



# WIDENING OUR DOORWAYS

An 8-Point Plan to Reshape and Renew Learning at NIC

NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE



North Island College is honoured to acknowledge the traditional territories of the combined 35 Nations of the Nuuchahnulth, Kwakwaka'wakw and Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional and unceded territories the College's campuses are situated.



# RESHAPING & RENEWING LEARNING AT NIC

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North Island College experienced extraordinary obstacles during the 2020/21 academic year due to the impacts of COVID-19. The College underwent a compression of programming and a massive shift in course delivery from a primarily face-to-face format to digital and blended learning.

Despite the challenges, 2020/21 will be remembered for how we delivered on another successful year. This success was predicated on the dedication and efforts of college employees, who prioritized student learning and support in a turbulent time and a community of learners who were flexible and determined to succeed.

COVID-19 has transformed and impacted post-secondary education for years to come. At NIC the pandemic has further focused our attention on delivering high-quality, responsive and student-centred learning. Our collective vision, outlined in NIC’s new strategic plan, *BUILD 2026* is “to deliver BC’s best individualized education and training experience by 2026”.<sup>1</sup>

**Widening Our Doorways (WOD) 2026** reframes the original 10-point framework published in the fall of 2020 by NIC’s former Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer and now President, Dr. Lisa Domae.

This renewed eight-point academic plan incorporates many of the themes of the original plan and incorporates *BUILD 2026*’s architecture, with a focus on achieving measurable goals and outcomes in the next five years.

The eight-point framework centres on “forward-thinking, collaborative and consultative programs that are centred on widening NIC’s approaches to relevant, responsive and accessible learning.”<sup>2</sup>

The following pages include a synopsis of each of the eight points. Each point references *BUILD 2026*, summarizes **Reset** initiatives started or completed during the 2020/21 academic year and lists **Reshape and Renewal** goals for 2021 to 2026.



Tony Bellavia  
Vice President, Academic



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# PEOPLE

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“The power of NIC lies in the strength, commitment and diversity of our people and workplaces.” (*BUILD 2026*).

NIC must strive to support employees and students to feel safe while on campus by recognizing the peaks and valleys of COVID-19 outbreaks will continue in Canada until at least January 2022.<sup>3</sup>

## POINT #1. Safe and Healthy Place-Making

### Reset

During the 2020/21 academic year, several reset initiatives were launched to support the creation of a safe and healthy place-making campus environment, including:

- ◇ Safety plans have been completed for all in-person programs and instructional spaces for the fall term;
- ◇ Certain learning in uncertain times. NIC was the first BC public post-secondary to determine how each program and course would be run for both fall and winter terms; and
- ◇ NIC completed required in-person instruction that was paused due to COVID-19, demonstrating our ability to offer face-to-face learning during the pandemic.

### Reshape and Renewal

At NIC creating, executing and communicating safe working and learning plans is a core responsibility of the College. This process will support the College in earning the trust of students, employees and the public and ensure that NIC places value in the safety of all.

## OUTCOMES 2021-2026

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MEASURABLE(S)	CURRENT STATE	YEAR 5 TARGET(S)	INITIATIVE(S)
1.1 Develop processes that strengthen the ability of program areas to deliver instruction during on-campus disruption	Develop process	Implement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Keep students safe and on track by developing and communicating safe learning strategies, inclusive of ability to catch-up remotely.</li><li>b. Create and communicate safe, effective, meaningful and welcoming learning environments where people want to be.</li></ul>

# FOUNDATION

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The enhancement of NIC's student learning experiences via its campuses and centres is the foundation for the delivery of NIC's education and training programs.

## **POINT #2. Enhancing Student Learning Experiences**

### **Reset**

During the 2020/21 academic year, several reset initiatives were launched with a focus on enhancing student learning experiences, including:

- ◆ Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTLI) prioritization on supporting faculty with digital teaching and learning;
- ◆ Acquisition of institutional licenses for BlueJeans (web conferencing), Kaltura (video storage and streaming) & Blue (student feedback);
- ◆ Further development of Teach Anywhere (for instructors) and Learn Anywhere (for students) websites;
- ◆ CTLI staff increase of 1.0 FTE. Educational Technologies group (IT) aligned with CTLI;
- ◆ Creation of campus-based video kits to allow the recording of lectures, seminars, demonstrations and learning activities;
- ◆ Student computer labs at each campus; and
- ◆ Evaluate future suitability of Blackboard Learn (learning management system).

