

# 2026-2029

## Strategic Plan



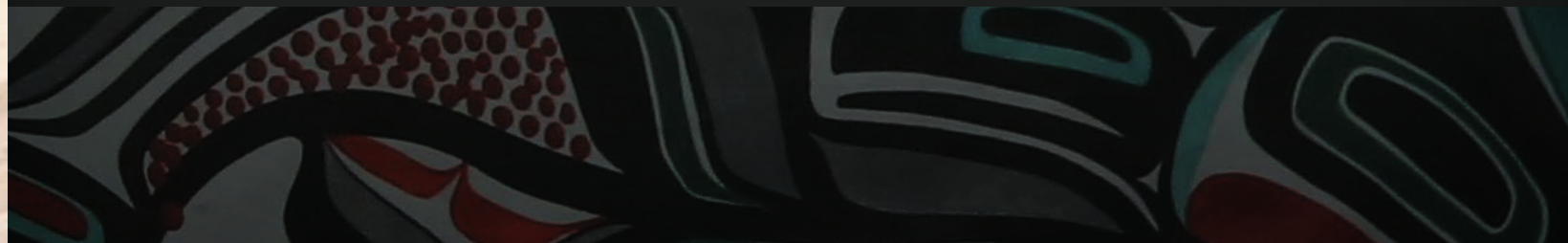
**NEW RELATIONSHIP TRUST**  
Empowering First Nations in British Columbia

[newrelationshiptrust.ca](http://newrelationshiptrust.ca)



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# About

## New Relationship Trust

New Relationship Trust (“NRT”) was established under New Relationship Trust Act, SBC 2006 (the “Act”) which came into force in 2006. NRT was created in response to the call for a new relationship between BC First Nations and the Province of BC, and the government of Canada. The Act acknowledged a commitment to strengthen relationships on a government-to-government basis, the importance of capacity building to support self determination and nation-building initiatives that close the socio-economic gaps in First Nation communities.

NRT began with an initial investment of \$100 million from the Province of BC to create a Contribution Account (the “Fund”) to support the mandate and objectives of the Act. NRT is a not-for-profit corporation, distinct from the Province of BC and not an agent of the government or the Organizations (defined in the Act as the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations, and the First Nations Leadership Council.

NRT manages the Fund (now \$140 million as of February 2026) in perpetuity to generate income to deliver its core annual funding programs to BC First Nations. The NRT also manages separate Contribution Accounts (the “Strategic Funds”) from contributions and donations from other sources to deliver specific funding programs to BC First Nations and other Indigenous recipients.

Since inception, NRT has approved more than \$260 million to support its funding programs and has attracted Strategic Funds of \$532 million to support the delivery of other funding programs (such as Clean Energy, Food Security, Labor Market, Declaration Act).

Each year, NRT canvasses, interviews and gathers solicited and unsolicited feedback from First Nations and strategic stakeholders in refining and adapting its strategic direction to meet the needs and priorities of BC First Nations in accordance with the Act in a contemporary context. In addition, NRT engages in a formal 3-year comprehensive First Nations’ community engagement process that seeks specific input from First Nations on their needs, priorities and experience with NRT. The 2026 Community Engagement Report is published alongside our 2026-2029 strategic plan.



# Looking Back

The previous strategic plan (2023-2026) was developed in 2023 through our Board of Directors strategic planning sessions and targeted community engagement with First Nations as summarized in the 2023 Community Engagement Report. The plan was then reviewed and validated at each subsequent strategic planning session held by our Board of Directors.

### THE STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2026) IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL
<b>Nation Opportunities</b>	Nation-building supports to strengthen First Nation self-determination and nationhood
<b>Financial Management</b>	Sustainable organization that continues growth of corporate, philanthropic and government funding, supporting greater access to new programming and funding.
<b>Governance</b>	Commit to continuous improvement of legislation, regulations, bylaws and policies.
<b>Communication</b>	Strong brand identity through a clearly defined brand and increased awareness of NRT. Excellence in partner relations through engagement and communication with partners to foster and maintain positive working relationships.

