

# Investing in First Nations in British Columbia NRT Strategic Plan 2016-2019





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### **BACKGROUND**:

In 2005, The First Nations Leadership of British Columbia (BC) and the Province of BC entered into a new relationship based on respect, recognition and accommodation of Aboriginal title and rights. The following year, the New Relationship Trust (NRT) was established through the New Relationship Trust Act, which was designed to assist First Nations in British Columbia to build their capacity. Taking its authority and direction from the Act, NRT supports capacity-building in areas of priority as determined by the Board in collaboration with First Nations in BC.

### VISION:

A British Columbia where First Nations enjoy a high quality of life that includes vibrant cultures and languages, effective and independent governments, social justice, economic prosperity, and where all forms of education are valued and accessible.

### **MISSION:**

Investing in First Nations in British Columbia to assist them in building their capacity.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

We believe in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that respects and advances First Nations' decision-making, traditional teachings and laws. To achieve our Vision and Mission, the following Guiding Principles will inform our shared work:

- Supporting First Nations in their capacity development efforts as they pursue individual and communal self-sufficiency
- Engaging in effective communications and engagement with those that we serve to strengthen and inform our activities
- Ensuring fair and equitable access to our services through the creation of transparent criteria that focus on initiatives that lead to measurable change at the individual, community and Nation levels
- Increasing the investment fund through responsible management, leveraging of our assets and pursuit of additional resources while not duplicating or replacing existing government or First Nations programs

### **INTRODUCTION**

The New Relationship Trust (NRT) was created in 2006 as a response to the call for a new relationship between First Nations and the government of BC. In its inaugural year, NRT set the stage for a future strategic direction by engaging with First Nations communities around the province regarding their needs and priorities. Subsequent Regional Engagement sessions were held in 2009, 2012 and 2015.

NRT's Strategic Plan is directly based on community feedback, which has consistently established a clear mandate and strategic direction for NRT. In particular, NRT is directed to:

- Ensure the fund is available to support future generations by balancing spending with investment; and
- Support capacity building for First Nations communities in five priority areas:
  - » Governance Capacity
  - » Economic Development
  - » Language & Culture
  - » Education
  - » Youth & Elders

The 2016 - 2019 Strategic Plan builds on the successes of NRT to date, with both ongoing and new initiatives under each of the five strategic areas of priority.

Annual spending remains at \$6 million for 2016/17 and has been reduced to \$5 million per year in 2017/18 and again in 2018/19. The reduction reflects both the anticipated downturn in the market and the expressed intention of NRT's Board and stakeholders that the fund be available for as long as possible – ideally in perpetuity.

The bulk of NRT spending -- roughly 87% -- is dispensed through initiatives that directly impact communities. NRT will maintain our goal of keeping administration costs to less than 2% of our annual investment portfolio value.

NRT continues to spend income earned from investments and a portion of the principle.

### JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

On behalf of the entire team at New Relationship Trust (NRT), we are pleased to present the 2016 – 2019 Strategic Plan. This document lays out NRT's direction over the next three years: our five strategic areas of focus, key initiatives and funding support, and our projected investment and spending strategy.

NRT's strategic direction is reviewed and refined annually by the Board of Directors in an intensive, two-day planning workshop. The Board takes into consideration the needs of First Nations as expressed through the feedback we receive throughout the year, as well as ongoing input from First Nations communities and leadership and project outcomes.

In 2015, we held a series of Regional Engagement Sessions, traveling around the province to 10 communities and collecting additional input from communities by way of an online survey. Regional Engagement sessions are held every three years and the 2015 sessions garnered the highest response to date; 575 surveys in total were completed, including 115 from people who attended a session in person and the rest from those who took the time to complete surveys online. 175 of the 203 First Nations in BC were represented in the feedback provided.

Results of the 2015 Regional Engagements showed an increased awareness of NRT and most of our initiatives, as well as strong support for the overall strategic direction and five priorities. In particular, there was extremely strong support for Education and Language & Culture funding, as well as a high level of awareness about initiatives within these focus areas.

Some respondents suggested additional types of projects we could support, such as adult learning and literacy initiatives, and the NRT Board discussed and is reviewing some of the recurring suggestions. We are also considering ways we can improve on existing offerings, such as raising awareness of some of the newer or partner-administered initiatives.