### **Reshape and Renewal**

While NIC is excited to return to face-to-face instruction, the College recognizes that it should enhance its programming with flexible learning delivery modes (e.g. digital, HyFlex and blended) to increase access to learning experiences while establishing optimal enrolments at each campus.

The College will also develop a Teaching and Learning Strategy with a focus on exceptional teaching and learning experiences.

## OUTCOMES 2021-2026

MEASURABLE(S)	CURRENT STATE	YEAR 5 TARGET(S)	INITIATIVE(S)
2.1 Teaching and Learning strategy operational	Establish processes for building the strategy	Pedagogically sound curriculum design in all programs and areas of instruction.	<p>a. Develop a set of NIC principles and practices of teaching and learning.</p> <p>b. Develop an NIC Teaching and Learning Strategy providing direction, resources and expectations on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ enhance instructor knowledge and application of core pedagogies &amp; practices through flexible and accessible student-centred learning experiences;</li> <li>◦ enhance instructor digital literacies and learning technology competencies for design and delivery of flexible programs and courses;</li> <li>◦ increase adoption and use of open educational practices and resources (e.g., open textbooks and educational resources) throughout programs &amp; courses;</li> <li>◦ enhance instructor intercultural fluency, expand diverse teaching and learning competencies and knowledge of and integration into curricula of Indigenous ways of knowing and learning;</li> <li>◦ formalize data gathering processes for feedback on teaching and learning (course evaluations, instructor conversations, formative feedback surveys etc.);</li> <li>◦ enhance participation and related supports for program review and curriculum renewal processes to align with institutional directions and reporting requirements, accreditation, articulation, training and ongoing program and course development; and</li> <li>◦ develop structures &amp; processes for continuous quality improvement of all programming including participation in provincial Quality Assurance Process Audit.</li> </ul>
2.2 Optimum enrolment at each location	Establish campus instructional capacity and future needs	Define and implement optimum enrolment at each campus location	<p>a. Through enrolment planning, set annual domestic, Indigenous and international enrolment targets for each program or instructional area.</p>

# DOORWAYS

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Learning is a journey towards self-discovery, personal growth and socio-economic prosperity.

## **POINT #3: Multi-Modal, Flexible, Demand-Based Enrolment that Occurs Year-Round with a Focus on Building Self-Directed Skill-Based Learning & Customized Credentials**

### **Reset**

During the 2020/21 academic year, several reset initiatives were launched to develop multi-modal, flexible, demand-based enrolments that occur year-round with a focus on building self-directed skill-based learning and customized credentials, including:

- ◆ First digital spring term and intersession with record enrolment;
- ◆ Addition of 144 apprenticeship and foundation trades seats across three campuses;
- ◆ Continued NIC's intersessions and 14-week spring sessions with offerings in all program areas;
- ◆ Fostered NIC awareness and belonging in the K-12 system through dual credit and outreach initiatives; and
- ◆ Developed and delivered several micro-credential programs.

### **Reshape and Renewal**

The when and how of education will change in response to student demand. "Students are not confined to what post-secondary has traditionally offered or how it has been offered."<sup>4</sup> Learners are instead choosing non-term-based models of instruction and credit. To meet this demand, programming must be accessible to those who want it, when they want it.<sup>5</sup> Customizable, personalized learning that recognizes industry-based learning was already trending but will accelerate.<sup>6</sup> NIC can meet the demand for re-skilling and up-skilling by developing new shorter programs and by providing multiple exit points in existing longer programs.

## OUTCOMES 2021-2026

MEASURABLE(S)	CURRENT STATE	YEAR 5 TARGET(S)	INITIATIVE(S)
3.1 % of FTEs in access courses and initiatives	40% (2019/20)	Increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase opportunities for students to be directly admitted into their first-choice program.</li> <li>b. Evaluate entry and admission requirements and create modules of learning to support entry into programs.</li> <li>c. Reshape delivery of upgrading programs, including review of admission requirements/access goals and community requests and needs.</li> <li>d. Develop program access opportunities that include ABE, e.g. upgrading, pathways, micro-credentials and prior learning assessments.</li> </ul>
3.2 % of courses with multiple modes of delivery	27% (2019/20)	Increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review and change Mature Student policy, including definition of adult.</li> </ul>
3.3 % of courses with more than one entry point per year	9% (2019/20)	Increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Create multiple entry points for each program, e.g. continuous intake and entry, monthly starts etc.</li> </ul>
3.4 Digital learning strategy developed and operational	Establish strategy	Digital learning strategy implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Offer a mix of face-to-face, digital (asynchronous and synchronous) and blended programming in a variety of instructional areas.</li> </ul>
3.5 % of BC high school students who transition to NIC within two years	1.09% (2016/17)	Increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review and renew dual credit agreements with local school districts.</li> </ul>
3.6 # students participating in post-secondary pathway agreements	195 (2019/20)	Maintain or increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop new dual credit North Island partnership model based on success of South Island partnership model.</li> <li>b. Map of credentials, visualize relationship for student's benefit.</li> <li>c. Increase self-directed learning that is personalized, customizable and credentialed.</li> </ul>

# ROOMS

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Learning is NIC's reason for being. Our high-quality, relevant and responsive programming draws students from across BC and around the world. NIC has a role to play in community-based social and economic recovery and resilience.

## **Point #4. Program Response & Renewal**

### **Reset**

During the 2020/21 academic year, several reset initiatives were launched to develop program response and renewal, including:

- ◆ NIC has earned \$620K in one-time funding to offer short-term, labour market-oriented programming;
- ◆ Review and reduction of low-enrolment course sections; addition of high-enrolled course sections;
- ◆ Plan for government investment in retraining;
- ◆ NIC has developed program proposals ready for submission for funding; and
- ◆ Funding advocacy with government.

### **Reshape and Renewal**

We will examine and renew our programs based on sound pedagogy with a lens on developing new credentials to support our communities as well as under-served student groups. NIC can be a bridge linking employers, industry and students.

NIC's focus on the renewal of programs will be enhanced by increasing resources through the implementation of the international education renewal strategy. We will also seek one-time funding opportunities through government (federal, provincial, Indigenous), industry-based contracts and community-based granting agencies.

# OUTCOMES 2021-2026

MEASURABLE(S)	CURRENT STATE	YEAR 5 TARGET(S)	INITIATIVE(S)
4.1 Place-based learning strategy operational	Establish place-based learning strategy	Implement strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Define the value and purpose of face-to-face and place-based learning for each program by developing courses and programs that speak to local communities. Adjust programs and modes of delivery accordingly.</li> </ul>
4.2 # of short-term customized micro-credentials and shorter programs (2020)	29 micro-credentials, certificates and shorter programs (2020)	Maintain or increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Apply cost recovery model to customize programs and stackable credentials.</li> <li>b. Increase revenues through new instructional models and programming that yields new tuition and diversity for the students we serve, e.g. NIC’s market.</li> <li>c. Establish a strategy and build in funding model to support offering of micro-credentials.</li> <li>d. Maximize best use of resources:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ build enrolment/tuition revenue considerations into department operating budgets;</li> <li>◦ reduce program and course duplication and overlaps;</li> <li>◦ develop seat utilization benchmarks; and</li> <li>◦ consider partnerships to foster student access to programming with limited demand at NIC.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
4.3 # of programs with program renewal plans	None, work begins in 2021/22	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Offer students options for delivery mode, i.e. HyFlex to allow for simultaneous participation of remote and on-campus students.</li> <li>b. Integrate/formalize opportunities for students to engage in co-op and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) within program areas.</li> <li>c. Develop pathways and links between non-credit (continuing education and training) models of instruction and credit programming.</li> <li>d. Sunset or re-conceptualize programs with low demand or poor economic renewal.</li> </ul>

# ROOF

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Good governance puts values and principles into practices every day. It ensures our programs are accountable to the public; our communities; our students; alumni; and government.

## **POINT #5. Indigenous Led Learning and Reconciliation**

### **Reset**

During the 2020/21 academic year, several reset initiatives were launched with a focus on developing Indigenous-focused learning included:

- ◆ Digital delivery of Indigenous language education:
- ◆ Development of NIC's Indigenization Plan; and
- ◆ Response to First Nation community program needs through Indigenous Skills Training and Education Program funding.