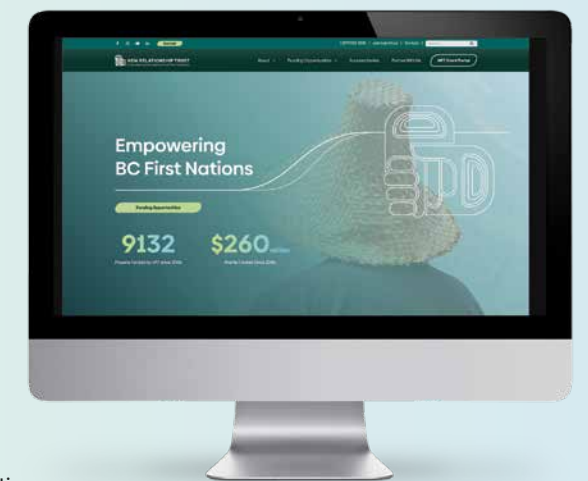
2023-2026

## 2023-2026 Achievements

In the past three years, NRT has made significant progress on its strategic priorities and goals.

### BETWEEN 2023-2026, NRT ACHIEVED THE FOLLOWING:

- Launched 10 new funding programs with a value over \$460 million to support nation-building and other initiatives.
- Continued to decolonize funding processes and embed trust-based approaches on all NRT funding relationships with First Nations.
- Collected over 40 project success stories in film and print to showcase First Nations nation-building, knowledge and entrepreneurship.
- Received \$460 million funding from the Province of BC through collaboration and negotiation to fund important First Nations initiatives.
- Achieved 40% growth of the original Fund to further enhance future funding to First Nations in perpetuity.
- Developed and published the NRT inaugural by-law to support strong governance.
- Designed and launched a new generation website.
- Implemented a successful social media strategy that has resulted in exponential growth on NRT social channels.
- Held the inaugural and 2 subsequent NRT Annual Stakeholder meetings.
- Attended 39 high profile events involving First Nations to showcase NRT funding and foster relationships.



# Looking Ahead:

## Honouring 20 Years and Empowering the Next Generation

“ The NRT has evolved into a trusted partner and steward of resources dedicated to advancing nation-building priorities across BC ”

As we approach our 20-year anniversary – marking two decades of empowering First Nations in BC – we pause to reflect on the profound journey that has brought us to this milestone. Created with a clear purpose and mandate to support First Nation communities with efficient and flexible funding, the NRT has evolved into a trusted partner and steward of resources dedicated to advancing nation-building priorities across BC.

Over the past 20 years, we’ve understood that success and lasting impact is rooted in respectful relationships, strong governance, and a disciplined approach to Fund management and stewardship of assets. We have also deepened our understanding of the expanding needs of First Nations shaped by varying reconciliation environments, wealth creation and economic opportunity, climate change, cultural revitalization, and evolving priorities for nationhood and self-determination.

Reaching this milestone provided an important opportunity for reflection and renewal. Over the past year, the Board and Staff engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process, informed by meaningful community engagement and enriched by insights from diverse stakeholders. Through dialogue, listening, and collaboration, a renewed vision emerged: the next chapter must build on our strong and reliable foundation while positioning the NRT to meet the growing scale and complexity of First Nations opportunities, needs, and priorities.

**With that context, the 2026-2029 Strategic Plan is anchored in three interconnected pillars that will guide our direction over the next three years.**

### Pillar 1 | EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE

Our governance framework is central to our relevance, accountability, and effectiveness. Over the next three years, we will modernize our governance model to ensure it reflects both contemporary best practices and the First Nations teachings and values-based approaches.

This includes pursuing strategic legislative enhancements to responsibly expand our mandate so we can better respond to the growing and evolving priorities of First Nations in British Columbia. We will work collaboratively with government partners to ensure that any proposed changes strengthen our ability to deliver impact while

preserving the community-driven focus and the spirit and intent of the current legislative purposes.

At the same time, we will integrate governance best practices—such as strengthened risk oversight, board development, performance measurement, and transparency—with governance approaches grounded in respectful relationship-building and First Nations teachings, values and cultural traditions. Excellence in governance will not only ensure transparency and accountability; it will enable adaptability, credibility, and long-term sustainability.

### Pillar 2 | SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

To meet increasing demand and expand our impact, the NRT must strengthen and diversify its financial foundation. Over the next three years, we will pursue innovative and sustainable growth strategies designed to responsibly expand our balance sheet and enhance our capacity to deliver value-added programs to First Nations communities.

This will include developing strategic partnerships with provincial and federal governments, corporate Canada, and philanthropic donors. By leveraging our 20-year track

record, strong governance, and trusted relationships, we will position the NRT as a compelling partner for co-investment in First Nation-led priorities.

