

**STEPS
FORWARD**

British Columbia
Initiative for
Inclusive Post
Secondary Education



2022/23

Annual Report

Vision

A world where the full equitable inclusion and integration of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities is unremarkable.

Mission

To support students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in pursuing a fully inclusive post-secondary education and to support them, their families, and their communities in building the capacity to extend inclusion and full participation beyond graduation.

Message from the Executive Director

I want to take this opportunity to recognize the students whose desires to pursue an equitable post-secondary education are why we show up every day, and also to the families, post-secondary communities, and employers who are working to co-create a world where full inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities is unremarkable.

Thank you to our facilitators and coordinators whose creativity and commitment to the hard work of realizing inclusion is truly remarkable. It is complex work and requires a relentless commitment to the vision to make sure that we continue to create positive change and not rest when things are “good enough”.

This past year has been a time for laying the groundwork for the year ahead. We hired two part-time coordinator positions to support each of our initiatives. We completed a project to improve our work of planning with students for life after graduation. And, to support families, we hired a full-time family organizer who will walk with them as they work to ensure their student can continue to assume roles that create opportunities for them to develop their identity, learn, and contribute in their communities and workplaces.

We are thrilled to have two new post-secondary partners. College of the Rockies in Cranbrook enrolled students for the first time this fall and College of New Caledonia will be enrolling their first student in January. These two new partnerships make Inclusive Post-secondary Education available at 10 of BC’s 25 public post-secondary institutions.

I hope you enjoy reading through this report and seeing a snapshot of inclusive post-secondary education.

With warm regards,



Arden Duncan Bonokoski

Current Partnerships



PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS

GOAL 1: ACHIEVE GREATER AUTONOMY TO ENSURE OPERATIONAL DECISIONS ARE ALIGNED WITH OUR MISSION

- Ready Willing & Able funding enabled us to support a student before they turned 19 and CLBC funding kicked in.
- CLBC Community Inclusion Innovation Fund allowed us to focus on improving our practice.
- Vancouver Foundation Funding helped us reach out to high schools to support students and families planning for post-secondary.

GOAL 2: SUPPORT STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO UNDERSTAND AND ACT ON THE PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

- We funded a family organizer position to strengthen our connections with families.
- We developed an orientation for families of new students.
- We hosted two virtual gatherings for families to discuss how to support inclusion lifelong.

GOAL 3: PREPARE STUDENTS FOR LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

- We developed a framework to enhance our practice to prepare students and families after graduation.
- We delivered a training module for facilitators on approaches to advance relationships, employment & family empowerment.

GOAL 4: DEVELOP INCLUSIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION CENTRE FOR EXPERTISE

- We released an audio-story gathering project that captured the experience of professors who have included students.
- We have an active committee developing research funding proposals and working towards publishing a book on Inclusive Post-secondary Education in BC .

GOAL 5: EMBED INCLUSIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE LANDSCAPE OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BC

- We are working collectively with Inclusion Canada to expand eligibility for Student Aid
- We worked with Skilled Trades BC to ensure students enrolled through Inclusive post-secondary education partnerships are fully funded in trades programs

The pursuit of belonging at university – who decides?

Lauren Mathews, Director of Inclusive Post-secondary Education

We have increasingly been working towards the inclusion of students into competitive programs of study, in particular, cohort-based programs. Students belonging as ordinary students in their program of study is an important aspect of an authentic student experience; the increased academic and social opportunities granted based on this belonging is significant, but membership is not assured.

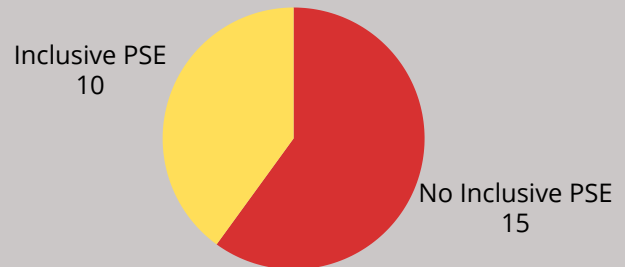
This last year, a student was welcomed into a competitive cohort-based program of study that had previously been closed to students. Working with the program to plan for the student's full inclusion beyond course registration, opened up many opportunities. It safeguarded their enrollment in upper-level courses in the program and opened up co-curricular opportunities including professional development opportunities in their field of interest. Some of these, including a practicum and honorarium position that required a referral from an instructor, were considered competitive, even within the cohort.

