

Building on the Strength of a Network:
LinkBC 2 Year Strategic Plan

2012-2014

According to an Independent Review (2011), “LinkBC plays an important role ... connecting academic institutions with one another, connecting students with industry, and connecting students with academic institutions.” This is our plan to build on past success – to strengthen these points of connection and ensure our network is contributing to a smarter, more competitive provincial tourism industry.



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Executive Summary

It's a time of change for BC's tourism industry – and provincial organizations are working to envision a positive post-Olympic future for our industry.

In this spirit, LinkBC: the tourism & hospitality education network is sharing this strategic plan, developed to align with:

- ✓ *Gaining the Edge: A Five Year for Strategy for Tourism in BC* (Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation)
- ✓ *BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy* (go2)
- ✓ *Where Should the BC Tourism Learning System be Going?* (BC Tourism Learning System Task Force)
- ✓ *Canada's Federal Tourism Strategy: Welcoming the World* (Canadian Tourism Commission)

The plan also takes into account an independent review conducted by Grant Thornton, with support from Tourism BC's research division. The report had positive feedback about many of LinkBC's strategic priorities but cautioned that better stakeholder engagement and reporting out, as well as strategic planning, would contribute to further success and sustainability.

To this end, LinkBC is now entering a biannual planning phase, with plans and accountability measures to be shared with stakeholders at least once per year.

LinkBC's revised vision is: To ensure British Columbia leads the world in Tourism and Hospitality Education.

Our mission: To strengthen British Columbia's competitive edge as a tourism destination by connecting faculty, students, and graduates of the BC Tourism Learning System to the industry and communities.

To fulfill our mission, LinkBC has established the following goals:

1. Provide *Student-Connect* programs and services.
2. Promote BC as a tourism learning destination.
3. Gather and share tourism knowledge and resources.
4. Communicate with and engage stakeholders.

In order to achieve these goals, revised HR roles have been proposed for LinkBC staff, so the team can capitalize on their strengths and add capacity in certain program areas.

Measurable outcomes of the strategic plan include:

- Increased student participation in networking and career-building events.
- Increased profile for institutions in the network.
- Stronger transition to, and retention of, graduates in industry.
- Increased enrolment in programs.
- Increased competitive intelligence and information sharing between institutions, industry partners, and across these two groups.
- Increased recognition of instructors as the cornerstone of a world-class learning system.
- Increased input from a better representation of the entire LinkBC network, clearer transparency around governance and decision-making.
- Clear accountability and more tangible outcomes reporting.
- Increased participation in LinkBC activities from network partners.

The following pages explore our history, goals and deliverables in greater detail. For feedback on any component of our strategy, please email info@linkbc.ca or call 604.984.1750.

Introduction

This strategy builds on successes of the last few years, while addressing recommendations from the 2011 review conducted by Grant Thornton. It has been approved by the LinkBC advisory board and highlights key goals and policy directions for the network for the fiscal years 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 (ending March 31, 2014).

It positions LinkBC's initiatives in relation to other provincial strategies and discussion documents, including:

- Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation: *Gaining the Edge: A Five Year for Strategy for Tourism in BC 2012-2016*
- The *BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy* (initiated by go2)
- The BC Tourism Learning System Task Force: *Where Should the BC Tourism Learning System be Going?*
- Canada's Federal Tourism Strategy: *Welcoming the World*

Implementation and resource allocation is the responsibility of LinkBC staff, taking direction from the Advisory Board. For board-approved projects within the mandate but beyond the scope of core activities, funds may be solicited from participating education partners and other sources.

Note: while the term "tourism" is used throughout this document, it is meant to encompass a range of many related programs offered by LinkBC education partners—in adventure tourism, culinary arts, hospitality management, and tourism management.

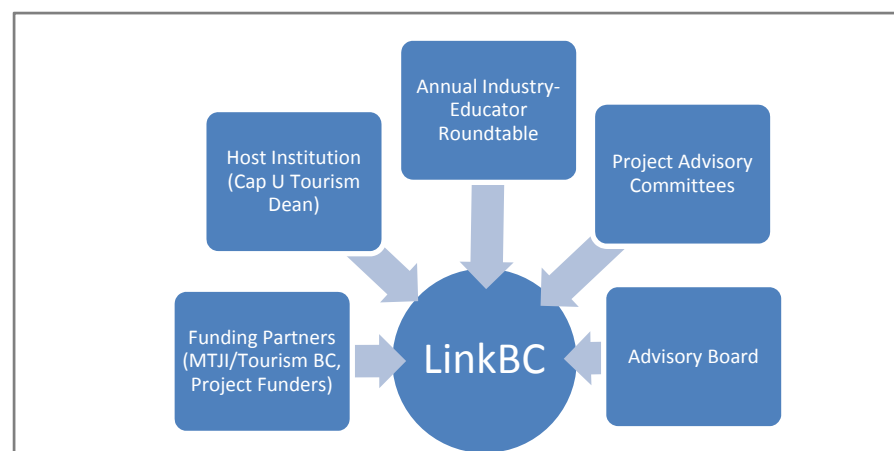
Background

In 2005, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Tourism British Columbia created the two *BC Centres of Tourism/Hospitality Leadership and Innovation*. In 2008, these organizations merged to form *LinkBC: the tourism & hospitality education network*.