We will also refine our donor and capital strategy, exploring innovative funding models and mission-aligned investment approaches that preserve capital while generating sustainable returns. Growth will be pursued with discipline and prudence, ensuring that expansion strengthens—rather than dilutes—our mandate and long-term stability.

### Pillar 3 | OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Operational excellence is essential to delivering on our promise and mandate to BC First Nations. Over the next three years, we will continue to strengthen our engagement with First Nations to ensure our programs remain responsive, accessible, and aligned with community-defined priorities.

We will enhance stewardship of our assets and investment fund through prudent financial management, transparent reporting, and meaningful performance monitoring. At the same time, we will invest in our people—empowering staff through professional development, succession planning, and organizational systems modernization to enhance and deliver high-standards of service built on trust and respect.

By embedding a culture of continuous improvement, data-informed decision-making, and service excellence, we will

enhance our ability to deliver and achieve the greatest possible impact for First Nations communities.

As we look ahead to 2026–2029, we do so with humility, gratitude, and determination. The first 20 years have established a strong foundation of trust, learning, and achievement. The next three years will be defined by renewal—modernizing our governance, strengthening our financial sustainability, and enhancing our operational excellence.

Guided by First Nations teachings, values, cultural traditions, and grounded in our statutory mandate, the NRT will continue to evolve as a resilient, forward-looking First Nations led organization—one that honours its past while building enduring value for First Nations across British Columbia for generations to come.

# Guiding Principles and Mandate

## Guiding Principles

SECTION 8 of the *NRT Act* establishes the guiding principles of NRT as follows:

1. the funding activities of the New Relationship Trust should be appropriate to the needs and priorities of first nations.
2. the New Relationship Trust should be accessible by all first nations;
3. funding should be provided by the New Relationship Trust
  - i. in a simple, efficient and flexible manner,
  - ii. in a way that is responsive to changing needs and circumstances, and
  - iii. to lead to the achievement of specified outcomes, consistent with the purposes for which the Contribution Account out of which the funding is to be provided was established, in accordance with specific plans, processes and timelines;
4. the New Relationship Trust should be operated in a simple, efficient and flexible manner with openness, transparency and accountability;
5. subject to paragraph (f), the New Relationship Trust should recognize that funding for certain activities may be available from other sources and should avoid providing funding for any purpose for which funding has been provided by, or is available from, any other source, other than the government;
6. funding may be provided for a purpose referred to in paragraph (e) if the donor or the recipient can, through leveraging of that funding with other funds, enhance opportunities to undertake or participate in activities consistent with
  - i. the principles identified in this section in relation to the New Relationship Trust, and
  - ii. the purposes for which the Contribution Account out of which the funding is to be provided was established.

## Mandate

SECTION 17 of the *NRT Act* establishes the legislative purposes of the NRT 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:

1. 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,
2. enhancing first nation capacity to engage in comprehensive community planning and land and resource planning,
3. enhancing first nation governance-related infrastructure capacity, including, without limitation, establishing or improving capacity for
  - i. electronic communications within and among first nations and with other persons,
  - ii. accumulating and compiling information, and
  - iii. managing information collection and retrieval systems,
4. enhancing first nations' knowledge and skills to facilitate their ability to take advantage of a range of
  - i. economic opportunities, including, without limitation, economic opportunities with respect to lands and resources, and
  - ii. social and cultural opportunities,
5. 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
6. 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:
  - i. foster and facilitate consultation with the government;
  - ii. engage directly or indirectly with the government in consultations and other interactions;
  - iii. 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.

# Vision, Mission and Values

## Vision

Empowered, healthy, resilient, and thriving First Nations communities for all generations.

## Mission

To be a partner and catalyst in supporting capacity development transformation across First Nations in British Columbia.

## Our Values

### Integrity

We build and sustain trust through fairness, honesty, and professionalism that reflects the best interests of First Nations.

### Humility

We observe, listen, and have empathy in collaborating with all our partners to find new and better ways to serve First Nations.

### Reciprocity

We seek opportunities to share, learn and draw upon the unique cultures, customs, and wisdom of First Nations in delivering relevant, responsive, and innovative programs.

### Accountability

We continuously work on behalf of First Nations, demonstrating accountability and transparency through meaningful engagement, ongoing evaluation, and reporting.