In addition to gathering feedback about funding initiatives, we asked about our spending and investment strategy. This year, there was less clarity around how to spend the fund. As in previous years, only a small minority of respondents felt we should spend the entire fund in the short term. This year, however, people expressed some uncertainty about whether to spend a small amount of principal plus interest as per the current model (55%) or to spend interest only (39%), thereby making the fund last longer. This ambiguity demonstrates an emerging trend whereby as people become more familiar with our initiatives, there is an increasing desire that the fund last

in perpetuity, so that established initiatives and financial support are available for future generations.

This trend is reflected in our 2016 – 2019 spending strategy. In 2016-17, we will maintain annual spending at \$6 million as per previous years, with little change to existing initiatives. However, in anticipation of lower returns this year, and in consideration of the emerging desire to have the fund last as long as possible, we have decreased spending in the second and third years of this three year plan by \$1 million per year. Without a new injection of funds, this decrease will, of course, require reductions to some of our initiative funding. To counter the impact this will have on communities, the NRT Board has established a fundraising committee and will be looking at ways to increase the fund via leveraging and, if viable, inviting additional government contributions.

Within this plan, you'll notice a couple of new projects and initiatives under the Governance Capacity focus. We've added the Nation Councils Policy Initiative, a new project that supports policy development at the Nation Council and Tribal Council levels. Also new this year, the Economic Development Support Team, launched in partnership with Western Economic Diversification Canada, pairs Aboriginal business specialists with First Nations to assist them in exploring business opportunities within their territories.

We expect 2016 to be another busy and impactful year as we expand our offerings with these new initiatives while continuing to deliver a number of ongoing funding opportunities. For details about funding support, NRT news and updates, and if you want to share any feedback with us, we encourage you to visit our website at www. newrelationshiptrust.ca.

Finally, NRT celebrates its 10th anniversary this year and we are currently considering ways to celebrate this important milestone. You can expect to hear from us as we will be taking this opportunity to raise our profile and connect with First Nations communities throughout BC—particularly those we have not previously supported.

Hugh Braker Chair

Cliff Fregin CEO

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

NRT will continue to invest in First Nations in BC by supporting efforts in five key areas. In 2016 - 2019, NRT will support First Nations capacity-building by:

- Enhancing First Nations' governance capacity
- Fostering and advancing economic development opportunities
- Assisting First Nations in BC to protect and revive their languages and cultures
- Encouraging access to **education**
- Supporting initiatives that engage youth and Elders

### **GOVERNANCE CAPACITY**

#### "Enhancing capacity within First Nations governments"

NRT defines governance capacity as the knowledge, abilities, skills, and processes First Nations governments require in order to create successful, vibrant, independent and self-sustaining communities.

NRT's governance capacity strategy has the following components:

- Direct Support to First Nations
- Policy Development support for First Nations organizations that have a provincewide mandate
- Nation Council Policy for Tribal Councils and Nation Councils in BC
- Economic Development Advisory Support for First Nations
- Tools and Resources

### **Direct Support to First Nations**

NRT will provide direct support to First Nations and their communities for local capacity building and policy development. Preference may be given to initiatives that facilitate collaboration amongst communities where feasible, and therefore support Nation building.

Eligible projects include:

- Land and marine use planning, including traditional use studies
- Comprehensive community planning, including economic development planning
- Governance capacity development, including support for human resources, knowledge and systems required to build strong governments
- Negotiating agreements in relation to governance and business development
- Implementation of agreements with government and/or the private sector

#### **Investing in First Nations in British Columbia**

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#### **Policy Development at the Provincial Level**

NRT will support policy development work at a provincial level in order to create and disseminate policies and related initiatives that directly benefit First Nations communities throughout the province.

Policy initiatives supported may include:

- Research and business case development to support policy and legislative initiatives
- Province-wide models / principles to organize First Nations, government and industry, and to support business partnerships, negotiation and revenue and benefit sharing
- Support for organizations working at a provincial level to develop policy in areas of importance to First Nations in BC
- Support for coordinated policy work by the First Nations Leadership Council

#### **Nations Council Policy Initiative (New)**

Added in 2015/16, the Nation Councils Policy Initiative supports policy development at the Nation Council and Tribal Council levels, and promotes information and resource sharing. Funds are provided to Nation and Tribal Councils to explore policy development issues within NRT's five strategic areas of focus.