In 2009, the Ministry of Advanced Education's funding commitment ended, and today the network has one core funder: Tourism British Columbia (within the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation). LinkBC is also supported financially by provincial host institution Capilano University and project fees (revenues) which are generated by LinkBC itself.

Operating Environment

From their offices at Capilano University's North Vancouver campus, LinkBC staff work with 19 colleges and universities offering tourism programs throughout the province – a group collectively known as "the tourism & hospitality education network".



As illustrated above, LinkBC staff are guided by Tourism BC (Ministry of Jobs Tourism and Innovation), the 'industry-education roundtable' information exchange, an advisory board, the dean of the provincial host institution, and project advisory committees.

Advisory Board

Tourism	Hospitality	Culinary	Adventure
Tourism BC	Host Institution (ex officio)	Student (TBD)	Industry (TBD)

Currently, LinkBC's advisory board is comprised of 4 educator seats (provincial reps from tourism, hospitality, adventure, culinary programs), and a seat for the primary funder (Tourism BC/MTJI). The dean of the host institution serves in an ex-officio capacity. This model was approved during a 2010 LinkBC governance development project, with the possibility of adding industry and student seats. LinkBC's workplan will address board development again in 2012.

A Changing Provincial Tourism HR Landscape

In 2011, a number of strategic initiatives aimed to shape the future of BC's tourism HR landscape. These included a new five-year provincial tourism strategy, the renewal of the BC tourism HR action plan, a new federal tourism strategy, the establishment of a BC Tourism Learning System Task force, and an independent review of LinkBC activities. LinkBC's strategic direction will be informed by these developments, and will continue to take these policy documents into account as their recommendations are finalized. This section outlines the connections between these plans and LinkBC's future direction.

Gaining the Edge: A Five Year Strategy for Tourism in BC

The new provincial plan for 2012-2016 states that "the human element of the tourism experience is fundamental to achieving success as a desirable place to visit."

LinkBC's education partners form a key component of the "range of industry training tools across the province" identified in the plan as critical to the delivery of top-notch experiences; and the province is committed to working "with post-secondary educators to address gaps and capitalize on opportunities in education and training programs."



Destination marketing will be directed towards markets classified as "top priority" (Ontario, Germany, California, Japan, the UK, South Korea, and Australia), "emerging" (China, India, and Mexico), and "nearby" (British Columbia, Alberta, and Washington State). These market priorities will be at the heart of LinkBC's efforts to *attract more students to BC to learn, and stay* (see p. 10 of this document).

Another provincial goal is to "assist more BC tourism businesses, local governments and communities to become market ready by providing planning tools and support" which includes research, and support for Aboriginal Tourism BC. This priority aligns well with LinkBC's efforts to *gather and share tourism knowledge and resources* (see p.11).

"Where Should the BC Tourism Learning System (TLS) be Going?" Tourism Educators Ad-Hoc Group

This volunteer group of BC tourism and hospitality educators was established at the May 2011 provincial tourism educators' meeting at Douglas College. The group agreed to work together to:

- Review the current landscape within which programs are operating.
- Review the history between BC programs, current status of the TLS, and identify issues and opportunities for joint collaboration.

- Make recommendations for the future.

In a draft green paper, now circulating, the group identified an opportunity to build on links established between the *www.studytourisminbc.ca* campaign (LinkBC) and the BC Centre for International Education's work promoting BC as a learning destination. The group suggests that sustained collaborative marketing efforts to increase BC's share of Canadian and overseas students will help ensure smaller and under-resourced programs continue to be viable. LinkBC will act on relevant recommendations from this group, anticipated in Spring, 2012.

BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy

Since the spring of 2011, go2, the BC tourism industry's workforce development organization, has been facilitating an intensive, stakeholder-guided process to develop a Tourism Labour Market Strategy for the province. The process has incorporated input from over one thousand tourism employers and employees, as well as stakeholders in government and the not-for-profit sector. This work includes two industry surveys (one for owners and senior managers; one for employees), twelve regional consultations, a scan of literature on best practices from around the world, analysis of performance measures in key areas, and other inputs.

This initiative builds upon the existing and highly successful 2003 Tourism HR Action Plan, entitled "Recruit, Retain & Train: Developing a Supernatural BC Tourism Workforce."

While the Tourism Labour Market Strategy will not be released until early 2012, initial consultations and research suggest that many of the strategy areas from the 2003 HR Action Plan remain relevant, including the broad thematic areas of recruitment, retention, and training.

The Tourism Labour Market Strategy will be aligned with the 2012-2016 BC Tourism Strategy, "Gaining the Edge," and utilizes the provincial growth target of 5% annual growth as the basis for developing tourism employment projections from 2010 to 2020, as well as related strategies. The Labour Market Strategy will include a variety of individual strategies to address the impending skills and labour shortages that are expected to intensify in the coming years. It will also provide industry and related stakeholders with valuable insights to help support the development of a world class tourism training system, and to ensure that tourism operators implement HR best practices that support their individual business plans as well as overall sector development objectives.