### Respect

We make decisions that respect the unique circumstances, goals, and aspirations of each First Nation.

# Strategic Goals (2026-2029)

## Pillar: Excellence in Governance

### GOAL 1:

#### Legislative Enhancements

Pursue Strategic Legislative Enhancements to Strengthen Impact to First Nations While Preserving Purpose.

#### Outcomes:

- Engage with First Nations
- Publish engagement report
- Propose updated *NRT Act*



### GOAL 2:

#### Modernized Governance

Modernize the Governance Framework to Reflect Contemporary Best Practices and First Nations Teachings, Values, and Approaches.

#### Outcomes:

- Update board bylaws and policies
- Center First Nation values
- Co-develop board recruitment process

## Pillar: Sustainable Growth

### GOAL 3:

#### Scalable Fundraising Program

Build a Scalable Fundraising & Philanthropy Program.

#### Outcomes

- Increase donor contributions
- Strengthen awareness of NRT
- Secure investments



### GOAL 4:

#### Innovative Funding Models

Develop Innovative and Purpose-Aligned Program and Funding Models to Enhance Benefits to First Nations.

#### Outcomes:

- Develop co-investment mechanism
- Build First Nations infrastructure capacity
- Leverage financial impacts

## Pillar: Operational Excellence

### GOAL 5:

#### Impactful Communications

Amplify Impact through Storytelling, Communications, and Knowledge Sharing.

#### Outcomes:

- Highlight impact stories
- Foster knowledge sharing and collaboration
- Create Nation building resource hub



### GOAL 6:

#### Efficient Systems

Enhance Grant Management Systems, Operational Policies, and Processes to Support Efficiency, Relationship-Centered Service Delivery and Strategic Stewardship.

#### Outcomes:

- Streamline grant funding processes
- Gather data insights
- Ensure sustainable funding programs

# Strategic Goals

(2026-2029)

## Pillar | EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE

### Goal 1

Pursue Strategic Legislative Enhancements to Strengthen Impact to First Nations While Preserving Purpose.

#### KEY ACTIONS

- Conduct a **comprehensive legislative analysis** to identify potential enhancements and amendments to the NRT Act that would responsibly expand or clarify NRT's purpose and mandate.
- Engage and **collaborate with the First Nation leadership bodies** in BC to identify the overall views, priorities and approaches to aligning the Act with First Nations opportunities now and future generations.
- Collaborate with provincial government partners and First Nations leadership to **co-develop proposed amendments**.
- Conduct First Nations **community engagement** to ensure proposed enhancements and amendments reflect evolving First Nations priorities while preserving the original spirit and intent of the Act.
- Develop **communications and transition plan** to support understanding and implementation of any legislative updates.

#### DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Complete and publish a First Nations **Community Engagement Report** relating to their feedback, priorities and recommendations.
- Meetings with each First Nations Leadership body (as defined in the Act) to gain **consensus and support** on proposal for enhancements and amendments to the Act.
- Complete and submit an **actionable proposal** to the Province of BC for enhancements and amendments to the NRT Act.
- Achieve **expanded flexibility to design and deliver innovative programs** and partnerships that respond to the current and future priorities of First nations in BC.

Goal 2

Modernize the Governance Framework to Reflect Contemporary Best Practices and First Nations Teachings, Values, and Approaches.

KEY ACTIONS

- Conduct a **comprehensive governance review** process to gain a consensus-based vision that interconnects First Nations and public sector governance models.
- Update bylaws, committee terms of reference, and Board policies to reflect clarified roles, **strengthened oversight**, contemporary and cultural accountability.
- Establish a **formal Board development program** (orientation, governance training, cultural competency, succession planning).
- Establish a formal **Board recruitment process** in collaboration with the First Nations Organizations as defined in the Act.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Bylaws and governance policies are updated and completed such that the NRT governance model is reasonably considered to be **grounded in First Nation values** and aligned with **contemporary best practices**.
- Clear and **transparent roles, authorities, and accountabilities** at the Board and management levels.
- **Increased confidence** among First Nations and partners in NRT's stewardship and leadership.
- Meetings with each First Nations Leadership body (as defined in the Act) to gain **consensus and support** on a formal Board recruitment process that aligns with the NRT governance model and the spirit and intent of the Act.

Goal 3

Build a Scalable Fundraising & Philanthropy Program.

