regarding decolonization and Indigenous resurgence, recognizing existing efforts and seeking opportunities for further advancement.

**\*Action 2.3.2:** Enhance reciprocal and community-led learning opportunities and develop meaningful ways to recognize Musqueam community members as valued teachers, learners, and collaborators.

**Action 2.3.3:** Expand and enhance knowledge-sharing opportunities for faculty and staff to learn about Musqueam, Indigenous pedagogies, and British Columbian Indigenous priorities and histories.

**Goal 4: Cultivate inclusive and culturally informed teaching and learning communities**

**\*Action 2.4.1:** Assess ongoing classroom climate<sup>14</sup> needs and challenges in the Faculty of Arts with a focus on inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, communicating across differences, and culturally informed teaching methods.

**\*Action 2.4.2:** Build capacity for inclusive teaching and learning, while reducing the disproportionate burden placed on junior, racialized,<sup>15</sup> and marginalized faculty and staff in managing these topics.

**Action 2.4.3:** Raise awareness of existing knowledge sharing opportunities and develop complementary ones for faculty and staff to learn about equity.

### Strategic Direction 3: Engage communities for greater impact

We collaborate with scholars, students, and community partners to co-create and disseminate many forms of scholarship and creativity, and to address real-world challenges. Acknowledging the diversity of our community, we welcome people from different cultures, traditions, countries, and linguistic backgrounds. We cultivate critical thinkers, dreamers, performers, researchers, and problem-solvers ready to take on the complex and compelling issues and stories of our world. Rooted in place, we actively engage with Musqueam and racialized communities in the Lower Mainland, strengthening connections across disciplines and communities. Our culture of care and engagement empowers staff, faculty, and students to feel invested in and connected to the work of their peers and the Faculty as a whole.

#### Goal 1: Amplify the value of the Faculty of Arts experience and education

**\*Action 3.1.1:** Develop a collective understanding of the value of a Faculty of Arts education and communicate a compelling narrative that articulates its value, depth, and relevance.

**\*Action 3.1.2:** Showcase contributions from faculty and staff in cutting edge research, innovative and inclusive teaching, and transformative student learning experiences.

**\*Action 3.1.3:** Develop a campaign to highlight post-graduation alumni success, emphasizing diverse career paths and the value of a Faculty of Arts education.

**\*Action 3.1.4:** Seek external funding for the Arts and Culture District to maximize opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, further integrate cultural units in the life of the university, and amplify their public impact as leading contributors to British Columbian, Canadian, and international cultural world.

**Action 3.1.5:** Foster collaboration and leverage strengths across Arts units to enhance collective impact including co-hosting public events, creating networks for sharing information and practices, and co-developing public-facing initiatives.

#### Goal 2: Deepen long-term reciprocal relationships with communities beyond campus

**\*Action 3.2.1:** Facilitate respectful face-to-face dialogue and collaboration with Musqueam and other local First Nation communities in Vancouver, ensuring that these engagements do not place an undue burden on the communities.

**\*Action 3.2.2:** Promote partnerships to foster connections between academic work and societal needs, including collaboration with racialized communities, both locally and more broadly across Canada and internationally.

**\*Action 3.2.3:** Meaningfully advance the recommendations outlined in the [Musqueam Engagement Report](#), ensuring sustained progress and accountability.

**\*Action 3.2.4:** Highlight the impact of philanthropic contributions of students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community to foster a culture of giving across the Faculty of Arts.

**Action 3.2.5:** Develop a cohesive framework for reciprocal engagement by developing tailored toolkits, establishing clear processes to streamline and coordinate engagement across units, and reporting mechanisms to measure alumni and community engagement efforts.

### **Goal 3: Address systemic barriers to engagement**

**\*Action 3.3.1:** Ensure that members of historically and systemically marginalized communities are equitably involved in leading the implementation of the strategic plan, assessing progress of implementing EDI-based and Indigenous work.

**Action 3.3.2:** Conduct a comprehensive assessment with community members to identify barriers to engagement within the Faculty of Arts and develop and implement protocols for reporting systemic barriers.

**Action 3.3.3:** Explore models for offering appropriate recognition to individuals and groups facing systemic barriers who participate in consultations and co-create inclusive programs.

### **Goal 4: Promote partnerships and collaboration within the Faculty of Arts and UBC**

**\*Action 3.4.1:** Establish and sustain Faculty of Arts communities of practice for staff and faculty working in similar roles, such as graduate advisors, chairs, communicators, administrators, curators, and professional staff in the cultural units, to foster collaboration and shared learning.

**Action 3.4.2:** Enhance engagement and community by actively listening to diverse voices, including members of historically and systemically marginalized groups within and outside the Faculty of Arts, and by creating a forum to share experiences and perspectives that will inform and improve institutional practices.

**Action 3.4.3:** Develop centralized engagement resources and training for cross-disciplinary and cross-Faculty collaboration and partnerships, with a focus on public impact as a key area of collaboration.

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## **Strategic Direction 4: Generate sustainable futures**

We commit to environmental, social, and financial sustainability. Through our diverse expertise in the Creative and Performing Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Geographical and Information Sciences, we inspire our community and beyond to meet the urgent challenges of the climate

emergency. We strive to foster the connectedness of our vibrant community and to increase accessibility, work satisfaction, belonging, and wellbeing, making the Faculty of Arts an optimal home for our students, faculty, and staff. We commit to sustainable budgets, making strategic financial investments aligned with our core values and vision.

### **Goal 1: Foster wellbeing, connectivity, equity, and belonging within the Faculty of Arts**

**\*Action 4.1.1:** Explore opportunities to provide career- and life-coaching support for students.

**Action 4.1.2:** Develop and implement initiatives and programs to cultivate a culture of wellbeing and work-life balance, foster connections and a sense of belonging, and build resilience among students, faculty, and staff.

**Action 4.1.3:** Foster a supportive environment and expand opportunities for workplace learning, leadership development, career growth and mobility to enable the continued flourishing of staff, faculty, and students.

**Action 4.1.4:** Support embedding mental health literacy into student programs and curricula to promote student mental health and wellbeing.

### **Goal 2: Advance environmental sustainability knowledge and practice and lead globally in research, teaching, and learning that addresses the climate emergency**

**\*Action 4.2.1:** Establish a mechanism for tracking contributions to the University's Climate Action Plan 2030, including encouraging virtual alternatives for meetings and conferences and reductions in travel.

**\*Action 4.2.2:** Support, recognize, and showcase environmental work across research, teaching and learning, and engagement, highlighting the Faculty of Arts' contribution to addressing climate emergency within UBC and beyond.

**Action 4.2.3:** Collaborate with campus partners to enhance work-integrated learning programs connecting students to work, research, and teaching and learning opportunities in environmental action and climate justice.

**Action 4.2.4:** Promote the responsible use of technology in supporting sustainability, acknowledging both its environmental impact—such as the energy intensity of AI—and its potential to reduce waste, improve efficiency, and support climate-conscious decision-making.

### **Goal 3: Ensure sustainable financial practices are transparently aligned with Faculty of Arts values, commitments, and strategic priorities**

**\*Action 4.3.1:** Develop an annual strategic plan progress report to highlight key accomplishments and investments.

**\*Action 4.3.2:** Develop and implement a multi-faceted data-driven marketing strategy to promote programs, attract, and retain prospective students, with attention to diversity and representation in recruitment.

**\*Action 4.3.3:** Assess and continue optimizing administrative services, processes, and organizational structures to enhance strategic alignment and operational efficiency, including leveraging technology to improve processes and services.

**\*Action 4.3.4:** Expand academic credit and non-credit programs and increase flexibility in learning pathways, focusing on areas that address global and societal challenges, align with market demand, and contribute to long term financial sustainability.

**Action 4.3.5:** Identify opportunities for sharing best practices across departments and optimizing curriculum, workload, and course delivery in alignment with the Faculty of Arts' values.

#### **Goal 4: Enhance accessibility to support faculty, students and staff**

**\*Action 4.4.1:** Foster dialogue with UBC campus partners to explore and identify the most effective strategies for elevating disability inclusion.

**\*Action 4.4.2:** Foster an environment of disability inclusion by recognizing efforts, reducing disability stigma, and actively seeking funding to advance accessibility.

**Action 4.4.3:** Proactively adopt workplace, teaching, learning, and research practices and modalities to improve accessibility, belonging, and flexibility.

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### **Strategic Direction 5: Integrate digital innovation**

We integrate digital innovation across research, education, engagement, and operations, and equip students, faculty, and staff with critical technological competencies, adaptable resources, accessible and affordable tools, and infrastructure to explore complex social and cultural inquiries. Our approach emphasizes experimentation, ethical integrity, accessibility, affordability, and inclusive and reciprocal relationships with communities, stressing the importance of wellbeing, equity, and human connection in an increasingly digital world. Digital empowerment allows us to ask new questions, reach new audiences, enhance knowledge exchange, address societal challenges, expand research capacities, and innovate our methods. Arts expertise and values also ensure that sustainability, ecological responsibility, and environmental literacy guide the development of policy, infrastructure, and careful use of technology.



### **Goal 1: Shape an ethical and empowered digital culture**

**\*Action 5.1.1:** Establish an Advisory Committee with representation of students, faculty, and staff to guide the overall implementation of the Faculty of Arts' digital strategy and resource allocation.

**\*Action 5.1.2:** Develop evidence-based ethical frameworks and guidelines, informed by Truth and Reconciliation, digital ecology, equity, wellbeing, and accessibility, to guide AI use, and employ minimal computing options and other sustainable digital practices.

**Action 5.1.3:** Identify opportunities to support computational and digital projects with social impact that aligns with Faculty of Arts commitments, including strengthening the role of Arts in shaping public policy around digital technologies.

**Action 5.1.4:** Ensure curricula, certificates, and specializations featuring digital scholarship encompass critical, ecological, and ethical perspectives by incorporating the history of technology, data, its relationship to society, and the role of human expertise in shaping these fields.

### **Goal 2: Develop an innovative, accessible, practical, and sustainable digital infrastructure**

**\*Action 5.2.1:** Establish and strengthen partnerships for collaborative infrastructure initiatives within and outside of UBC and expand research support services and software.

**\*Action 5.2.2:** Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing digital resources, tools, infrastructure gaps, and support needs, and enhance and expand access to skilled developers, digital tools and resources such as servers, specialized software, and AI models.

**Action 5.2.3:** Identify and reduce critical gaps to enhance digital accessibility, affordability, and wellbeing, prioritizing sustainability and equitable access to computational resources.

**Action 5.2.4:** Explore the development and enhancement of digital maker spaces and showcase areas with upgradable infrastructure to foster community engagement, knowledge exchange, and co-learning.

**Action 5.2.5:** Equip learning and study spaces with the technology needed for tech-intensive teaching and collaboration using a phased, targeted, and sustainability-informed approach.

### **Goal 3: Foster digital literacy and technological competencies**

**\*Action 5.3.1:** Incentivize the development of academic programs and micro-credentials that integrate digital competencies within the Faculty of Arts and in collaboration with UBC partners.

**Action 5.3.2:** Create and expand opportunities for students to engage in project-based learning using digital applications to solve real-world problems.

**Action 5.3.3:** Support innovative curricula and pedagogy that apply digital methods, including multimodal outputs, natural language processing, machine/deep learning, archiving, image, text, data, and spatial analysis, while ensuring that digital literacy includes critical engagement with the ethical, social, and environmental dimensions of technology.

**Action 5.3.4:** Work with units to update degree outcomes, revise programs and/or courses to negotiate/align with digital advancement, such as AI, encoding, analytics, data preservation, towards critical and responsible use of technology.