### **Reshape and Renewal**

Meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities requires the College to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC's) Calls to Action for Education across college programs.

# OUTCOMES 2021-2026

MEASURABLE(S)	CURRENT STATE	YEAR 5 TARGET(S)	INITIATIVE(S)
5.1 # of named program areas with clear and measurable commitments to address specific TRC Calls to Action for Education	# of named program areas (social work, early childhood care and education, health care, business and Indigenous language)	All	a. Support implementation of NIC's Indigenization Plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ departments/faculties identify and act on specific commitments to reconciliation and Indigenization;</li> <li>◦ Indigenous histories, worldview, knowledge and pedagogies are relevantly, accurately and respectfully integrated;</li> <li>◦ departments address and respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action;</li> <li>◦ academic programs include content in at least one course, which explores Indigenous histories and identifies how Indigenous issues intersect with the field of study; and</li> <li>◦ continue to partner with Indigenous communities to develop accredited decolonized post-secondary programs that can be delivered in community and on campus.</li> </ul>

# ROOF

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## **POINT #6. International Education Renewal**

### **Reset**

During the 2020/21 academic year, several reset initiatives were launched with a focus on International Education Renewal, including:

- ◇ Foundation laid for development of NIC's International Education Plan;
- ◇ Deferment of registration of International students in 14 programs; and
- ◇ Sourcing of \$920,000 to support NIC's participation in International projects, \$500,000+ to support NIC study abroad and \$700,000 to support a northern consortium for study abroad.

### **Reshape and Renewal**

The College will develop an International Education Plan with a focus on providing: exceptional learning and services for visiting International students, increased opportunities for domestic students to study abroad and enhancing opportunities for employees to engage in international projects and activities.

## OUTCOMES 2021-2026

MEASURABLE(S)	CURRENT STATE	YEAR 5 TARGET(S)	INITIATIVE(S)
<p>6.1 Track and report on the breadth and depth of NIC's international activity including but not limited to international student enrolment, study abroad, digital exchanges, projects and student services, wellness and student life support</p>	<p>Establish benchmark</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>a. Support implementation of NIC's International Education Plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ with the guidance of the Indigenous Education Office, prepare the foundational steps for an Indigenized internationalization plan;</li> <li>◦ report international activity to faculties, departments and institution on a regular basis;</li> <li>◦ develop and integrate international and intercultural learning at NIC;</li> <li>◦ identify and quantify international activity that addresses environmental and social justice challenges; and</li> <li>◦ inform and support development of new and adjusted programming in a variety of credential types that supports both domestic and international student learners.</li> </ul>

# ENVIRONMENT

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The places where we live, learn, work and play matter. The incredibly biodiverse coastal mountains, ocean and forests which form the landscape we live on are key to our identities, inspire us and support the health and economies of the people.

## POINT #7. Green Learning

### Reset

During the 2020/21 academic year, several reset initiatives were launched with a focus on developing green learning, including:

- ◆ NIC has been reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Adapting to climate change through education is the next step.

### Reshape and Renewal

Post-secondary institutions face clear and growing risks from climate disruptions. There is growing student insistence that NIC advance social justice and climate change issues through action.

## OUTCOMES 2021-2026

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MEASURABLE(S)	CURRENT STATE	YEAR 5 TARGET(S)	INITIATIVE(S)
7.1 # of courses, research and applied learning initiatives that include sustainability	Establish process to track data	Implement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Compile an inventory of current courses that include climate change in their curriculum</li> <li>b. Develop courses, programs, research and applied learning opportunities that focus on sustainability</li> <li>c. Expand the number of courses that include climate change in their curriculum</li> </ul>

# COMMUNITIES

Communities come together through NIC. We anchor the region’s communities through education, training, knowledge and innovation.

## POINT #8. Socially Just Learning

### Reset

During the 2020/21 academic year, several reset initiatives were launched with a focus on developing socially just learning including:

- ◆ Creation of a Student Life Engagement and Programming plan that addresses social justice; and
- ◆ Women in Trades program offered.

### Reshape and Renewal

We are part of a social and environmental reckoning. The recovery from the impact of COVID-19 must be both socially just and green.<sup>7</sup> Racism, colonialism, gender inequality, homophobia, ableism and climate justice are inextricably linked. Diversity, equity and inclusion as well as sustainability must be embedded in the reset of our society and economy.

