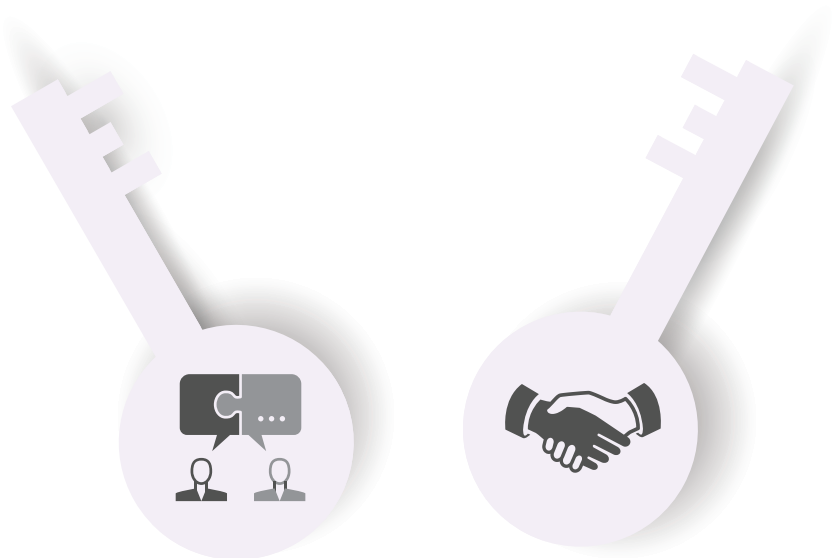


# UNLOCKING POTENTIAL



**Health Care**  
Human Resource Sector Council



# STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025

The Health Care Human Resource Sector Council is committed to working with the health and community care sectors to contribute to a quality, sustainable workforce.

## Our Vision

A diverse, sustainable health and community care workforce

## Our Mission

The Council promotes excellence in human resource innovation and builds capacity through collaboration with stakeholders.

## Values

Integrity – our valued partnerships depend on it

Excellence – demonstrated in the quality of our results

Diversity – initiatives to support safe and welcoming workplaces

Innovation – researching best practices and trends to ensure creative solutions

Collaboration – proactive alliances are a cornerstone of our success

Cultural Competency – everything we do is informed by sector stakeholders

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# Impact

## The Health Care Human Resource Sector Council ...

... **has more than 20 years of proven results** in supporting a professional and sustainable workforce, and in helping to develop healthy and diverse workplaces.

... **is non-political, truly representative and objective** in all of its work. By bringing different perspectives to the table, we broaden understanding across the sector and ensure an alignment with province-wide priorities.

... **is outcome-driven.** Responding to emerging needs, we interpret trends, research best practices and facilitate solutions.

... **demonstrates responsible financial stewardship and accountability.** Operational and project budgets are monitored monthly, with regular reports to the Board of Directors and funders.

... **has become a “go-to” centre** for innovative and relevant training, tools and resources.

... **unlocks the potential for collaboration** among the many sector stakeholders, maximizing resources and building capacity.

...**is committed** to ongoing growth, innovation and renewal.

# Partnering for Success

The Health Care Human Resource Sector Council ensures that its initiatives complement the work of other organizations, and contribute to the sustainability of the sector workforce. Our programs are successful because we partner with government, stakeholder representative groups, and employers.

Funding partners over the past three years have included:

- Department of Community Services
- Department of Health and Wellness
- Department of Labour and Advanced Education
- Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia

Project partners include:

- Association of Industry Sector Councils
- Health Association of Nova Scotia, CCA Program and Dementia Understanding the Journey
- Nova Scotia Residential Agencies Association
- Nursing Homes of Nova Scotia Association
- Registered Nurses Professional Development Centre
- VON Nova Scotia

# Stakeholder Engagement

## Board Sector Representation

### Directors

Allied Health Professionals  
Continuing Care Assistant (Member at Large)  
Continuing Care Association of Nova Scotia  
Home Support Network (HANS)  
Nova Scotia Nurses Union  
Nova Scotia Residential Societies  
Nursing Homes of Nova Scotia Association  
Our Neighborhood Living Society  
Quest Society for Adult Support and Rehabilitation  
Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia

### Resource Representatives

Department of Community Services  
Department of Health and Wellness  
Department of Labour and Advanced Education

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## Stakeholder and Resource Partners

The following organizations inform the council's work through participation on project advisory groups and knowledge transfer.

Barefoot Facilitation Inc.  
Carla Anglehart  
CCA Program and Dementia Understanding the Journey (HANS)  
Closing the Gap  
Continuing Care Association of NS  
Continuing Care Branch, Department of Health and Wellness  
Continuing Care Council (HANS)  
Cove Guest Home  
Dykeland Lodge  
Futureworx  
Gen Z Research Inc.  
Health Workforce Planning, Department of Health and Wellness  
Home Support Network (HANS)

Inverness County Home Support Society  
Inverary Manor  
Inverness County Home Support Society  
Northwood  
Nova Scotia College of Nursing  
Nova Scotia Community College  
Nova Scotia Health, QEII  
Nova Scotia Nurses Union  
Nursing Homes of Nova Scotia Association  
Oakwood Terrace  
Peopleworks  
PMA Workforce Development Solutions  
R.C. MacGillivray Guest Home  
Home Support Network  
Registered Nurses Professional Development Centre  
Shannex  
VON Nova Scotia  
Windsor Elms  
Wynnpark Villa  
Yarmouth Argyle Home Support Services

# Demonstrated Results

The COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact sector-wide, but the Council was able to adapt quickly and continue our work through 2020 and 2021. Here are some highlights of our successes, all accomplished with the help of partners, within the three main focus areas:

## Human Resource Planning

- Needs assessments and an inventory of resources were conducted for home support and disability support employers
- The Council was instrumental in developing Key Actions in the Proposed Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Continuing Care, now being implemented.
- Orientation and onboarding resources were developed for Long-Term Care Assistants and for Continuing Care Assistants working in home support.
- A project is underway to provide labour market information through the Association of Industry Sector Council's All-Sector Dashboard Project

## Attraction and Retention

- The career promotion videos and fact sheet series were expanded to include Continuing Care Assistants (long-term care and home support) and Residential Care Workers
- A Career Exploration Toolkit was developed to provide timely career and employer information for career seekers
- The Knowledge Hub web portal for long-term care was launched in April 2020. Work has begun to expand this initiative for disability support organizations.
- The Council brought together a curriculum consultant, a Project Working Group and a Solutions Advisory Group to ensure the quality and success of the CCA program in a pandemic learning environment. Guidelines and recommendations were submitted to the Department of Health and Wellness.
- A standardized orientation program was developed for RNs and LPNs in long-term care – those transitioning from professional practice and new graduates.

## Training

- The Working Mind program supports mental wellness. We first offered it in person in 2018. Council trainers have conducted 99 sessions with 1,186 staff from continuing care and disability support workplaces. Evaluations from the instructor-led virtual training remain extremely positive, with an average of 97% score across eight evaluation areas.
  - We began delivery of the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention in continuing care, in 2018. In response to an identified need, the Council trained four VON in-house facilitators, who now support delivery of the program in four zones across the province. Because of the pandemic, the Council was proactive in redesigning the program in 2020, to a blended learning approach. In the past three years, sessions were held with almost 450 continuing care participants; and more than 450 VON staff.
- Other training programs offered include
- Unbreakable Me, a resilience-building workshop
  - Skillspass, a management training platform
  - In This Together, a program to support nursing leadership in home support

# State of the Sector

## Health Care

Nova Scotia's publicly-funded health care system includes approximately 45,000 physicians and other employees. Roughly 69% of the annual budget for the Department of Health and Wellness goes toward their compensation, roughly \$3.33-billion per year.

In acute care, the majority of health care professionals (e.g. nurses, medical laboratory technologists and respiratory therapists) are regulated. The opposite is true in continuing care, which relies heavily on an unregulated workforce.

Continuing Care Assistants make up the majority of continuing care workers, and this part of the workforce presents the greatest human resource challenge. Over 11,000 CCAs have been certified in NS since 2000, including 386 in 2019-20.