The Tourism Labour Market Strategy project is funded in part by the Province of British Columbia, through the Labour Market Partnerships Program (LMPP).

Canada's Federal Tourism Strategy: Welcoming the World

In October 2011, a national strategy for tourism was released, with priorities including: "fostering an adequate supply of skills and labour to enhance visitor experiences through quality service and hospitality." LinkBC's work within the education sector will continue to contribute to a provincial culture of training and continuous improvement.

In addition to considering complementary strategies, LinkBC staff and board members were guided by the findings of an independent review conducted by Grant Thornton, with support from Tourism BC Research, in 2011.

Summary of the Independent Review Results

According to the independent review “LinkBC plays an important role with regard to connecting academic institutions with one another, connecting students with industry, and connecting students with academic institutions.” Stakeholder interviews, an online questionnaire, and focus groups led to these overall findings:

- Overall support for the network model as currently structured.
- High effectiveness ratings for each program— ranging from 3.9 to 4.4 (out of 5.0).
- Strong support for “connecting industry to students/grads” as LinkBC’s most clear and quantifiable strategic priority.
- Support for “promoting BC as a learning destination” as a continued priority (contributing to global presence, awareness about programs, and offering benefits to smaller institutions).
- Support for continued role “serving as a tourism and hospitality information hub”, with a call from stakeholders to expand the initiative to cover a range of information-sharing projects in addition to the Tourism Online Resource Centre.
- Inconclusive levels of support for the “strengthening the tourism learning system” (common curriculum) with a recommendation to re-engage stakeholders before moving forward.
- Suggestions for clarifying the organization’s mandate and stronger communication with stakeholders.

What’s the BC Tourism Learning System (TLS)?

The informally-named BC Tourism Learning System (TLS) is unique in North America. It was developed by a consortium of educators in the 1990s to help build a professional tourism and hospitality workforce in British Columbia.

Colleges and universities from across BC collaborated to create a set of recognized provincial curriculum handbooks—outlining common learning outcomes at the certificate & diploma level, and common themes and topics at the degree-level.

Key industry associations are involved in validating these resources, now available in six program disciplines.

These ladder programs focus on high-quality, industry-relevant content, and support student mobility. They represent the “product” marketed to students interested in a career in tourism.

The Way Forward

Given stakeholder endorsement and support for the organization, and a renewed focus on tourism HR and education in the province, LinkBC is positioned like never before to make a significant contribution to the provincial landscape. The next section incorporates these findings into a stronger, more refined direction for the organization moving forward.

LinkBC's vision is: To ensure British Columbia leads the world in Tourism and Hospitality Education.

Our mission: To strengthen British Columbia's competitive edge as a tourism destination by connecting faculty, students, and graduates of the BC Tourism Learning System to the industry and communities.

Strategic Goals:

To achieve this mission, LinkBC capitalizes on the strength of its network towards the following goals:

1. Provide Student-Connect programs and services.

Now branded under the “Student-Connect” banner, LinkBC’s goal is to enhance the profile of tourism programs and increase the attractiveness of TLS students to employers. Examples of activities include the annual Student Case Competition, the Orange Book for Students (workshops and resources) and the annual Student-Industry Rendezvous. Students receiving these benefits become a preferred hiring choice, providing positive reinforcement for their education/career path choice.



2. Promote BC as a tourism learning destination. In order for our provincial programs to remain competitive and respond to labour market demands, our network of educational institutions must collaborate to maximize the number of high-



quality students attracted to BC tourism programs. This initiative encompasses value-added services and promotional efforts that will increase BC programs’ market share of both domestic and international students.

3. Gather and share tourism knowledge and resources.

The professionalism of BC’s tourism workforce is only as strong as the network of resources to support it. LinkBC will facilitate ongoing learning by developing, managing and promoting the uptake of *made-in-BC* learning resources, including the Tourism Online Resource Centre (TORC), and supporting professional development for instructors in the network.



4. Communicate with and engage stakeholders.

LinkBC is at the hub of a network of schools across a geographic area almost the size of Europe. In order to continue to build relationships within and between the tourism education and industry communities, LinkBC must continue to strive for outstanding communications standards in web, print, social media, and face-to-face. Continuous celebration of successes and sharing of best practices will help ensure the network remains strong for years to come.



Objectives and Outcomes

The objectives and outcomes outlined on the following pages will help us achieve these goals. An expanded workplan with tactics/action items is located in Appendix A.

1. Provide *Student-Connect* programs and services:



Objectives

- Streamline industry financial support for *Student-Connect* activities (i.e.: Case Competition, Rendezvous, and Project Change).
- Increase number of quality work experience placements for BC students.
- Increase face-to-face connections between industry and faculty, and industry and students.
- Increase virtual connections between these groups.
- Support increased engagement between communities and education partners.
- Retain contact with alumni for better tracking, and stronger industry connections.
- Continue to develop and distribute Orange Book career products. These include career planning workshops and guides for students, a best practice manual for work experience employers, and a student retention guide for educators.
- Increase the number of BC students applying for, and receiving, tourism/hospitality-specific scholarships.