Over the summer this student had opportunities to work in various positions within her field of interest through practicum and to pursue a personalized professional development course open to only a small handful of students in their program. From this experience, the student has shared that they have built confidence, identity, and professional skills in their field. They can now envision, and describe clearly to others, a strong current student and future career identity. They have built new and impactful relationships based on these opportunities, some of which led to a longer-term student work position with one of the practicum employers, with whom the student successfully self-advocated for a higher wage.

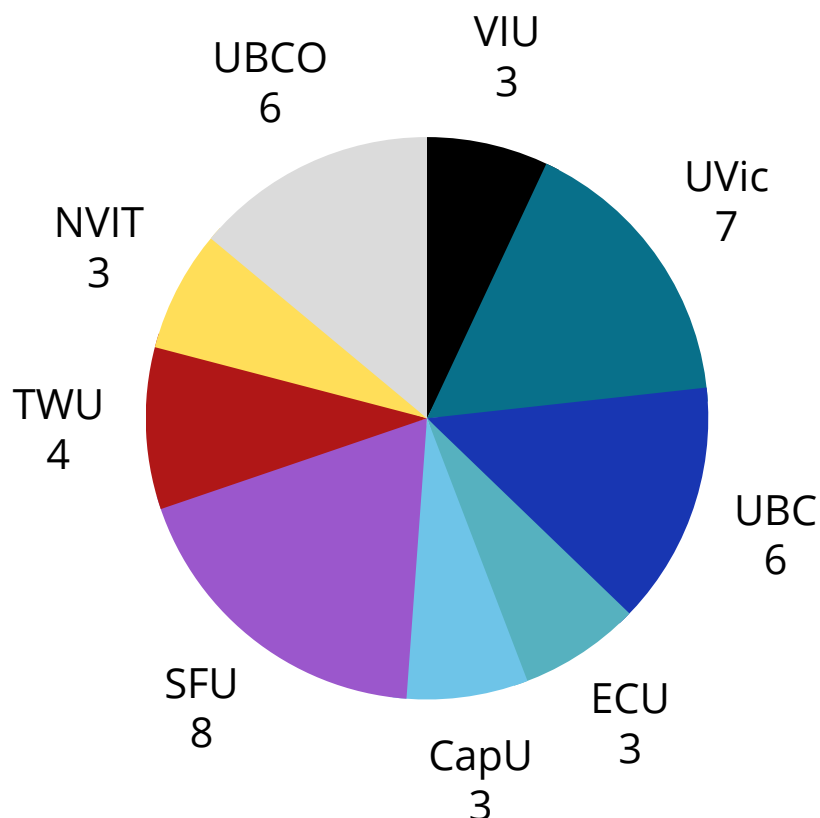
All of these opportunities have hinged on this student belonging to their program of study, and the acknowledgment of this belonging by the department. Though students accessing their studies through inclusive post-secondary education initiatives often have positive relationships with instructors who welcome them into individual courses, the decision to fully welcome a student into all of the opportunities within a program of study often hinges on the support of one person; typically, a dean, director, or department chair. This makes students vulnerable to being excluded or only tangentially included. Through these examples, we can see how impactful full student membership is, but also how delicate it is. Work remains to be done to ensure that students with developmental disabilities are seen as, and provided opportunity to be, fully involved, active, valued members of their educational communities.