Nurses make up the largest portion of the health workforce, at around 15,000. As of 2020, there were 10,245 registered nurses (RNs), 4,682 licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and 238 nurse practitioners (NPs). Since 2010, the number of RNs in the province has remained relatively stable despite a period of peak retirements, while the number of LPNs and NPs has grown by 26% and 91%, respectively.

Retention and recruitment challenges exist for RNs in certain specialty areas (including long-term care) and in certain geographic regions, especially rural areas. The Council focuses on small to mid-sized organizations, particularly those in non-urban areas. The Leadership for Nurses program is now in Phase Three, and the standardized orientation program will support retention of nurses in long-term care.

## Community Care

In Nova Scotia, services for persons with disabilities are delivered through the Department of Community Services. These services include residential, vocational and employment support for individuals with mental health issues, intellectual disabilities, severe behavioural issues or a combination of those.

Direct care staff in disability support (excluding supervisors and nurses) number 5,300, serving 5,100 people with disabilities across the province. This includes both residential and non-resident care.

For the past several years, the Department has been transforming services to better align with the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Government has committed to offering individuals with disabilities appropriate options for living, working and participating in their communities. For instance, large facilities currently housing people with disabilities will be phased out over a period of time. This process has already started, with one facility closing and the number of residents reduced in others.

The move to community living will require additional staff and resources to support individuals with disabilities. The sector is already experiencing significant recruitment and retention issues. Lack of training is also a major factor, which further affects the quality of support provided. The Department of Community Services has begun to commit additional resources to address these issues.

The Council has started expanding its Knowledge Hub for disability support organizations, to help identify specific training needs for that sector.

The work guided by our Strategic Priorities/Objectives/Outcomes (see page 6) will address a number of these challenges.

## Strengths

# S



- Collaborative approach and processes
- Meaningful involvement of stakeholders from across the sector
- Work based on sector needs
- Strong relationship with government, good linkages with appropriate departments
- Collaboration with Association of Industry Sector Councils
- Ability to adapt and respond effectively
- Commitment to excellence
- Demonstrated value through evaluation frameworks
- Knowledgeable and committed operational team with range of expertise
- Strong analytic skills
- Demonstrated leadership

## Weaknesses

# W



- Profile and understanding of the Council mandate and its programs
- Continuously changing landscape
- Project-based funding model: challenging for long-term planning and core operations

## Opportunities

# O



- Increased public focus on health care, provincially and nationally, created by pandemic
- New provincial government with strong platform on health care reform
  - Increased government funding
  - Potential to showcase our strengths and outcomes, as a leader in support for health care
- Association of Industry Sector Councils
  - Opportunities for further collaboration and shared resources
  - Opportunities to leverage funding (eg All-Sector Dashboard Project)
- Technology improvements
  - Increased accessibility and ease of use for training, education
  - Increased willingness of users to embrace new norm
- Increased awareness of the value of diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace
- International recruitment
- Attraction of career seekers through high school co-op programs (job shadowing) with sector employers