Outcomes

- Increased student participation in networking and career-building events (especially from rural and lesser-resourced institutions).
- Increased number of quality work placements completed by network students.
- Increased profile for institutions in the network as a source for committed staff and future industry leaders.
- Stronger transition to, and retention in, the tourism industry for program graduates (lower attrition rates).
- Increase in networking between industry, faculty and students on regional and provincial scale.
- A range of real-world, impactful results produced by network students (Project Change) and a tangible demonstration of student leadership qualities.
- Contributions to community tourism economic development, and increased capacity in communities.
- Larger proportion of BC students receiving financial support and recognition of their excellence in the national and international tourism academic realms.



2. Promote BC as a tourism learning destination.

Objectives

- Cultivate marketing partnerships with government and industry organizations.
- Develop a well-informed recognizable umbrella brand for tourism, hospitality, culinary, and adventure education in BC.
- Encourage education partner participation and establish a lead-generation and response process.
- Support pilot initiatives that demonstrate collaboration in program delivery.
- Cultivate relationships with partners and provincial secondary school community to deliver key messages to 8-12 students at feeder schools (in collaboration with go2).
- Develop marketing and communications channels for the brand.

Outcomes

- Statistics for 2013 onwards should demonstrate increase in student inquiry traffic to individual programs (website use, web referrals, phone calls.)
- Increased product mix and overall student enrolment in BC programs (by offering multi-partner executive and experiential learning opportunities).
- Increased enrolment in tourism (and related) programs from in-province and secondary 'feeder' schools.
- Increased enrolment in BC tourism (and related) programs direct from out-of-province students.



3. Gather and share tourism knowledge and resources.

Objectives

- Continue to support the creation and promotion of made-in-BC resources as a component of the Tourism Learning System's competitive edge. These include the *Cultural Heritage Tourism Handbook* and *Transforming Communities through Tourism*.
- Enhance and promote the Tourism Online Resource Centre as a one-stop-shop for tourism resources. Build on TTRA Canada MOU to secure additional content contributors (within and outside of BC).
- Increase capacity and knowledge of Aboriginal tourism through a provincial approach to Aboriginal tourism education and training (in partnership with AtBC and education partners).
- Support, contribute to, and promote professional development events for network instructors and students. (e.g. TEC, Rural Tourism Conference)
- Bring provincial perspective and experience to individual program-strengthening activities at partner institutions.
- Celebrate and broadcast instructor excellence and achievements.

Outcomes

- Increased use of online resources by target groups – increased competitive intelligence and ease of information sharing between institutions, industry partners, and across industry and education boundaries.
- Increased entry and retention to industry of Aboriginal people.
- Increase learning and teaching about Aboriginal tourism sector (a competitive edge for BC's tourism industry and destination development).
- Increased participation in, and contributions to, province-wide PD and networking opportunities for tourism (and related instructors).
- Increased sharing of knowledge and best practice between geographic areas/institutions.
- Increased sharing of achievements and increased recognition of instructors as the cornerstone of a world-class learning system.