The Numbers

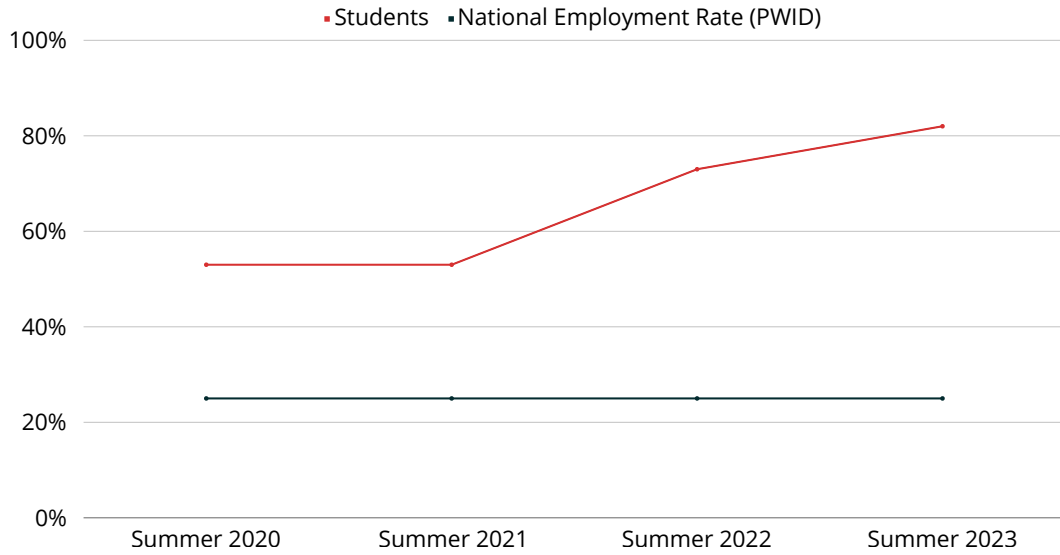
Publicly Funded Post-secondary Institutions
with Inclusive Post-secondary Education
Initiatives



