



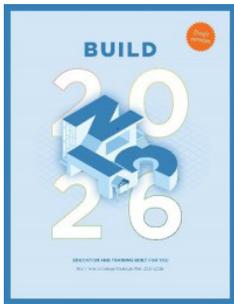
New NIC president, Lisa Domae, launches draft Strategic Plan

NIC's new president, Lisa Domae, PhD, is asking for feedback on NIC's new draft strategic plan.

Domae previously served as NIC's Executive Vice President, Academic and Chief Operating Officer and started her term as NIC President April 12.

She succeeds John Bowman, who retired in March after serving as NIC president for nearly eight years.

"I'm honoured to serve as NIC's sixth president at this crucial time for the people and communities we serve," said Domae.



"With students at the centre of our work, we can deliver education and training that creates a better quality of life for students and communities, facilitates lasting reconciliation with Indigenous people, and creates a more equitable world."

Her first priority is to hear from students and community members on BUILD 2026, a new draft strategic plan, available at engage.nic.bc.ca.

The draft plan builds on the community consultations that took place before the pandemic and the many changes taking place now.

Visitors to the site can learn more about the planned consultations and comment directly.

"We really want to hear from students, alumni and community members to understand the individual programs, services and supports they need to thrive now, during the pandemic, and beyond," said Domae.

"NIC alumni are forever members of the NIC family; their success is our success. Thank you for continually enriching NIC students' learning experiences through the co-op and internship programs and all of the other ways you remain connected to NIC. I'm looking forward to getting your feedback on our new strategic plan."

Expanded digital learning for NIC School of Business

NIC's business programs will continue with online delivery options through the next academic year.

Delivery for Fall 2021 will include a mix of face-to-face classes and digital options for students in almost all business programs.

"We're very excited to be able to continue to offer digital learning opportunities for our students, along with a return to face-to-face classes," said Ali Mayboudi, department chair, NIC School of Business. "We've heard from our students who started digitally last year that they would like to continue with that option, and many students have told us they've enjoyed the flexibility that digital learning affords them."

While the global pandemic prompted the transition to digital learning, the move to increased digital offerings has been something that has been on the school's radar for a while.

"Business learning lends itself well to an online environment and also reflects how the nature of work itself is changing," said Mayboudi. "The trend of increased remote work was starting before the pandemic forced many businesses to move in that direction. I expect we'll see a fair number of businesses re-evaluate the traditional office space. As well, more business is being conducted through online tools as businesses go global and work with others in other provinces or around the world."

The change also improves access to education and community resiliency.

"A BBA prepares students to become the next generation of community leaders," said Mayboudi. "Enabling students to learn through a delivery method that works for them and without having to leave their home communities is a huge step forward."

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello to all our NIC School of Business students, alumni and supporters in the community.

As we settle into spring, we are also marking several new changes at NIC and in the School of Business.

This month we welcomed our new president, Lisa Domae. Lisa has worked at NIC since 2000, most recently as vice president, academic and COO and has launched a draft strategic plan for feedback.

We also announced plans for program delivery for Fall 2021 and Winter 2022. For the School of Business, that means a blend of digital and face-to-face delivery to provide maximum flexibility and learning opportunities for our students.

The NIC School of Business was proud to sponsor once again the #YouRock Youth Award for both the Comox Valley and Campbell River and District Chambers of Commerce annual awards. While we couldn't celebrate in person this year, it was still inspiring to see the incredible work of the young nominees in our communities. We are honoured to be able to recognize their hard work.

As we finish our winter term and head into summer, many of our students are heading into co-op and internship placements. I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support of their education. We could not do the work we do without your support.

Thank you for taking the time to read our spring newsletter. If you have a story you'd like to share, please reach out to me at ali.mayboudi@nic.bc.ca or connect with me on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ali-mayboudi).

Sincerely,

Ali Mayboudi, Chair,
NIC School of Business

NIC School of Business is honoured to acknowledge the traditional territories of the combined 35 First Nations of the Nuu-chah-nulth, Kwakwaka'wakw and Coast Salish traditions, on whose traditional and unceded territories the college's campuses are situated.

Alumni Spotlight: business degree gives alumna a new career and lifelong connections

NIC alumna Andrea Smith says her experience at NIC didn't just change her career – it changed her entire life.

Smith started the business program in 2009 as a mature student. She was looking to move from a job to a career, which would also support her family.

NIC was a great option because Smith didn't want to uproot her family to move somewhere else. She was able to fulfill her studies while still being close to home.

"I was 33 years old with a family and a home here, so it wasn't like I could pick up my life and go to Victoria for four years," said Smith. "NIC offered everything here, and the cost was significantly cheaper as well."

The structure of the BBA program also helped her transition to school because the laddering of the credentials made it less intimidating, said Smith.

"I wasn't starting a degree; I was going in to start the program, then the certificate built to the diploma, and the diploma built to the degree,"



said Smith. "It was really good to be able to have those stepping stones because I didn't go in saying I'm getting my four-year degree; I went in going this will give me hireable skills."

While finishing her final semester at NIC, Smith began her career in public practice as a part-time accounting clerk doing bookkeeping, reconciling clients' financial records, and preparing Notice to Reader files at Deborah A. Ewart Inc. in Campbell River.

Over the years, her success led to secure full-time position at the public accounting firm of Deborah A. Ewart Inc. In January 2019, Smith and Ewart formed a partnership and rebranded the firm as Pier CPA Group Inc.

Having found such success from her time at NIC, Smith is committed to paying that forward to the next generation of students through offering co-op and work experience opportunities.

"The support I received through NIC, both in class and through work experience, was invaluable to developing my skills and preparing me to go out into the workforce. I think it's great that I can help other students do the same," noted Smith.

Smith says she left NIC, not just with the hireable skills she was looking for, but with lifelong connections to her fellow students, faculty and the broader business community.

"I still keep in touch with several close friends that I met during college. We still support each other," said Smith. "NIC has given me lifelong friendships, as well as a lifelong career."

NIC expanding international projects & partnerships

NIC is expanding its work on international engagement and increasing support for students who want to go global with their learning.

NIC's new manager of international projects, partnerships and global education, Romana Pasca, joined the college in January with a focus on helping students gain international experiences in a new, changing landscape.

"International experiences are incredibly important for post-secondary students as a way to broaden their education, gain life skills and experience other cultures," said Mark Herringer, executive director, NIC Office of Global Engagement. "The last 12 months has led to great innovations and changes in how we, and other institutions can provide those experiences to our students, now and into the future."

Adaptation has been the main driver of NIC's international work over the last year. With travel shut down, institutions from across the globe have collaborated to offer unique opportunities to students through virtual events and tours and encouraging connections between students around the world.

"We hope to be able to work on some very interesting virtual events with our partner institutions to provide students with international experiences from home," said Pasca. "The flexibility and international connections available through virtual events has been a great opportunity that we hadn't explored before. There is amazing potential there that we hope to continue to tap into in the future."

There has also been a lot of work focused on preparing students for study abroad and exchange opportunities, once travel resumes. Increased federal financial support for the 2021/2022 year for study abroad will further increase access for NIC students.

"It's going to be a very exciting, busy year for us," said Pasca. "We're thrilled to be able to offer more opportunities for our students."

NIC Student Hope Campaign needs help to reach goal

The NIC Foundation needs the public's help to reach its \$50,000 goal for the COVID-19 Student Hope Campaign.

The campaign, which was started to help students reduce the financial barriers caused by the pandemic and give them hope for a brighter future, is only \$10,000 away from the finish line.

"We want to support 50 students with a \$1,000 bursary each to help pay for college so they can reach their educational, career and life goals," said Randall Heidt, Executive Director of the NIC Foundation. "COVID-19 has been difficult for everyone, but it has been especially challenging for some students who were unable to work or save for their education because of the pandemic."

One of the students featured in the campaign is Bachelor of Business Administration - Accounting student Derrick Barrie, who was a recipient of a foundation bursary.

"It's completely life changing," said Barrie. "The bursary I got paid for my whole fall tuition this year. It was an enormous financial relief."

"It's essentially like they're investing in me and I take that as a huge honour. Someone is willing to put their money towards me progressing in life and I can't think of a better compliment than that. It's hard to put into words how grateful I am for that. It's changed this year for me tremendously."

Every year the NIC Foundation helps about 500 local students, but up to 200 eligible students in need do not receive assistance due to lack of available funds. That number is rising because of COVID-19.

"In addition to the tragic loss of lives and the immediate financial strain the pandemic has caused, there is also a potential long-term impact to the economy," Heidt said. "Our communities cannot afford a gap in an educated and skilled workforce that COVID-19 threatens to create."

To learn more about the Student Hope Campaign and watch Derrick's video, visit <https://foundation.nic.bc.ca/what-can-i-do/covid-19-student-hope-campaign>.

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