KEY ACTIONS

- Develop a **comprehensive donor strategy** focused on major donations, corporate partnerships, and community giving.
- Launch a **public giving campaign** supported by digital storytelling and social media to broaden engagement across British Columbia and Canada.
- Establish **corporate partnership opportunities** that align corporate social responsibility priorities with First Nation initiatives.
- Cultivate relationships with **major donors and philanthropic foundations** interested in reconciliation and Indigenous-led solutions.
- Strengthen **collaboration and funding partnerships** with the Province of BC, Canada and Institutions to develop opportunities to fund and scale programs for the benefit of First Nations communities.
- Provide donors with **clear impact reporting and engagement opportunities** with funded initiatives.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Increased **annual philanthropic contributions** supporting NRT funding programs.
- Strengthened public awareness of the NRT's role in **supporting First Nation communities across BC**.
- **Measurable growth** in annual program funding.
- **Secure contributions and investments** that enhances funding impact in perpetuity.
- **Increased number of funding partners and philanthropic supporters**

Goal 4

Develop Innovative and Purpose-Aligned Program and Funding Models to Enhance Benefits to First Nations.

KEY ACTIONS

- Explore and develop an **investment account enhancement** consistent with the Act, that enables NRT's Investment Accounts to receive and hold funds contributed by a First Nation for the purposes of investment and benefit of the respective First Nation.
- Explore and develop potential program for innovative **funding solutions for infrastructure** capacity and other partnership solutions that unlock larger infrastructure investment and accelerate First Nations opportunities and priorities.
- Pilot **impact-program or revolving funding models** aligned with BC First Nations priorities and needs.
- Explore and develop opportunities to:
  - Structure **co-investment opportunities** with corporate and philanthropic partners to support large-scale First Nation initiatives.
  - Evaluate opportunities to **blend endowment income, philanthropic capital, and government funding** to maximize program impact.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- New **innovative funding mechanisms** that increase capital available for First Nation initiatives.
- Launch a **program mechanism** to enable First Nations in BC to receive administrative support to invest with and benefit from NRT Investment Accounts.
- Improved community capacity for **infrastructure planning and development**.
- **Strengthen partnerships** with Infrastructure Canada and BC Indigenous Infrastructure Fund and other institutions that support infrastructure co-investment opportunities.
- **Enhanced reputation** as a forward-thinking and innovative First Nations funding partner.
- Sustainable financial models that **extend the reach of each dollar invested**.

Goal 5

Amplify Impact through Storytelling, Communications, and Knowledge Sharing.

KEY ACTIONS

- Develop a **communications strategy** to showcase project successes and lessons learned from funded First Nation initiatives.
- Expand use of **social media, digital storytelling, and multimedia platforms** to highlight community achievements and project impacts.
- Create a **knowledge-sharing hub within the grant management platform** where participating First Nations can voluntarily share project reports, tools, templates, and resources.
- Facilitate **peer learning opportunities** such as webinars, community showcases, and mentorship between grant recipients.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Greater visibility of the positive impacts created by funded projects.
- Increased collaboration and knowledge sharing among First Nation communities.
- A growing repository of practical resources that supports future nation-building initiatives.
- Enhanced awareness among partners, stakeholders, and communities about the NRT impact.

**Goal 6:**

Enhance Grant Management Systems, Operational Policies, and Processes to Support Efficiency, Relationship-Centered Service Delivery and Strategic Stewardship.

**KEY ACTIONS**

- Enhance the **grant management platform** to streamline application intake, review, approval, and reporting processes.
- Implement digital tools that allow **real-time communication, document sharing, and progress tracking** between the NRT and First Nation communities.
- Reduce administrative barriers by introducing **simplified workflows, automated processes, and clear status updates** for applicants.
- Integrate **data analytics and reporting capabilities** to support performance tracking and program evaluation.
- Provide **training and support resources** for both staff and First Nation users to ensure effective use of the system.
- Review and update **organizational policies and operational procedures** to align with the Board's strategic governance priorities.
- Strengthen **risk management, compliance, and accountability frameworks** for managing the NRT Fund and organizational assets.

**DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- Reduced timelines from application to funding decision and project implementation.
- Improved transparency and accessibility for First Nation communities interacting with the funding programs.
- Greater efficiency and consistency in grant administration.
- Stronger data insights to support decision-making and program improvement.
- Long-term sustainability of funding programs supporting First Nations
- Clear and efficient operations aligned with strategic priorities





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