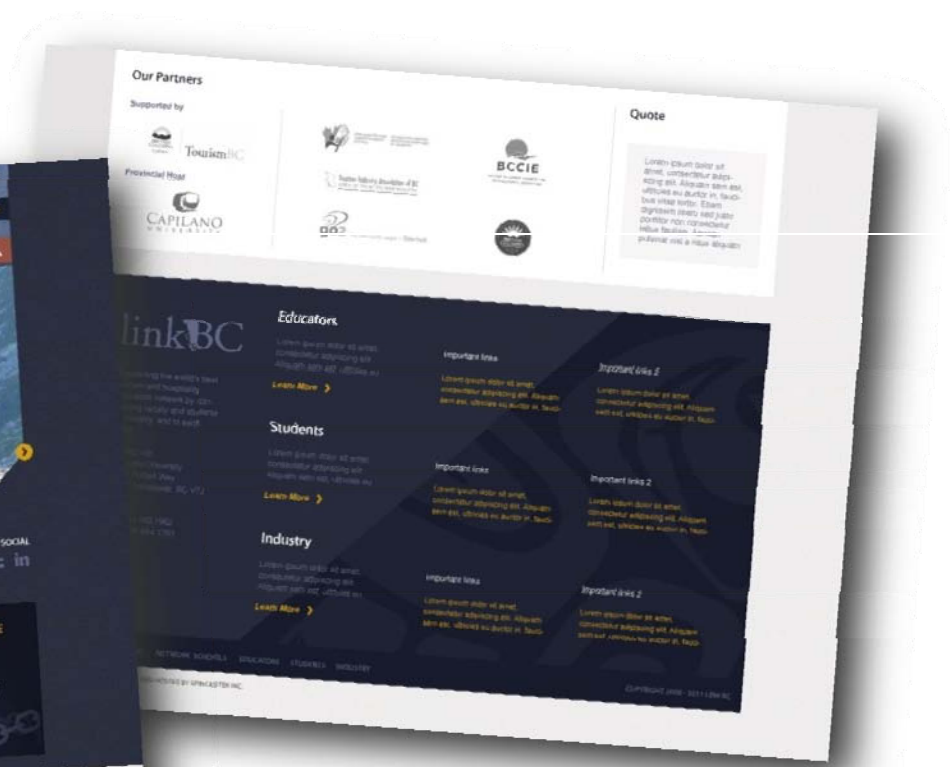
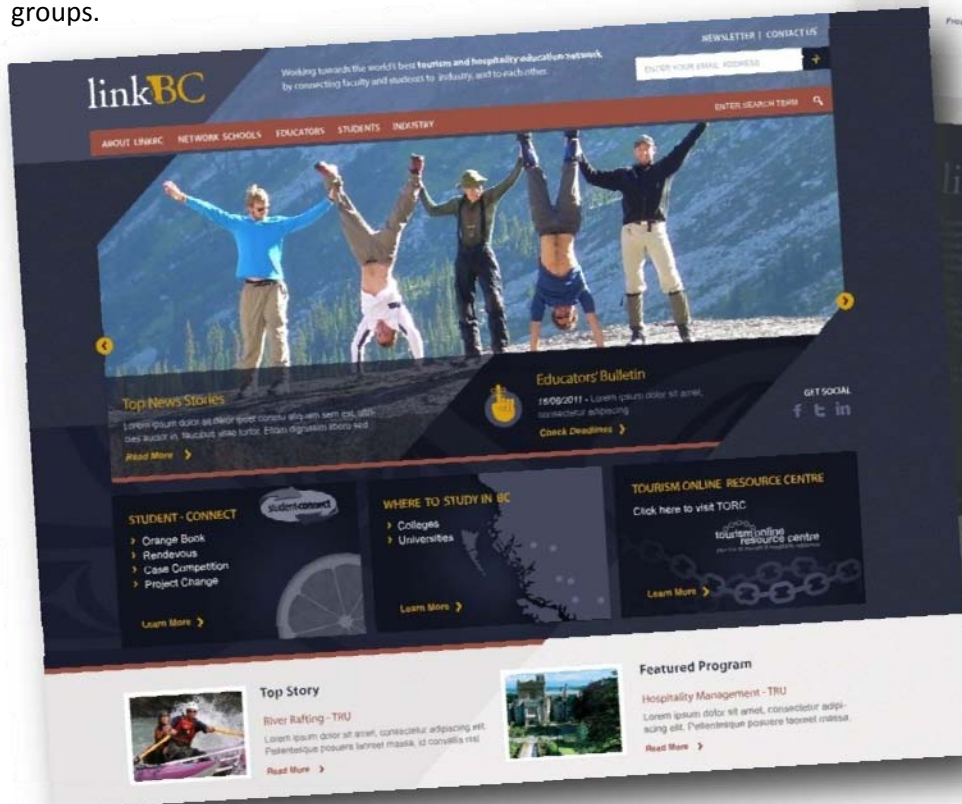
4. Communicate with and engage stakeholders.

Objectives

- Refresh LinkBC's corporate online presence (increase website user-friendliness, add instructor features, develop more ties to social media).
- Update collateral to reflect changes in this strategic plan.
- Support the board development process.
- Engage in one-on-one relationship development with educators, industry, and government partners.
- Provide feedback mechanisms to stakeholders and enhance results reporting.
- Engage in targeted outreach campaigns with key stakeholder groups.

Outcomes

- Increased use of LinkBC.ca as a portal of information about the network and resources offered.
- Increased input from a better representation of the entire LinkBC network, clearer transparency around governance and decision-making.
- Clear accountability and more tangible outcomes reporting.
- Increased participation in LinkBC activities from network partners.



HR Management Plan

Staff members benefit from donated office space and support services made available through Capilano University, the provincial host institution. They are responsible to the LinkBC Advisory Board and are employees working directly with the Dean of Tourism and Outdoor Recreation through an administrative relationship. They share progress updates with the Board and draw upon input from the Board, project working committees, and continual feedback from network schools for continued guidance.

Beginning in 2012-2013, staff roles and responsibilities will shift as succession planning takes place with the pending semi-retirement of the current General Manager. The HR capacities noted below have been realigned to this strategy and the annual work plan.

Proposed staff composition starting in July 2012 is as follows:

General Manager, full time. Responsible for:

- strategic direction for the organization
- execution of the annual work plan
- ongoing financial management of the organization
- relationship management with education, industry and government partners
- *Student-Connect* program management
- learning destination program management
- communications management (with delegation to support staff)
- events management (with delegation to support staff)
- media relations management

Resources and Information Manager, part-time. Responsible for :

- transition support and guidance for new GM
- execution of workplan area #3: gather and share tourism knowledge and resources
- management and development of expansion initiative: Tourism Online Resource Centre
- education liaison with BC tourism researchers
- projects coordinator: tourism educator resources such as curriculum guides and best practice pieces
- support for the learning destination strategy

Communications and Events Coordinator, contract position. Responsible for:

- draft website and social media content
- photography for LinkBC image bank (schools, events, etc.)
- drafting of collateral
- draft newsletter content
- draft annual reports
- events coordination
- media coordination
- office management (tracking expenses, processing paperwork, etc.)