## OUTCOMES 2021-2026

MEASURABLE(S)	CURRENT STATE	YEAR 5 TARGET(S)	INITIATIVE(S)
8.1 # of students involved in research projects	13 students (2019/20)	Increase	a. Enhanced student opportunities to engage in research through the Centre for Applied Research, Technology and Innovation.
8.2 Completion rates of black, Indigenous and people of colour (BIPOC), women and students with accessibility needs	Establish baseline	Increase	a. Address structural racism and inequality by improving completion rates of BIPOC, women and students with accessibility needs.

## GLOSSARY

Term	Definition	Source
HyFlex	“The HyFlex course format is an instructional approach that combines face-to-face and online learning. Each class session and learning activity is offered in-person, synchronously online and asynchronously online. Students can decide how to participate. The flexibility of the HyFlex model demonstrates a commitment to student success and that flexibility can also enable institutions to maintain educational and research activities during a disruption.”	<a href="https://library.educause.edu/re-sources/2020/7/7-things-you-should-know-about-the-hyflex-course-model">https://library.educause.edu/re-sources/2020/7/7-things-you-should-know-about-the-hyflex-course-model</a>
Micro-credential	“Micro-credentials are mini-qualifications that demonstrate skills, knowledge, and/or experience in a given subject area or capability. Also known as nano degrees, micro-credentials tend to be narrower in range than traditional qualifications like diplomas or degrees. However, they can also be broad in focus rather than specific. Micro-credentials can be awarded for soft and hard skills. The <a href="#">growing interest</a> in micro-credentialing could be in part explained by the need for workplaces to remain competitive by ensuring employees are continuing to develop new capabilities. Micro-credentialing gives a way to map these career paths and quantify any types of skill.”	<a href="https://www.deakinco.com/media-centre/article/Benefits-of-micro-credentials-for-business-and-employees">https://www.deakinco.com/media-centre/article/Benefits-of-micro-credentials-for-business-and-employees</a>
Pedagogy	“The art and science of how to teach including theories and practices of how to design learning experiences and engage learners. It is not to be confused with ‘curriculum’ – which defines what is being taught.”	Dr. Liesel Knaack
Stackable credential	“Stackable credentials are composed of a sequence of credentials that stack or accumulate towards an additional credential. According to <a href="#">Ganzglass (2014)</a> they serve “to build up an individual’s qualifications and help them to move along a career pathway or up a career ladder to different and potentially higher-paying jobs.” (p.2). Stacking can refer to micro-credentials, digital credentials or badges, or already established HEI credentials such as certificates, degrees and diplomas.”	<a href="https://homonym.ca/published/alternative-credential-stacking/">https://homonym.ca/published/alternative-credential-stacking/</a>
Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)	“There is an emerging and compelling desire to put the events of the past behind us so that we can work towards a stronger and healthier future. The truth telling and reconciliation process as part of an overall holistic and comprehensive response to the Indian Residential School legacy is a sincere indication and acknowledgement of the injustices and harms experienced by Aboriginal people and the need for continued healing.”	<a href="https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf#page=346">https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf#page=346</a>

## CITATIONS

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<sup>1</sup> *BUILD 2026* is NIC's strategic plan published in September 2021.

<sup>2</sup> *Widening our Doorways (WOD)* is NIC's academic plan published in September 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Jones, R.P. (2020). Physical distancing, mask-wearing could be in place for 2-3 years even with vaccine, Tam warns. *CBC.ca*.

<sup>4</sup> Weinberg, A. (2020 08 04). 5 ways COVID-19 will change higher education forever, and how colleges can adapt. *USA Today*.

<sup>5</sup> St. Amour, M. (2020 09 16). The Moment is Primed for Asynchronous Learning. *Inside Higher Education*.

<sup>6</sup> Schrumm, A. (2020). The Future of Post-Secondary Education: On Campus, Online and On Demand. *Human Capital. RBC*.

<sup>7</sup> Currie, B. (2020). "The opportunity to build sustainability into our sector."  
People, Productivity and Place: A New Vision For Colleges. *The Independent Commission on the College of the Future - pp. 30-31*

# EDUCATION + TRAINING BUILT FOR YOU

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NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE