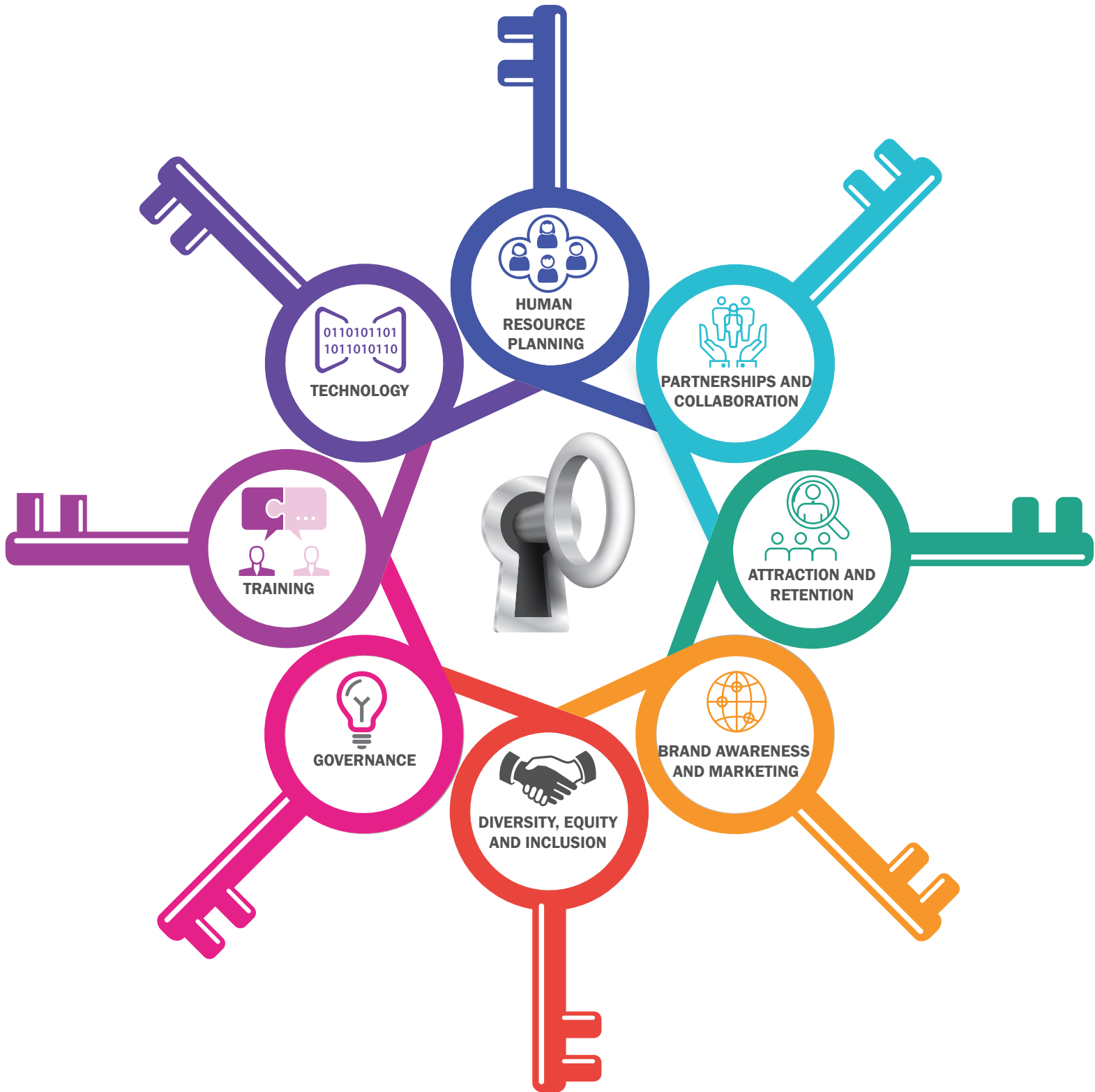
## Threats

# T

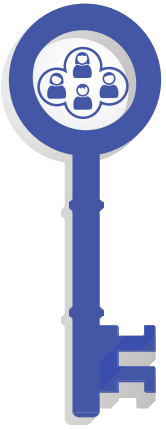


- New government means restructuring of departments, funding changes
- Lack of predictable and sustainable funding
- Continuously changing sector environment
- Challenges in workforce retention
  - retirements, aging workforce
  - increasing numbers leaving the workforce and the sector

# Strategic Priorities/Objectives/Outcomes







# Human Resource Planning

**Strategic Priority: Increase the available workforce for the sectors, ensuring the right person for the right role, leading to sustainability**

**Objectives:**

- Build capacity through increased access to strategic workforce planning tools, training and resources for sector employers
- Increase access to labour market information to inform organizations' workforce planning
- Create pathways to enhance partnerships with, and among, sector organizations to support workforce planning initiatives
- Increase Council's existing career assessment tools, and make them more accessible to career seekers
- Establish a baseline and evaluation framework to measure effectiveness of the initiatives annually