These staff will be supported by an independent contract team comprised of a graphic designer, web developers, and student interns (volunteers and paid placements).

Collaboration with Other Organizations

LinkBC realizes many of its industry and government partners are also committed to strengthening the tourism industry workforce. We seek ways the tourism education community can effectively collaborate with these organizations, building well-defined working relationships with organizations including:

- ✓ **Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation:** primary funder for LinkBC.
- ✓ **Tourism BC (MJTI) Research Division:** exploring ways LinkBC partners can further collaborate with industry on research projects.
- ✓ **go2:** working with LinkBC to determine the best ways network education partners can contribute to objectives in the new BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy. Future points of connection with LinkBC may include foreign worker (i.e. student) policy, career awareness, “Orange Book” development and distribution, etc.
- ✓ **BC Council for International Education:** development partner for learning destination strategy.
- ✓ **Tourism Industry Association of BC:** delivery partner for the Student Case Competition, source of volunteer opportunities for students (conference volunteers now coordinated by LinkBC).
- ✓ **Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC:** holds a service agreement with LinkBC to strengthen links with communities and education partners. Supporting consistent, community-based Aboriginal tourism education & training throughout BC with *Trailblazers/Ready-to-Work (emerit)* program.

- ✓ **Canadian Tourism HR Council:** LinkBC participates on national CTHRC Educators Steering Committee and working groups, sharing information about standards-based training with the education community.
- ✓ **Travel and Tourism Research Association (Canada Chapter):** development partner for the Tourism Online Resource Centre.

Final Thoughts and Next Steps

This strategic plan has been approved by LinkBC’s advisory board and forms the basis for the next two years of operations.

We thank our funders, partners, board, and all stakeholders for their extensive feedback and support through this process.

Our team looks forward to continuing to play an important role in the BC tourism industry, training, and education landscape!

For more information about our initiatives, please read on for (abbreviated) workplan.

Appendix A: LinkBC Work Plan

1. Provide <i>Student-Connect</i> programs and services.		
Objectives	Tactics	Measurements and Outcomes
<i>Streamline financial support for Student-Connect activities.</i>	<p>Create comprehensive sponsorship package for projects and events and streamline points of contact with supporters.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Increase number of donors/total support for programs.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: \$ raised , # of students supported.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased participation in events by rural and lesser-resourced institutions.</p>
<i>Increase number of quality work experience placements for students.</i>	<p>Develop and distribute educational materials for employers illustrating quality of work experience candidates. Create a network of committed employers with “demand” for work experience students.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Promote employer resources and increase awareness of Student-Connect brand. Serve as a lead generation agent for student work placement.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of work placements offered, # of student work placements completed.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased number of qualified work placements completed by network students. Increased profile for network institutions as a source for staff/supervisors.</p>
<i>Increase face-to-face connections between industry and faculty, and industry and students – on a regional and provincial scale.</i>	<p>Create funding mechanism for instructors and students from out-of-area to attend face-to-face events. Work with schools to regionalize provincial efforts. Continue to host student-focused events (Case Competition, Student-Industry Rendezvous), and re-introduce Educator-Industry Roundtable event for instructors to engage with industry organizations and SMEs.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Manage and report out on use and results of Participation Funding. Continue to encourage and support ‘regional scale’ events. Continue to host the Educator-Industry Roundtable. Encourage reporting out and sharing of event results by industry.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of attendees per face-to-face event (industry, faculty, student), # of regional events held (and attendance at these).</p> <p>Outcome: Increased networking between industry, faculty, and students. Increased profile for institutions in the network as a source for industry HR needs.</p>

<p><i>Increase virtual connections between industry and faculty, and industry and students on a regional and provincial scale.</i></p>	<p>Continue to serve as hub for <i>Project Change</i> (provincial virtual competition). Develop and promote research and community engagement guidelines for tourism programs to work with BC communities.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Explore other virtual contests and additional opportunities for industry to challenge students. Continue to promote research guidelines for tourism programs and students to work with communities.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of participants, \$ equivalent of media, results of projects (built-in as deliverable).</p> <p>Outcome: Impacts of projects submitted by students.</p>
<p><i>Support increased engagement between communities and education partners.</i></p>	<p>Seek out, and promote, community project opportunities under the <i>Student-Connect</i> brand.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Continue to promote community research and business-development opportunities under the Student-Connect brand.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of community and SME projects undertaken by school teams, # of projects listed and promoted through Student-Connect, results of projects (changes made, etc.).</p> <p>Outcome: Projects contribute to community tourism economic development.</p>
<p><i>Retain contact with alumni for better tracking, and stronger industry connections.</i></p>	<p>Capture contact information for outgoing graduates, using class reps as a leverage point. Develop projects and events that position alumni as the bridge between students and industry.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Launch provincial virtual mentorship program developed in prior year, connecting alumni with students. Continue projects and events that position alumni as the bridge between students and industry.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of graduates from each program (create baseline and develop contacts for future survey), # of alumni participating in mentorship program, # of alumni success stories posted online.</p> <p>Outcome: Tracking of alumni retention in industry, better retention of graduates in industry (mentorship).</p>
<p><i>Continue to develop the Orange Book suite of career transition products as 'bridging' resources and best practice manuals.</i></p>	<p>Improve delivery systems of updated ORANGE BOOK for Students. Update Orange Book for EMPLOYERS resource and explore expanded delivery systems.</p> <p><i>2012-2014: Celebration of OB for Employers success stories at a 'meet the Minister event'. Create Orange Book for EDUCATORS resource and explore delivery systems.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of students completing OB workshop, # of employer OB downloads from LinkBC.ca, # of attendees at employer workshop.</p> <p>Outcome: Larger proportion of tourism employers offering high-quality work experience placements, better transition of graduates to industry, lower initial attrition rates.</p>

<p><i>Increase number of BC students applying for, and receiving, tourism/hospitality-specific scholarships.</i></p>	<p>Increase student awareness of scholarships and awards. Increase number of awards posted on LinkBC.ca (or other mechanism) – seek out new opportunities on an ongoing basis. Keep information current.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Increase reach of student communications plan relating to scholarship opportunities.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of students receiving awards, \$ value of awards received.</p> <p>Outcome: Larger proportion of students being supported through their programs, greater recognition of BC programs.</p>
<p>2. Promote BC as a tourism learning destination.</p>		
<p><i>Cultivate marketing partnerships with network institutions, and government/industry organizations.</i></p>	<p>Develop/enhance relationships with partner organizations.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Continue to develop relationships with potential partners including AVED (provincial nominee program), Canadian Trade Offices, etc.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of MOUs and/or relationships with written commitments.</p> <p>Outcome: Leveraging of resources for learning destination strategy, greater success and reach of strategy.</p>
<p><i>Develop a well-informed umbrella brand for tourism, hospitality, culinary, and adventure education in BC.</i></p>	<p>Research and create profiles for target markets in partnership with BCCIE. Review (and if necessary) rebrand the “StudyTourism” piece.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Launch brand using marketing plan developed in prior year. Create a PR/media strategy.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: (create baselines for) webstats: # of unique visitors, bounce rate, length of online stay; # of program enquiries and web referrals.</p> <p>Outcome: Statistics for 2013 onwards should demonstrate increase in traffic to individual programs (website use, web referrals, phone calls).</p>
<p><i>Encourage education partner participation and establish a lead-generation and response process.</i></p>	<p>Develop lead communications champions at each institution in the network. Create benchmarks and measurable points with institutions.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Use CTAs developed in prior year to capture potential registrants and refer them to education partners.</i></p>	
<p><i>Support pilot initiatives that demonstrate collaboration in program delivery.</i></p>	<p>Work as part of a team to develop executive-level and experiential learning opportunities in Whistler.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Monitor initial pilot results and expand program as</i></p>	<p>Monitor: (create baselines for) student enrolment (#s, demographics) and participant details.</p>

	<i>appropriate.</i>	Outcome: Increased product mix and overall student enrolment (by offering multi-partner executive and experiential learning opportunities).
<i>Cultivate relationships with partners and secondary school community to deliver key messages to grade 8-12 students at 'feeder' schools.</i>	<p>Work with go2 to clarify roles and responsibilities and specific programs for collaboration. Make a stronger connection with the VSB in a pilot relationship development effort.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: (Ideally in partnership with go2) work with WorldHost and other provincial programs with access to secondary school audiences. (Potential) work with other school districts to explore ways of attracting students to programs.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: (create baselines for) student graduation and transition numbers (# continuing to university, # continuing to a tourism program, etc.)</p> <p>Outcome: Increased enrolment in tourism (and related) programs from in-province and secondary 'feeder' schools.</p>
<i>Develop marketing and communications channels for brand.</i>	<p>Redevelop StudyTourisminBC.ca web and/or social media platform. Develop communications and marketing links with partners, including the BCCIE. Create pilot 'niche' marketing campaign based on sound research.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Coordinate events to promote tourism education as a viable, reputable, and serious choice for students Build on most successful partnerships. Expand first-year 'niche' campaign to other product sub-sectors.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: (create baselines for) # of web visits, in-person impressions and direct mail contacts vs. # of registrations.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased enrolment in tourism (and related) programs direct from out-of-province students.</p>
3. Gather and share tourism knowledge and resources.		
<i>Continue to support the development of made-in-BC educational resources as a component of Tourism Learning System competitive edge.</i>	<p>Review results/feedback from dean's committee and TLS task force regarding review of provincial curriculum handbooks and resources. Where appropriate, work with partners to facilitate the development of specific industry-led handbooks and learning resources.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Where appropriate, continue to work with education partners to develop specific industry-endorsed handbooks and resources. Pilot Best Practice series and create simple mechanism</i></p>	<p>Monitor: (create baselines for) # of programs using the handbooks, # of students in each 'core' program.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased connectivity of learning system outputs to industry needs, increased competitive edge of BC programs.</p>