#### **Goal 4: Elevate research with advanced digital methods, modalities, and outputs**

**\*Action 5.4.1:** Foster Faculty-wide conversations on ways to support digital integration and to evaluate and recognize diverse forms of research excellence in digital methods.

**\*Action 5.4.2:** Promote and support digital research funding opportunities.

**Action 5.4.3:** Promote available resources and accessible training to help faculty and students stay current with digital research advancements and integrate them into teaching and research.

**Action 5.4.4:** Enable participation and contributions from different fields and roles in developing digital initiatives, including in research and teaching.

**Action 5.4.5:** Attract funding and opportunities to create specialized expertise and roles that drive advancements in digital research and creative practice.

#### **Goal 5: Enable digital collaborations within the Faculty of Arts and beyond**

**\*Action 5.5.1:** Strengthen existing digital collaborations and knowledge-sharing opportunities, and develop new opportunities across the Faculty of Arts, UBC, and with external partners.

**Action 5.5.2:** Expand digital literacy programs and resources on-campus and beyond.

**Action 5.5.3:** Advocate for innovative grant structures and facilitate securing diverse funding sources to support the use of digital methods for social, environmental, and community good.

### **Implementation**

To bring this plan to life, we will integrate annual action and budget planning with key deliverables, accountability, and resourcing. We will establish an implementation governance framework to help mobilize and guide our efforts. We will monitor our progress through regular check-ins and issue an annual report to share our progress. Ongoing communication and scheduled engagement with campus partners and the Faculty of Arts community will sustain alignment, direction, and energy. This is a living plan—our strategic priorities and actions will continue to evolve as we respond to emerging needs and opportunities over the next five years.

## Endnotes

**<sup>1</sup>Unceded:** These lands were never sold, traded, or given up through treaty or other agreement. The University's location and history require that we critically reflect on the ongoing effects of settler colonialism and structural racism, and question what it means to teach, learn, and conduct research on these lands.

**<sup>2</sup>Reconciliation:** An ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change" (Source: [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 16](#)).

**<sup>3</sup>Equity/Equitable:** Equity refers to achieving parity in policy, process, and outcomes for historically and systemically marginalized people and groups while accounting for diversity. It considers power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes in three main areas:

- **Representational equity:** the proportional participation at all levels of an institution;
- **Resource equity:** the distribution of resources in order to close equity gaps; and
- **Equity-mindedness:** the demonstration of an awareness of, and willingness to, address equity issues (Source: UBC Equity and Inclusion Office, [Glossary of Terms](#)).

**<sup>4</sup>Justice:** Social justice is fairness as it manifests in society. That includes fairness in healthcare, employment, housing, and more. Social justice applies to all aspects of society, including race and gender, and it is closely tied to human rights. Social justice depends on four essential goals: human rights, access, participation, and equity (Source: Human Rights Careers. n.d. [What does Social Justice Mean](#)).

**<sup>5</sup>Inclusion:** Inclusion is an active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege, and to build a respectful and diverse community that ensures welcoming spaces and opportunities to flourish for all. (Source: [Association of American Colleges & Universities](#)).

**<sup>6</sup>Decolonization:** The active resistance against colonial powers, and a shifting of power towards political, economic, educational, and cultural independence and power that originate from a colonized nation's own indigenous culture. This process occurs politically and applies to personal and societal, cultural, political, agricultural, and educational deconstruction of colonial oppression. (Source: [UBC EDI Glossary](#))

**<sup>7</sup>Indigenous Resurgence:** Resurgence involves the "flourishment" of Indigenous knowledges, laws, languages, and practices as integral elements of Indigenous self-determination (Simpson, 2011, p 17). Imagining resurgence as a multivalent project, Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Simpson

avers: “We need to rebuild our culturally inherent philosophical contexts for governance, education, healthcare, and economy. We need to be able to articulate in a clear manner our visions for the future, for living as Indigenous Peoples in contemporary times. To do so, we need to engage in Indigenous processes, since according to our traditions, the processes of engagement highly influence the outcome of the engagement itself...We need our Elders, our languages, and our lands, along with vision, intent, commitment, community, and ultimately, action. We must move ourselves beyond resistance and survival, to flourishing” (Simpson, 2011, pp. 16-17). Source: (Simpson, L. B. (2017). [As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance](#). University of Minnesota Press).

**<sup>8</sup>Historically and Systemically Marginalized Groups:** In Canada, and in the current UBC context, disadvantaged groups are commonly understood to include: Indigenous Peoples, women, racialized people, disabled people/people with disabilities, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities (Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual, plus countless ways people choose to identify) and TGNB people (transgender and non-binary) who experience barriers on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (Source: UBC Equity and Inclusion Office, [Glossary of Terms](#)).

**<sup>9</sup>Accessibility/Accessible:** Accessibility enables disabled people to participate fully in all aspects of life, on an equal basis with others, and to access services, employment, information and communications, physical environments, and transportation (Source: UBC Equity and Inclusion Office, [Glossary of Terms](#)).

**<sup>10</sup>Community-Led Research:** Community-led research emphasizes the leadership and ownership of the research process by the community itself. Researchers may support and facilitate the process, but the community drives the direction and decision-making, empowering local knowledge and fostering self-determination in the research process.

**<sup>11</sup>Community-Based Research:** Community-based research is a collaborative approach to research that is performed in an equitable partnership between researchers and community members (and/or their representatives). Community-based research is informed by the needs of the community and is goal-oriented, with outcomes intended to benefit the community. In community-based research, all partners provide input and expertise throughout all stages of the project, including determining the research question or objective, providing wisdom and expertise, and sharing in decision-making (Source: [UBC Indigenous Research Support Initiative](#)).

**<sup>12</sup>Equity-Led Research:** Research that ensures that individuals most impacted by inequities lead and shape the research process. This approach shifts power by centering the knowledge, leadership, and

decision-making to members of historically and systemically marginalized communities, fostering systemic change in research practices.

**<sup>13</sup> Equity-Based Research:** Research that addresses issues of systemic inequality and strives to include diverse perspectives, through thematic focus, methodological approach, team design, community collaboration and/or other elements.

**<sup>14</sup> Classroom Climate:** “The intellectual, social, emotional, and physical environments in which our students learn” (Ambrose et al., 2010, p. 170). Different aspects of the classroom climate and student development – intellectual development and social identity development in particular – interact with each other to have an impact on student learning and performance. Instructors may attend to the following aspects of student development and classroom climate to consider how each aspect is related to teaching and learning:

- **Physical:** Physical aspect of the classroom and course delivery, such as classroom type (e.g., an auditorium, a small classroom, a lab), layout (e.g., students sit facing the front of the room, students sit in small groups, everyone sits in a circle), and medium (e.g., face-to-face, online).
- **Intellectual:** Intellectual aspect of the course and class, such as the course content, class discussion topics, course materials (e.g., textbooks, videos screened in class), and the forms and levels of skills and knowledge that students are expected to demonstrate.
- **Social:** The social aspect of classroom climate refers to relationships between students (e.g., individualistic vs. team-oriented, or competitive vs. cooperative) and between students and instructor (e.g., the instructor being approachable or authoritative to students) and the social atmosphere of the class (e.g., casual, formal, democratic, inclusive).
- **Emotional:** The classroom contains various emotions, and the emotions can shift quickly. Students and instructors can have different emotional reactions to course materials and class discussions. ([Source: UBC CTLT Indigenous Initiatives](#)).

**<sup>15</sup> Racialized Communities:** Members of racialized groups are persons who do not identify as primarily white in race, ethnicity, origin, and/or colour, regardless of their birthplace or citizenship. The term “racialized” is used as a more current term than “visible minority” from the Employment Equity Act (1995) (Source: UBC Equity and Inclusion Office, [Glossary of Terms](#)).