### **Economic Development Support Team (New)**

Launched in 2015/16 in partnership with Western Economic Diversification Canada, the Economic Development Support Team (EDST) initiative pairs Aboriginal business specialists with First Nations to support and advise them as they explore business opportunities within their territories. Support is tailored to the specific needs of each participating community and may include:

- Developing consultation and accommodation engagement strategies to maximize opportunities
- Creating a negotiations strategy based on community needs
- Helping implement the opportunities associated with a negotiated deal

### **GOVERNANCE CAPACITY**

### **Tools and Resources**

NRT will continue to support the development and dissemination of tools and resources that help First Nations in BC and their communities build capacity. Examples of capacity building resources may include:

- Best Practices
- Negotiating tools and templates
- Case Studies
- Specific studies and research
- Workshops and information sessions
- Skills, trades development / coordination
- BC FN Knowledge Network (web portal)

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### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### "Fostering and advancing economic development opportunities"

Healthy First Nations communities require a sustainable level of prosperity to achieve their goals and support their programs. By taking advantage of economic development opportunities – both provincially and locally – First Nations can and are beginning to prosper.

NRT's Economic Development strategy has the following focus areas:

- Entrepreneur and Community Equity Matching
- West Coast Energy Fund
- Other economic development opportunities

### **Equity Matching Initiatives**

In 2010, NRT launched the Entrepreneur Equity Matching Initiative (EEMI) to support First Nations entrepreneurs in BC by partnering with BC Aboriginal Capital Corporations (ACCs) to provide matching equity for new or expanding businesses in the province. This exciting opportunity assists entrepreneurs in obtaining financing for their businesses, as well as assisting ACCs in identifying new lending opportunities in their service areas. In 2011, NRT expanded the EEMI to extend equity matching to First Nation community business projects in BC, creating the Community Equity Matching Initiative (CEMI).

NRT will continue to offer equity matching to both business and community projects and will expand outreach efforts in partnership with ACCs to ensure potential applicants are aware of this opportunity

### West Coast Energy Fund (New)

Created in partnership between Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada – Strategic Partnerships Initiative and NRT, the West Coast Energy Fund (WCEF) is a \$5 million capital fund that is available to support Aboriginal entrepreneurial and community businesses in BC that are related to oil and gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects. It will be delivered by selected Aboriginal Capital Corporations and Aboriginal Community Futures organizations beginning in 2016/17.

### **Other Economic Initiatives**

NRT seeks public and private partnerships to support capacity building for First Nations in the economic and business development sector. In addition, NRT is researching 'access to capital' opportunities, which allow First Nations in BC to participate in viable economic opportunities.

### **LANGUAGE & CULTURE**

#### "Protecting and reviving languages and cultures"

Sixty percent of the First Nations languages in Canada are spoken in BC. With 34 First Nations languages and more than 60 dialects, BC has the most diverse array of indigenous languages in the country. However, many of these dialects are in danger of being lost. Preservation of First Nations languages and cultures builds self-identity and enhances cultural pride. Under this strategic direction, NRT has prioritized language revitalization due to the current crisis facing First Nations languages in BC.

NRT's Language and Culture strategy will support:

- Preservation and revitalization of First Nations languages
- Initiatives that promote and revive First Nations' cultural and artistic traditions

### Language

In partnership with First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC), NRT will continue to support the revitalization and preservation of First Nations languages in BC. Language initiatives may include:

- Enabling First Nations to record, archive and share their languages
- Creating language and cultural immersion environments for all ages within the community/Nation
- Developing language and culture authorities within Nations

### Culture

NRT will continue to support and promote First Nations' arts and culture through the FPCC. Types of initiatives may include:

- Apprenticeship and mentoring programs for artists and arts administrators
- Initiatives that promote First Nations arts and cultural activities

### **NEW RELATIONSHIP TRUST FOUNDATION**

In 2011, NRT created the New Relationship Trust Foundation. This strategic decision allows the Foundation to use its charitable status to attract additional support for NRT's education initiatives. In 2012, the Foundation assumed oversight of NRT's education initiatives.

The mission of the Foundation is:

*"To assist Aboriginal peoples in BC separately and collectively to meet their education goals, and to support the educational components of Aboriginal language revitalization."* 

In the short term, the Foundation is seeking to leverage donations of \$750,000 over the next three years.

The long term goal is to build an endowment fund of \$30 million over the next ten years.

To date, the Foundation has leveraged in excess of \$1,381,955 in support from new partners.

The Foundation will continue to seek donations from the private and public sectors for education support

### **EDUCATION**

#### "Encouraging access to education"

Education is a key to independence for First Nations. Assisting First Nation youth and individuals to pursue and complete secondary and post-secondary education is a high priority for NRT.

The education strategy currently has the following components:

- Support for the NRT Foundation to attract private and public contributions
- Scholarships and bursaries for post-secondary students
- Support for First Nations communities for K-12 initiatives

### **NRT Foundation**

Through the NRT Foundation, NRT will seek additional support for existing education initiatives and will issue tax receipts to companies and individuals that contribute funds.

### **NRT Scholarships and Bursaries**

NRT will continue to provide scholarships and bursaries to assist First Nations students in achieving post-secondary education and training goals. This program awards funding based on qualification criteria and the student's proposed contribution back to First Nations communities.

- Scholarships will be awarded for students pursuing undergraduate, Masters and PhD degrees.
- Bursaries will be awarded for certificate, diploma, associate degree and trades programs.

The New Relationship Trust Foundation will seek to partner with First Nations, public and private scholarship organizations in the province to reach more First Nations students.

### **Supporting K-12 Initiatives**

NRT supports initiatives that increase the First Nations high school graduation rate. In 2012, NRT created the K-12 Education Grants initiative, which provides funds to First Nations in BC to deliver K-12 projects at the community level. Eligible projects fall into three categories: English / literacy, math and science.

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### **YOUTH & ELDERS**

#### "Supporting initiatives that engage Youth and Elders"

The inclusion of youth and Elders is essential to strong, healthy First Nations. Elders hold the wisdom of past generations; youth provide the key to a healthy and vital future.

Based on feedback received from community members, we will focus support on community-based projects, activities and events for youth and Elders

### Youth

NRT will continue to support projects for youth at the community and provincial levels that:

- Strengthen youth leadership and governance
- Support youth entrepreneurship, including annual national Young Entrepreneurs Symposium (YES)
- Build capacity for youth
- Promote mentorship for youth
- Provide networking opportunities for youth

### **Elders**

NRT will continue to support projects for Elders that:

- Assist groups, communities and organizations representing First Nations Elders in BC, including the annual Elders Gathering
- Develop and deliver projects at the First Nations community level
- Benefit and build capacity for Elders

### **INVESTMENT**

NRT's investment strategy is based on feedback from First Nations leaders and community members, as well as insight and analysis from investment professionals regarding market trends and opportunities. Community feedback received at First Nations leadership meetings, NRT Regional Engagements and through online surveys has consistently stated a preference that NRT seek to maintain the fund so that future generations of First Nations people will benefit. NRT continually reviews its investment strategy in order to ensure that it both reflects current economic issues and optimizes return on investment.

### Investing

NRT's investment strategy consists of short-term and long-term investments. The short-term investment strategy preserves capital by investing in safe and liquid investments. This in turn allows for funding stability. The long-term investments are allocated according to the following range of target asset mixes:

Fund Benchmark and Asset Allocation Ranges				
Asset Type	Minimum	Benchmark	Maximum	
Equities				
Global equities (MSCI World Index)	30%	40%	55%	
Canadian equities (S&P/TSX Composite Index)	20%	30%	45%	
Fixed Income				
Canadian bonds (DEX Universe Bond Index)	15%	30%	40%	
Total Fund		100%		

### **FUND GROWTH**

A key goal of NRT's financial strategy is growing the investment fund in order to support sustainable and ongoing Nation building activities. Fund growth will be accomplished by establishing collaborative partnerships, leveraging program funds from government and other organizations, and other fundraising activities.

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### Spending

NRT's spending strategy is revised each year during the annual strategic planning session and depends on returns on investment, leveraging and fund growth, all of which differ from year-to-year. Spending levels are further balanced to support the needs of First Nations with the expressed priority of maintaining the fund for future generations.

For the past several years, NRT's spending budget has been stable at \$6 million annually, an amount comprised of interest and a small amount of principal. Given a healthy return on investment in 2015/16, we are able to maintain spending at \$6 million in 2016/17. In 2017/18 and 2018/19, spending has been reduced to \$5 million per year in anticipation of lower market returns and to address the growing desire to extend the fund's lifespan. Spending amounts will be reviewed as part of the next annual strategic planning exercise.

Strategy	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Governance Capacity	\$2,400,000	\$2,250,000	\$2,250,000
Economic Development	1,000,000	750,000	750,000
Language & Culture	1,000,000	750,000	750,000
Education	1,100,000	850,000	850,000
Youth & Elders	500,000	400,000	400,000
TOTAL	\$6,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000

NRT's 2016 - 2019 program spending strategy is as follows:

NRT's goal is to limit annual administrative costs to less than 2% of the investment portfolio.

### **Investment Governance**

In order to demonstrate transparency and accountability, NRT established a *governance framework* for the investment of funds. Components of the framework are as follows:

- An independent, professional investment advisory firm was initially engaged to develop an investment policy and strategy and to assist in the selection of investment managers. The investment advisory firm reports to NRT quarterly regarding portfolio performance and Investment Manager changes
- A custodian firm has been engaged to hold the investments and provide independent accounting of portfolio transactions

- Expertise: three professional investment managers have been selected to manage the investment portfolio. Each Investment Manager manages one of the long-term components of the investment fund: either Fixed Income, Global Equities, or Canadian Equities
- Diversification: the investments are diversified amongst companies, geographic regions, strategies, and Investment Managers
- Re-balancing: the long-term portfolio is re-balanced quarterly, if necessary, to maintain NRT's long-term target asset diversification mix

NRT will review its investment strategy in 2016 to determine if improvements can be made to the overall return on investment.

### INVESTMENT

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### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Accountability is one of NRT's guiding principles. In keeping with this principle, we perform a number of key communication tasks throughout the year that maintain a high level of accountability to all First Nations in BC and the province.

## NRT's areas of focus are the leaders and members of First Nations in BC and their communities, and the leadership of the Province of BC.

NRT will maintain a Communications Strategy that complements the Strategic Plan. The Communications Strategy will be updated annually.

### **Communication Delivery**

NRT employs a multi-faceted approach to communications to raise awareness and knowledge about NRT activities. Specifically, NRT:

- Publishes and distributes a three-year Strategic Plan
- Prepares and publishes an Annual Report containing the audited financial statements and annual performance results
- Promotes and creates awareness of opportunities for First Nations to benefit from NRT initiatives and programs
- Informs and educates First Nations and government leaders about NRT vision, mission and strategic initiatives
- Maintains a web site (www.newrelationshiptrust.ca) and uses technology to improve the overall effectiveness of NRT communications
- Partners with the First Nations Technology Council to maintain the First Nations in BC Knowledge Network (www.fnbc.info)
- Utilizes social media platforms (Facebook, YouTube and Twitter) to keep constituents informed of NRT news and activities

In addition to the above, the NRT Foundation:

- Publishes an annual recipient brochure for the NRT Scholarship and Bursary Initiative
- Maintains a website with a focus on donor opportunities

### COMMUNICATIONS

### **Feedback Gathering**

As part of its annual strategic planning activity, NRT solicits feedback from First Nations in BC regarding program and funding priorities as well as management of the investment fund. Feedback is integrated into the Strategic Plan each year and is posted to the NRT web site for public information purposes.

Specific feedback gathering strategies are as follows:

- NRT will perform a province wide engagement process every three years. Regional Engagement meetings and surveys were conducted in 2006, 2009, 2012 and 2015. The next sessions will be held in 2018
- NRT will perform focused surveys about a specific area of programming or operations as required
- NRT will use its website and social media platforms to solicit comments from NRT followers

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### **RELATIONSHIP BUILDING**

A number of NRT's guiding principles speak to the need for relationship building, both amongst First Nations and between First Nations and other agencies and governments. These principles include:

- Reflecting the intent and purpose of the New Relationship vision
- Supporting Nation building
- Not replacing or duplicating existing government or First Nations programs
- Encouraging inter-community cooperation and partnerships

Accordingly, NRT's strategy for relationship building includes the following tactics:

### Partnering

NRT will establish and maintain partnerships with First Nations, public and private organizations that share common goals and values in order to leverage funds and minimize administrative costs. NRT's current partners are:

- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC)
- First Nations Technology Council (FNTC)
- All Nations Trust Company (ANTCO)
- Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development Corporation (NEDC)
- Tale'awtxw Aboriginal Capital Corporation (TACC)
- Tribal Resource Investment Corporation (TRICORP)
- Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Interior First Nations (CFDCCIFN)
- BC Treaty Commission
- First Nations Health Authority
- Provincial Health Services Authority
- Native Fishing Association
- Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Strategic Partnerships Initiative
- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- First Nations Leadership Council:
  - » First Nations Summit (FNS)
  - » BC Association of First Nations (BC AFN)
  - » Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC)

### **Nation building**

In order to support Nation building and cooperation amongst First Nations communities in BC, NRT will:

- Where possible within the existing strategic priorities, provide incentives through support to initiatives that foster cooperation between communities
- Where practical, ensure that information and outcomes of NRT support are shared amongst Nations
- Although NRT is not an agent of the government or the First Nations Leadership Council, communication and cooperation with the Province of BC and with BC's First Nations leadership is integral to NRT's operating policies and procedures as well as to its ongoing evolution

### 2016 - 2019 PERFORMANCE TARGETS

### Short Term (1 - 3 years)

#### Governance

- Develop and deliver 3 5 regional training sessions per year
- In partnership with First Nations organizations, create and / or support the development of governance capacity tools for First Nations
- Fund up to 12 community projects per year in each of the following areas: Land Use Planning, Traditional Land Use Planning, Economic Development Planning, Negotiations and Impact Benefit Agreements
- Fund up to 5 policy development projects per year for provincially mandated BC First Nations organizations

#### Education

- Create and distribute an annual brochure that showcases NRT scholarship and bursary recipients
- Assist up to 40 First Nations students per year with funding toward completion of post-secondary degrees and up to 60 First Nations students per year toward completion of diploma, certificate and / or trades programs
- Support the New Relationship Trust Foundation to attract an additional \$750,000 for scholarships and bursaries for First Nations in BC through partnerships and leveraging
- Establish a database of past NRT Scholarship recipients to be used in conjunction with the NRT Foundation to promote the hiring of First Nations graduates and post-secondary students

#### Language and Culture

- Leverage an additional \$1 million in capital for First Nations language and culture initiatives from public and private sources
- In partnership, support the digital archiving of up to 10 BC First Nations language dialects

#### **Youth and Elders**

- Provide funding for up to 50 youth projects per year
- Provide funding for up to 80 Elders projects per year
- Provide financial support to the annual Elders Gathering
- Provide financial support to an annual gathering or initiative that builds capacity for BC First Nations Youth

#### **Economic Development**

 In partnership with BC Aboriginal Capital Corporations, support up to 50 First Nations entrepreneurs and 5 First Nations communities in BC each year by matching equity for business start-ups and/or expansion of businesses within BC

#### Investments

- Leverage new project funding at a goal of 2:1
- Limit annual administrative costs to less than 2% of the investment portfolio

#### **Partnerships**

• Develop and maintain at least 6 partnerships / protocols with other First Nations organizations in order to promote collaboration and prevent duplication of products and services

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### Medium Term (3 - 5 years)

- Enhance First Nations governments' capacity to negotiate, with the government, agreements for shared decision-making, land use planning, land and resource management and revenue and benefit sharing
- Fundraise an additional \$50 million in capital for the capacity-building objectives of First Nations
- Maintain annual NRT project funding at a minimum of \$6 million

### Long Term (5 + years)

- Grow the Investment Fund to \$100 million by 2025, through investment and contributions
- Grow annual project funding to \$6+ million per year by 2025