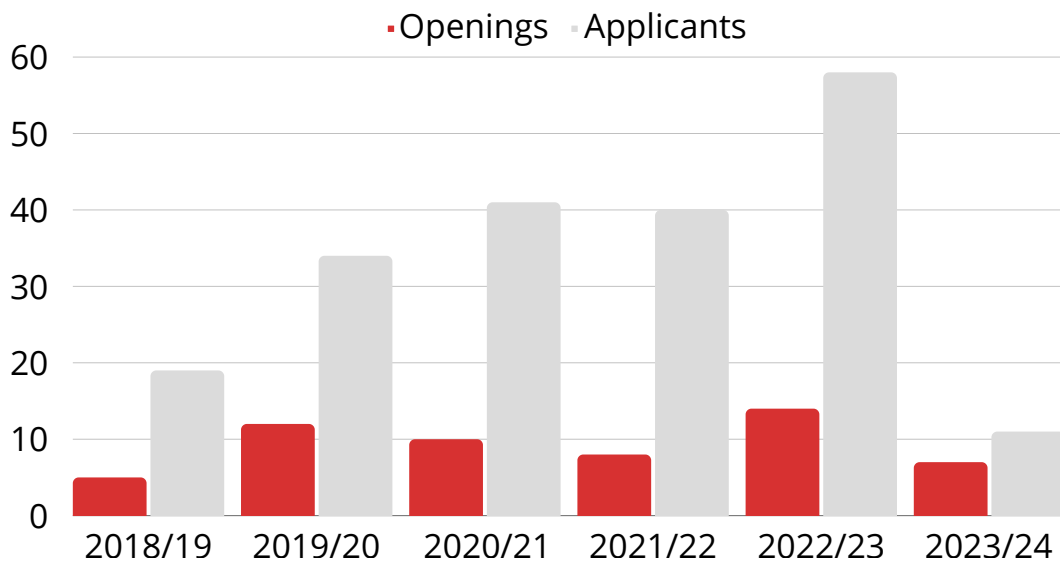
2022/23 Students Per Campus



Student Summer Employment

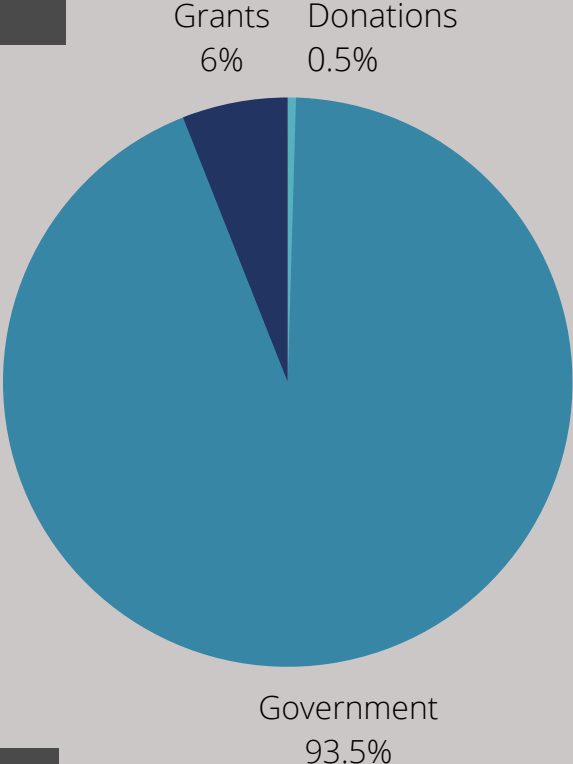


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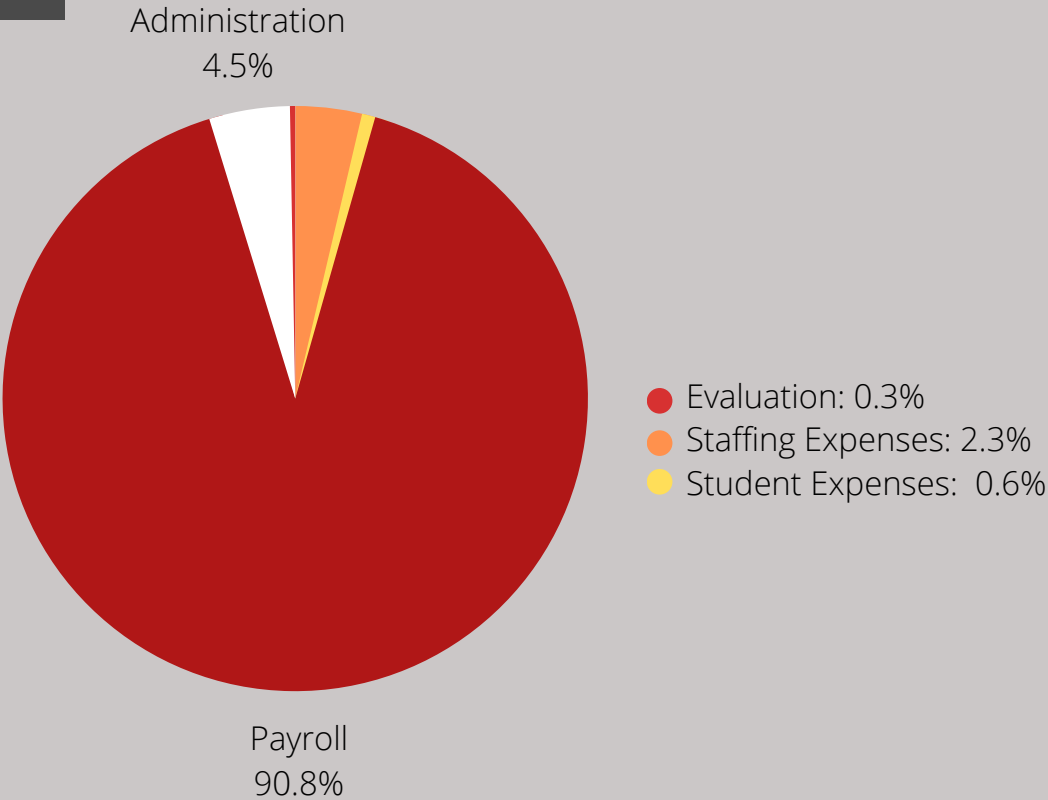


The Money

REVENUE: \$1,503,297



EXPENSES: \$1,249,540



Special Thanks to:

