

**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**2021/24**  
EMPOWERING NATION BUILDING



**NEW RELATIONSHIP TRUST**  
Empowering First Nations in British Columbia



# Contents

---

Executive Summary .....	4
Strategy: At a Glance .....	5
About NRT .....	6
Strategy Mandate .....	9
Pillars of our Success .....	10
Strategic Challenges .....	11
Strategic Goals (2021-2024) .....	13
Budget Forecast .....	18



Two years after the unanimous passage of the *Declaration Act* in 2019—which made BC the first jurisdiction in Canada to pass legislation relating to the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*—the BC government released a draft action plan laying out the overarching goals and specific measures the government will take towards recognizing Indigenous self-determination and inherent rights.

In response to these announcements, the NRT has taken an active role in adapting its own programs to ensure NRT’s approach and funding respects and honours each community’s unique structure, culture, agency and journey to achieve their own version of Nation building.

In developing this Strategic Plan, the NRT engaged with a number of First Nation leaders and communities to explore their priorities in the context of this new emerging relationship with the BC government and how NRT can contribute to Nation building activities in this area.

Their feedback has led the NRT board of directors to revitalize the notion that Nation building is the foundation underlying the legislated purposes of the NRT, ultimately “enhancing First Nation governance, leadership and institutional and human resources capacity to address social, cultural and economic needs and priorities.”

The 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, *Empowering Nation Building*, describes how we will allocate strategic resources to enhance the NRT as a relevant and responsive partner for First Nations, centering each community’s vision of their own future to support their journey towards Nation building.

## VISION

Self-determined, self sustaining, First Nations with effective governments and healthy empowered citizens.

## MISSION

NRT invests in capacity development and transformation of First Nations governments and their citizens.

## OUR VALUES

- Relevant
- Responsive
- Innovative
- Excellence

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- Strengthen Self-determination & Nationhood
- Improve Economic Development Opportunities
- Sustainable & Responsive Organization

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES



## The New Relationship Trust (NRT) is the only legislated Indigenous economic trust in the Province of BC.

The NRT was established in 2006 as an outcome of the Transformative Change Accord Agreement (Accord) signed on November 25th, 2005 between the Leadership Council representing the First Nations in BC, the Government of BC, and the Government of Canada. The Accord acknowledged the commitment to strengthen relationships on a government-to-government basis, the importance of First Nations' governance in supporting healthy communities, and the need to streamline efforts to close capacity and socio-economic gaps in First Nation communities. The Parties also recognized that new resources would be required, and that transformative change would require different funding approaches.

In response to the Accord, the NRT was established as an independent, politically neutral not-for-profit corporation by the Province of British Columbia on March 23, 2006 through enactment of the *New Relationship Act, Bill 11 – 2006*. The Province subsequently transferred \$100 million under the *Act* to NRT to support the achievement of the purposes of the *Act*, which includes assisting First Nations in building their capacity towards self-determination and Nationhood within their own context. NRT meets the purposes of the *Act* by funding First Nations activities that enhance the Nations' governance, leadership, and institutional and human resources capacity to address social, cultural and economic needs and priorities.

The NRT established a \$100 million economic investment fund for the benefit of First Nations. The creation of the fund does not make the NRT a legal trust for the benefit of First Nations, nor is NRT a Trustee for First Nations in BC. Rather, the NRT holds the fund as principals, and income generated from the fund is used to deliver annual funding programs to First Nations as well as to pay for the annual operating costs of the NRT.

Since its inception in 2006, the NRT fund has distributed more than \$71.5M in capacity funding to First Nations and Indigenous learners across BC. As of August 31, 2021, the NRT fund had a balance of \$98.4M.

As part of its accountability and transparency commitment, the NRT engages in an annual process to direct a rolling three-year strategic plan. This process includes incorporating feedback from triennial regional engagement sessions held with First Nations. These were hosted in years 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2018. In addition, the NRT solicits and considers continuous input and feedback from First Nations and strategic partners in refining and adapting the strategic direction to meet the needs and priorities of First Nations in the contemporary context. Informed by feedback from clients and strategic planning sessions held by staff and the board of directors, NRT's Strategic Plan prioritizes the organization's activities and objectives for the next three years.

Based on all of the above, the NRT strategic plan has narrowed its focus on the following:

### 2021-24

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTION:

- ◆ Supporting First Nations in reclaiming and rebuilding **SELF-DETERMINATION AND NATIONHOOD**
- ◆ Regenerating First Nation **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** and resiliency
- ◆ Ensuring the NRT is a **SUSTAINABLE** and **RESPONSIVE** organization



## Strategy **Mandate**

---

**SECTION 17** of the *NRT Act* establishes the legislative purposes of the NRT fund as follows.

The purpose of the New Relationship Account is to provide money to assist First Nations to build their own capacity to participate in the processes and activities envisioned by, and that evolve out of, the new relationship by enhancing First Nation governance, leadership and institutional and human resources capacity to address social, cultural and economic needs and priorities, including, without limitation, for the purposes of:

- ▶ enhancing First Nation governments' capacity to negotiate, with the government, agreements for shared decision-making, land use planning, land and resource management and revenue and benefit sharing,

---

- ▶ enhancing First Nation capacity to engage in comprehensive community planning and land and resource planning,

---

- ▶ enhancing First Nation governance-related infrastructure capacity, including, without limitation, establishing or improving capacity for
  - electronic communications within and among First Nations and with other persons,
  - accumulating and compiling information, and
  - managing information collection and retrieval systems,

---

- ▶ enhancing First Nations' knowledge and skills to facilitate their ability to take advantage of a range of
  - economic opportunities, including, without limitation, economic opportunities with respect to lands and resources, and
  - social and cultural opportunities,

---

- ▶ enhancing First Nation capacity to give effect to the processes by which agreements, decisions and plans referred to in this subsection can be implemented, and

---

- ▶ providing funding for any other purpose that the directors may determine is appropriate to assist First Nations to build capacity to do any of the following in an effective and cost efficient manner
  - foster and facilitate consultation with the government;
  - engage directly or indirectly with the government in consultations and other interactions,
  - work together with the government under mutually agreed arrangements, in a way that assists First Nations to increase their ability to draw on expert advice or services from within First Nations in and for these matters.

## Strategic Pillars of our Success



### OUR VISION

Self-determined, self-sustaining First Nations with effective governments and healthy empowered citizens.



### OUR MISSION

NRT invests in capacity development and transformation of First Nations governments and their citizens.



### OUR VALUES

#### RELEVANCE

NRT will establish funding programs and tools that are most relevant to the unique needs and priorities of First Nations.

#### INNOVATION

NRT will continuously seek to improve or replace funding processes, guidelines and programs that result in delivering the best funding platform for First Nations.

#### EXCELLENCE

NRT will instill Indigenous values, professionalism and integrity in becoming a regional hub of excellence for supporting First Nation ambitions for Nationhood and other funding initiatives.

#### RESPONSIVENESS

NRT will have keen awareness on the evolving First Nations governance and socio-economic landscape, and will adapt and align its funding guidelines and programs as appropriate.

## Strategic Challenges



#### ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL:

the NRT investment fund needs growth to support the expansive needs of First Nations in perpetuity on their path to reclaim their self-determination and Nationhood.



#### ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS NEED UPDATING:

NRT needs to develop and enhance information technology systems to unlock further value of NRT capabilities.



#### NEXT GENERATION PROGRAM DELIVERY IS NEEDED:

Automation and innovation is needed to ensure NRT delivers the right programs and funding to accommodate the evolving, contemporary needs and priorities of First Nations in BC.



## Strengthening first nation self-determination and nationhood

**PRIORITY** Programming Access and Innovation

Goal	Metric
Deliver a clear and expansive Nationhood capacity-building funding program.	New Nationhood funding guidelines and funding platform are implemented.
Support First Nation initiatives that foster sustainable Nationhood solutions.	At least 20 First Nation projects linked to Nationhood initiatives are funded each year.
Deliver First Nation funding initiatives that ensure Elders, Youth, and language projects have opportunities for support and capacity building.	At least 20 Youth, Elder and language projects are funded each year.
Establish collaborative and strategic partnerships to increase third-party funding programs, both internally and externally, that support Nationhood initiatives.	At least one strategic funding partnership is established annually for the delivery of programming linked to self-determination and Nationhood initiatives.

## Improve First Nation Economic Development

**PRIORITY** Programming Access and Innovation

Goal	Metric
Enhance the ability of First Nation community-based businesses to access funding to improve their sustainability and resiliency.	At least five annual funding opportunities are established and delivered to Aboriginal Financial Institutions in BC to support viable community-based business projects.
Enhance the ability of Indigenous entrepreneurs in BC to access funding at various stages of their business development.	New and innovative criteria and funding streams are established and implemented, accessible to Indigenous entrepreneurs through the network of the Aboriginal Financial Institutions in BC.
Support Indigenous grassroots initiatives that mobilize Indigenous knowledge and strengthen systems change and economic reconciliation in BC.	At least one strategic partnership that promotes an innovative approach for moving economic reconciliation forward within First Nation communities in BC is supported.

## Ensuring NRT is a Sustainable and Responsive Organization

**PRIORITY** Programming Access and Innovation

Goal	Metric
Establish and implement a user-friendly, automated, online funding application platform with intuitive, simple to follow guidelines and processes for First Nation applicants.	New online funding application platform and process is implemented.

**PRIORITY** Strong Governance

Goal	Metric
Modernize the NRT Corporate manual.	An NRT Governing Bylaw document is developed, implemented and published.
Strengthen and protect corporate knowledge and best practices.	Organizational policies, records management, and board and committee procedures are updated or developed and implemented.
Manage organizational sustainability through internal capacity building.	A new organizational structure aligned with the organization's new strategic direction is implemented.

**PRIORITY** Sustainable Financial Management

Goal	Metric
Optimize a strategic and tactical investment approach that ensures the NRT investment fund can be managed in perpetuity.	A new strategic and tactical investment policy aligned with the long-term objective of the NRT is approved.
Maintain effective and prudent financial management systems each year.	An unqualified audit is achieved each year and the administrative budget represents no more than 1.75% of the NRT investment fund.
Demonstrate effective administration and delivery of third-party funding programs.	At least one third-party funding program that achieves all expected reporting outcomes within NRT's control is delivered.

**PRIORITY** Excellence in Stakeholder Relations

Goal	Metric
Foster a culture of continuous collaboration with First Nations, First Nation leadership and strategic partners that enhances feedback and innovative ideas to support Nation building.	Collaborate with at least 30 First Nations and strategic partners each year on challenges, needs, priorities, and ideas to develop new ways of supporting First Nations in BC.
Optimize social media to enhance the reputation, awareness, and presence of NRT across BC and Canada.	A social media strategy is developed and implemented.
Actively engage and foster strategic collaborations and partnerships that bring together symbiotic and reciprocal capabilities of organizations that can be linked to Nation building.	Achieve at least one strategic relationship per year that enables NRT to leverage an external organization's capabilities in Nation building.

**PRIORITY** Operational Innovation and Improvement

Goal	Metric
Develop and implement a customer relationship management system (CRM) that empowers new ways of supporting First Nations	New CRM system is implemented and integrated with the online application system.
Launch a streamlined, modern and responsive website that empowers a dynamic and positive client experience.	A next generation website is developed and launched.
Create interactive systems that provide First Nations with access to a repository of resources to support their Nation-building initiatives.	A First Nation online document and resource repository for Nation building is developed and launched.



## Budget Forecast

The budget is approved annually by the NRT board of directors. The financial budget below is for information and projection purposes and excludes funding programs that NRT is delivering on behalf of the Province of BC or Canada.

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
<b>FIRST NATION FUNDING INITIATIVES</b>			
Nation-Building	\$ 2,050,000	\$ 2,700,000	\$ 3,300,000
Clean Energy	2,800,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
Economic Development	500,000	600,000	700,000
Education	800,000	800,000	800,000
Youth & Elders	400,000	400,000	400,000
Language & Culture	100,000	100,000	100,000
<b>TOTAL GRANTS FUNDED</b>	<b>\$ 6,650,000</b>	<b>\$ 9,600,000</b>	<b>\$ 10,300,000</b>
Investment Management Fees	464,000	475,000	490,000
Total Administration Costs	1,829,000	2,300,000	2,500,000
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 8,943,000</b>	<b>\$ 12,375,000</b>	<b>\$ 13,290,000</b>



**NEW RELATIONSHIP TRUST**  
Empowering First Nations in British Columbia