**Outcomes:**

- Sector employers will demonstrate their knowledge and use of workforce planning tools (eg Workforce Edge) and other resources
- Workforce planning will be better informed and will allow for identification of potential career seekers to meet service delivery
- Workforce planning will reflect current labour market realities and emerging trends
- A collaborative workforce planning approach will emerge, focused on sharing best practices. Decreased competition and duplication of services will be evident
- Increased traffic to the career assessment tools on Council's website
- Career seekers' feedback will show that career assessment tools are useful, and have helped them decide whether a career in the sector is right for them
- Demonstrated and consistent evaluation will measure the effectiveness of Human Resource planning methods and will identify opportunities for new methods and resources



# Attraction and Retention

## **Strategic Priority: Increase the sustainability of the sectors' workforce**

### **Objectives:**

- Increase best practice resources, and access to those resources, in the areas of attraction and retention for all sector stakeholders
- Build capacity by providing a forum for stakeholder engagement in attraction and retention initiatives
- Increase opportunities to support recruitment needs within the sectors, through NS Works and other partners/potential partners

### **Outcomes:**

- Sector organizations will report (anecdotally) that the new resources are of value
- Increased leadership capacity within the sectors, keeping them current and competitive
- Increased understanding of the value of NS Works and other partners
- Increased understanding of sector careers and pathways for a stronger relationship between recruiters and employers

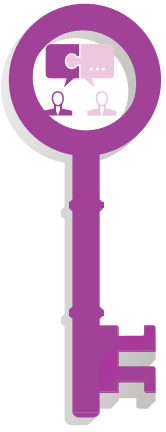
## **Strategic Priority: Increase and highlight occupational choices within the sectors**

### **Objectives:**

- Increase accessibility to career resources, especially on the Council's website
- Identify gaps in career resources and, in collaboration with regulatory bodies, develop appropriate materials to address those gaps
- Identify innovative career promotion initiatives to expand reach to potential career seekers

### **Outcomes:**

- Increased career-seeker traffic on the Council's website
- Initiatives with regulatory bodies to develop new resources for targeted careers
- Promotion to career seekers included in the Council's marketing plan



# Training

## **Strategic Priority: Enhance Council's leadership in the development and delivery of industry-specific training to foster innovation and sustainability**

### **Objectives:**

- Further develop Knowledge Hubs to include a forum for stakeholder engagement
- Undertake an annual needs assessment to determine the evolving needs of the sectors and to inform delivery methods
- Determine training priorities within Council's mandate and existing resources
- Evaluate relevance and success of each program using an outcome-based framework  
Revise training opportunities, content and delivery based on evaluation results

### **Outcomes:**

- Organizations report benefit from a forum, sharing best practices and knowledge
- Evidence-based training will support identified priorities
- Council will expand and pivot to ensure training reflects current and emerging best practices, in a realistic context
- Consistent evaluation will articulate training outcomes and impact

## **Strategic Priority: Facilitate and enhance a learning culture in sector workplaces**

### **Objectives:**

- Identify resources through partnerships among sector employers and others
- Source funding, as required
- Facilitate easy access for employers to training, tools and resources

### **Outcomes:**

- Additional resources will be available at a centralized hub, through partnerships
- Employers' use of these resources will be demonstrated through increased engagement in knowledge transfer

# Cross-cutting Initiatives

The following priority areas all impact across Human Resource Planning, Attraction and Retention, and Training.



## Brand Awareness and Marketing

**Strategic Priority: Refine, and increase understanding of, Council's value to the sectors we serve**

**Objectives:**

- Conduct a comprehensive brand assessment and continue to develop a robust marketing strategy based on the results
- Use enhanced marketing strategy to continue to build momentum in stakeholder awareness of Council's role and value

**Outcome:**

- Increased awareness and understanding of the Council's role and the resources it provides within the sectors



## Partnerships and Collaboration

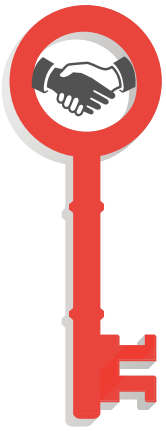
**Strategic Priority: Enhance and grow strategic partnerships and collaborative relationships**

**Objective:**

- Build on existing collaborations, and identify new ones, to enhance Council's work in serving the sectors

**Outcomes:**

- The province will benefit from strengthened collaboration within the sectors and with others
- Additional resources and opportunities will be evident



# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

## **Strategic Priority: Ensure the Council is sensitive to, and responsive to, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)**

### **Objectives:**

- Examine Council's committee makeup, processes, programs and delivery methods with a DEI lens
- Define Council's role in inclusion and diversity across the sectors
- Establish a DEI Working Group to guide Council's work and build linkages
- Increase partnerships and collaboration with under-represented communities

### **Outcomes:**

- Council's Board and staff will benefit from DEI training
- Council's committee makeup, processes, programs and delivery methods will better reflect DEI values
- An educational program and forum will increase DEI competency in the sectors
- DEI effectiveness will be demonstrated through ongoing evaluation of recruiting and retention strategies
- Connections are strengthened between employers and under-represented groups. This will be reflected in recruitment and retention, and in knowledge transfer

## **Strategic Priority: Increase diversity and inclusion within the sectors**

### **Objectives:**

- Establish the Council as a resource and facilitation hub for DEI best practices and tools
- Target outreach to under-represented communities, through community leaders and appropriate organizations, to build linkages
- Develop an educational program in collaboration with DEI groups, to foster safe and inclusive workplaces
- Provide an open forum for relevant diversity groups and employers to advance recruitment and retention initiatives
- Establish an evaluation framework to measure DEI effectiveness of recruitment and retention strategies
- Develop a community education model to support workers from under-represented groups, thereby increasing retention

### Outcomes:

- Sector stakeholders will see the Council as the “go-to” for DEI knowledge transfer
- Linkages will be formed with under-represented communities
- A DEI educational program will be launched to foster safe and inclusive workplaces
- Sector stakeholder participation in an open forum for diversity groups and employers
- Evaluation of DEI successes and lessons learned will inform evolving DEI initiatives
- Workers from under-represented groups will feel more welcome and supported in their workplaces and communities



## Technology

**Strategic Priority: Assess and adapt Council's use of technology to best support the changing needs of employers, career seekers and other stakeholders**

### Objectives:

- Increase Council's web capacity and accessibility to improve user experience
- Evaluate, and continue to modify, technologies used for training and for access to resources

### Outcome:

- Opportunities will be identified to leverage technology solutions in support of human resource management and planning (eg. FitFirst)



# Governance

## **Strategic Priority: Enhance Council's effectiveness**

### **Objectives:**

- Evaluate each program and project, and make changes based on evaluation results
- Ensure sector-wide stakeholder involvement through a DEI lens

## **Strategic Priority: Enhance Council's efficiency**

### **Objectives:**

- Use appropriate technologies
- Enhance collaboration with Association of Industry Sector Councils and other organizations, exploring opportunities for synergy

## **Strategic Priority: Ensure Council's sustainability**

### **Objectives:**

- Pursue sustainable funding
- Develop and implement a succession planning process for Board and staff
- Develop and implement a plan to ensure ongoing Board development

### **Outcomes:**

- Continued demonstration of fiscal and fiduciary responsibility
- Innovative approaches
- Effective and accountable operations management

# Operational Team

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Janet Everest

## ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

Catherine Martin

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

Joanne Jones

## PROJECT COORDINATORS

Millie Colbourne

Morah MacEachern

Debbie Stuart

## LABOUR MARKET ANALYST

Magesh Sivaparam

# Acknowledgements

The COVID pandemic made it impossible to do our usual in-person stakeholder engagement sessions in developing this strategic plan. However, our ongoing project advisory groups, needs assessments and stakeholder feedback, in combination with our two Board stakeholder sessions, informed this evidence-based strategic plan.

The Council extends appreciation to Barefoot Facilitation Inc. for guiding our strategic planning sessions and Ruth Jeppesen, Communications Specialist, for her insight and clarity in pulling it all together.

# Contact



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