	<i>(form, online platform) for instructors to share their expertise with each other.</i>	
<i>Enhance and promote the Tourism Online Resource Centre as a one-stop-shop for tourism resources.</i>	<p>Redevelop and re-launch TORC based on extensive user-feedback process. Migrate to a new platform consistent with current technology (2005 platform no longer relevant). Create marketing plan and branding strategy to increase use of TORC platform.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Increase number of content contributors from within and without BC. Continue marketing activities that increase use of site by BC educators, students, and tourism industry groups.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: Site visits, # of downloads, length of visit (online), # of content contributors, # of new postings/day.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased use of online resources by target groups – increased competitive intelligence and ease of information sharing.</p>
<i>Increase capacity and knowledge of Aboriginal tourism through a provincial approach to Aboriginal tourism education and training.</i>	<p>Renew third annual service agreement with AtBC to cover activities including pilots of Trailblazers/Ready-to-Work. Promote and develop Aboriginal Tourism curriculum and research resources.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Increase number of communities and participants benefitting from the Trailblazers/Ready-to-Work Program. Continue to promote Aboriginal tourism programs and learning resources.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: (create baselines for) Trailblazers Ready-to-Work numbers (# participating, # continuing to college/university, # exiting to industry, retention rates in industry). Track # of instructors/programs/students using handbook and delivery guidelines.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased entry and retention to industry of Aboriginal people. Increased learning/teaching about Aboriginal tourism sector (competitive edge for BC).</p>
<i>Support, contribute to, and promote Professional Development events for network instructors and students.</i>	<p>Serve as a secretariat for the Tourism Educators Conference. Continue to support education partner-produced events like the Rural Tourism Conference. Facilitate a speaker series for the network connecting speakers already travelling to BC with hosts.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Continue to serve as secretariat for conference. Continue to promote these events. Continue speaker series.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of attendees at events, # of proceedings downloaded.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased participation in large-scale PD and networking for tourism (and related) instructors.</p>
<i>Bring provincial perspective and experience to program-strengthening activities.</i>	<p>Coordinate program-strengthening workshops and participate on program advisory committees as requested by partners.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Continue to participate in these initiatives, workload</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # and type of involvements, # of resources produced, # of anticipated users.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased sharing of knowledge and</p>

	<i>permitting, and report out on progress to the network.</i>	best practice between geographic areas/institutions.
<i>Celebrate instructor excellence and achievements.</i>	<p>Capture, promote, and share, BC tourism/hospitality instructor achievements and knowledge.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Raise the profile of tourism/hospitality instructors as they become award-winners.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of postings to LinkBC.ca</p> <p>Outcome: Increased recognition of instructors as the cornerstone of a world-class learning system.</p>
4. Communicate with and engage stakeholders.		
<i>Refresh LinkBC's corporate online presence.</i>	<p>Hard launch refreshed web presence at www.linkbc.ca (developed in 2011/2012) – possibly through a celebratory event or at TEC 2012.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Update organizational collateral to match refreshed brand.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of hits, site visits, length of stay and type of use.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased use of LinkBC.ca as a portal of network information.</p>
<i>Support board development process.</i>	<p>Serve in secretariat support role for board. Support board decisions regarding industry reps and student engagement criteria. If asked, help distribute recruitment information out through the network.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Continue development of Board Manual and policies, ensure board rotation is underway, share developments with all network partners.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # of hours contributed to LinkBC (or as \$ value), range of programs represented in input process.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased input from better representation of entire network, transparency around governance and decision-making.</p>
<i>Engage in one-on-one relationship development.</i>	<p>Reach out to each network college and university through phone-arounds, in-person site visits (when travel funds and schedules permit), and encourage reciprocal web links on program pages.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Reach out to current and potential industry partners (major industry associations and individual business contacts).</i></p>	<p>Monitor: # and type of communications contacts made through the year.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased input from better representation of entire network, transparency.</p>
<i>Provide feedback mechanisms and enhance results reporting</i>	<p>Facilitate online 'LinkBC stakeholder satisfaction survey' to be benchmarked against review results. Create and post annual LinkBC report card with clear accountability measures.</p>	<p>Monitor: responses to survey (rankings) and completion rate.</p>

	<p><i>2013-2014: Report out against previous annual survey with clarity around adjustments to workplan where requested by stakeholders</i></p> <p><i>Report out against results from previous year with strong indicators for success/failure.</i></p>	<p>Outcome: Clear accountability and more tangible outcomes reporting.</p>
<p><i>Engage in targeted outreach campaigns with key stakeholder groups.</i></p>	<p>Create and mail out Fall resource packages for partners and host ‘welcome back calls’. Offer multiple opportunities for instructors to connect with LinkBC, with each other, and with key industry groups.</p> <p><i>2013-2014: Update packages based on feedback from partners. Invest in virtual conference platform so network partners can convene in larger groups.</i></p>	<p>Monitor: open rates on packages, participation in conference calls, educator attendance at industry events.</p> <p>Outcome: Increased participation from network partners.</p>