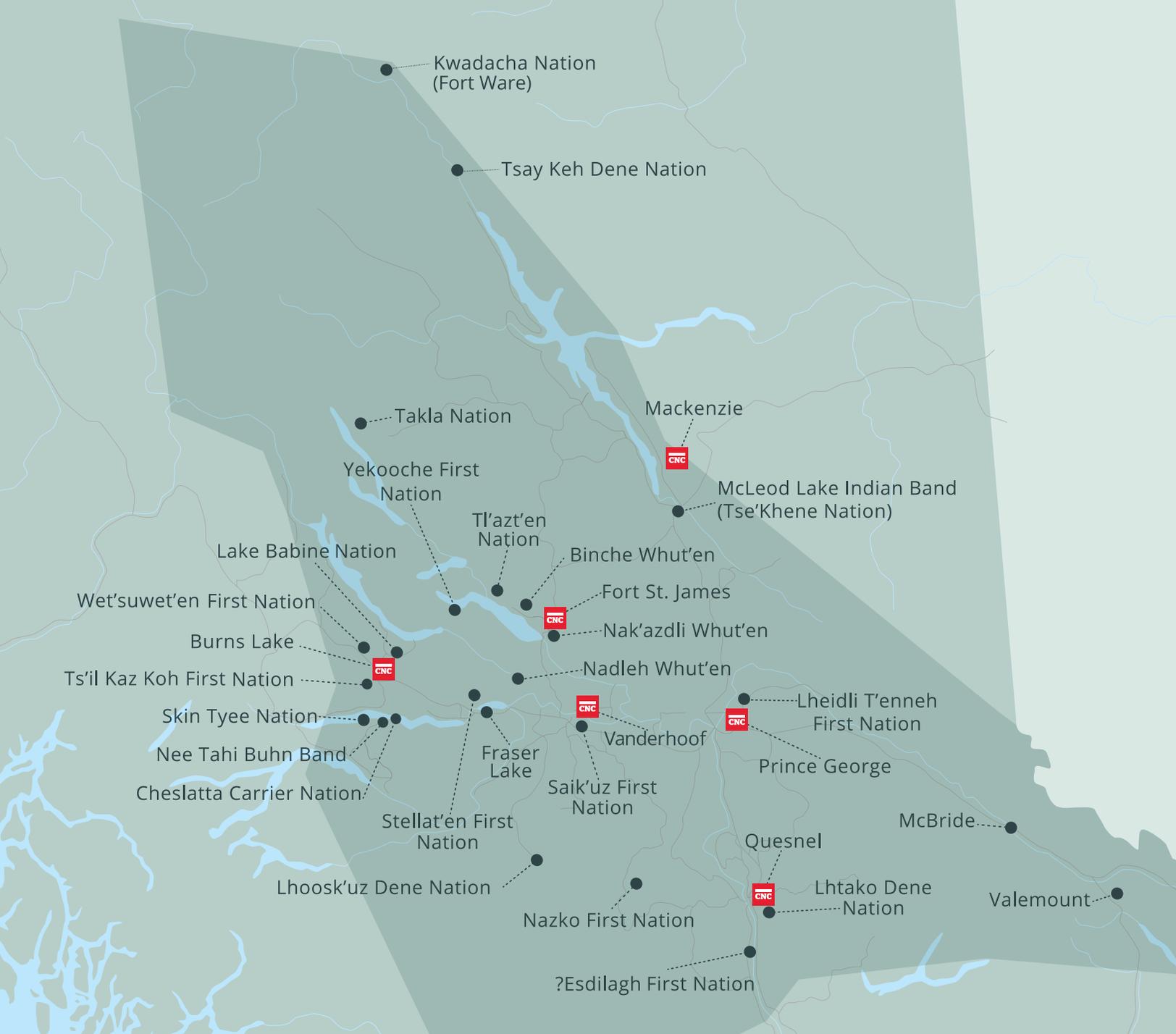




# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

Strategy 2026 - 2031





# Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

The College of New Caledonia is honoured to work with the Indigenous communities in this region, inclusive of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. We acknowledge the graciousness of the First Peoples in welcoming those seeking knowledge on their traditional and unceded territories.



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# Message from the Vice President, Indigenization



I am hopeful to see the dedicated work of CNC towards Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (*EDIB*) across each of our campuses. As someone who navigates intersecting identities including gender, Indigeneity, and neurodiversity, I resonate deeply with creative opportunities that bring awareness to voices at the table. Historically in all societies that thrive, more voices contribute to a kaleidoscope of perspectives that not only offer inclusion and belonging but removes pressure from the few to make decisions for the many. Nurtured and raised from a collective Indigenous perspective, this approach comforts me and offers us pause to celebrate the courageous work of those who see the value of EDIB.

Listening to the needs beyond our own limited experiences asks us to bear witness to barriers and see opportunity to grow and change. We are stronger as a community when the door is open to constant improvement because we truly are richer with learners from all paths who want to be part of the CNC community. The voices of EDIB are the future, and I know CNC is bravely seeking out that journey collectively in a way that centers accessibility, equity, and success for all. Human experience has always been about the beauty in difference, that we are all different is a blessing we each received the moment our spirit was given life. Since time immemorial, embracing diversity and living in a good and inclusive way has been the greatest weapon against power, division, and class systems. Each of us deserves to feel the embrace of belonging, to know someone is watching out for us, and that we each have a responsibility to take care of one another like the land takes care of us if we take care of it. You only need to give yourself permission to situate yourself in new challenging conversations to see how changing your perspective can positively change the outcome for another.

This plan has spirit and will continue to evolve and shape our efforts to be a place of learning where everyone can land and learn safely. Here is where our path begins; it starts with the opening of doors for folks to discover their potential and build their respective futures. When one flourishes in education, we all flourish with endless opportunities of growth.

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**Dr. Jessie King, VP Indigenization**

# Message from the CNC President



At the College of New Caledonia, we believe that education thrives in an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives. Our commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (*EDIB*) is not just a statement, it is a guiding principle that shapes how we learn, work, and grow together.

This plan is the result of deep listening, thoughtful collaboration, and a shared vision for a future where systemic barriers are dismantled and opportunities are accessible to all. It reflects our dedication to continuous learning, courageous conversations, and meaningful action.

It is more than an aspiration, it is a strategic framework that aligns with our institutional priorities and ensures that equity and inclusion are embedded in every decision we make. By approaching this work strategically, we move beyond isolated initiatives and create sustainable, systemic change that benefits students, employees, and the communities we serve.

We recognize that fostering equity and inclusion is an ongoing journey. It requires courage, collaboration, and accountability. Strategic action allows us to measure progress, allocate resources effectively, and hold ourselves responsible for achieving meaningful outcomes. By embracing this work, we strengthen our ability to serve students, support employees, and contribute to the well-being of the communities we call home.

Thank you for joining us in this important endeavor. As President, I am proud to stand alongside our community in advancing this work. Together, we will foster a culture where belonging is not an aspiration, it is a lived experience.

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**Cindy Heitman, President & CEO**



# Inspiring Change: The start of our EDIB Story



In early 2023, the College of New Caledonia (CNC) released a Request for Proposal (RFP) related to the development of an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) plan. In June 2023, CNC initiated an EDIB Reference Group, and in September, an EDIB Committee, with the goal of creating an EDIB Strategy. In Fall 2023, CNC was provided with two EDIB Assessment Surveys: one for CNC employees and one for CNC students. The purpose of the surveys was to provide CNC with data regarding the lived experience of equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging among CNC students and employees. In late November 2023, CNC received four reports – a qualitative and quantitative set, reflecting responses to the survey for CNC employees and a qualitative and quantitative set, reflecting responses to the survey for CNC students. The survey data collected through the EDIB Assessment surveys inform CNC’s EDIB Plan. The original version of the strategic priorities and action plan were created in March 2024, outlining the direction for CNC’s EDIB Plan.

## What did you have to say about EDIB at CNC?



**70% of students and 60% of staff** agree that CNC is proactive in its responses to EDIB issues that impact members of the CNC community.



**77% of students and 65% of staff** agree that CNC is committed to building a community of belonging that is experienced as equitable, diverse, and inclusive.



**76% of students** agree that the CNC student population is diverse.



**81% of staff** agree that EDIB should be a strategic priority at CNC.



**80% of staff** agree that CNC leaders should lead CNC's EDIB journey.

## Why does it matter?

EDIB is essential at CNC to ensure every person feels valued, our learning spaces are inclusive, and our community reflects the diversity we serve. EDIB isn't just for a few. It touches more lives than many realize. It includes people of different races, genders, ages, abilities, sexual orientations, socioeconomic backgrounds, and more. By recognizing and supporting this broad range of experiences, we build stronger, more inclusive communities for all.

# What is Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB)?



EDIB stands for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging. EDIB aims to address fair treatment and equal opportunities for all, recognize and celebrating diversity, all while nurturing environments of belonging.

## Our Commitment to EDIB at CNC

By embracing a diverse workplace and learning environment, we all benefit through richer perspectives, stronger collaboration, and better outcomes for everyone. At CNC, we strive to celebrate and value the unique contributions of equity-deserving and systemically excluded groups to foster an environment of belonging, collaboration and success.

CNC is actively working to embed approaches guided by EDIB principals into our institutional frameworks and operations, fostering a culture and community of accountability, respect, empathy and belonging. We recognize that our journey towards justice must be ongoing, intentional, and done with lateral kindness. It requires continuous learning, unlearning, and collective, and collaborative action. Together, we will celebrate diverse voices, identities, and ways of knowing and being while building a more inclusive and equitable future for members of our college community.





# Alignment

Development of this EDIB Plan was guided by CNC's Strategic and Academic Plans. CNC's Strategic Vision informs the desired future state for EDIB at CNC.



## **CNC Vision**

**Learning Together, Changing Lives, Creating Futures**

**Lhulh whuts'odutel'eh | lhk'enazdulkat | nus 'uztelelh**

CNC's strategic priorities of Learning Across a Lifetime, Student Success Focused Education and Training, and Organizational Strength & Agility provide direction for EDIB goals and objectives. As part of Organizational Strength & Agility, we explicitly affirm our commitment to welcoming and respecting everyone, embracing diversity, and celebrating our differences.

### **EDIB's goals and objectives also align to:**

- CNC's Academic Plan goals:
  - Encourage and support students and employees to engage in diverse ways of learning, knowing, and being.
  - Help students, faculty, and staff develop cross-cultural competencies.
  - Improve flexibility of program delivery options and reduce barriers to enrollment, inclusion, engagement, and success.
  - Review curriculum, policies, practices, and methodologies for bias and assumption.
  - Provide welcoming, safe, and inclusive learning environments.
  - Make evidence-informed decisions to guide program development, student success and retention, and process improvement.

Echoes of the EDIB Plan are reflected in all strategic and academic plans at CNC, as alignment across these plans is essential to fostering the College's collaborative culture. Successful implementation will require close coordination and partnership across the academic portfolio and departments throughout the CNC community.

# EDIB Statement



Our EDIB Statement will guide current and future work. The implication of this statement is significant as it casts a vision, reflects a mission, and points to core values. It is intentionally concise so that it can be easily remembered and applied throughout day-to-day operations at CNC.

## CNC EDIB Statement

**The College of New Caledonia (CNC) is committed to embedding Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) as a strategic priority for students, faculty, leadership and staff.**

Together, we will celebrate diverse voices, identities and ways of knowing and being in building a more inclusive and equitable future for members of our college community.





## EDIB Strategy

Alongside the EDIB Statement, the EDIB Plan is essential to guiding and supporting actions related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging at CNC. Our commitments to EDIB are supported by clear, actionable objectives. While the EDIB Plan aligns with the broader strategic direction, it also maintains a distinct focus on advancing CNC's EDIB goals. Building on the work CNC has already undertaken, the following EDIB priorities have been identified to guide the continued development and implementation of CNC's EDIB Plan.

# Priority 1

## Structurally Integrate EDIB into CNC (Foundation)

This is the foundation to have EDIB integrated with intention at CNC by establishing an EDIB office that is effectively positioned within the institution to ensure integration of EDIB principles and practices across institutional functions.

**Rationale:** It is evident that EDIB commitments are more consciously and intentionally upheld where staff and resources are dedicated to acting on EDIB commitments.

**Anticipated Outcomes:** With the EDIB office centrally located within CNC's operational framework, we will drive meaningful institutional change, influencing practices across the college. EDIB principles will be deeply embedded in daily operations and central to shaping a more inclusive institutional culture. A dedicated EDIB office with staffing and resources will energize and drive CNC's ongoing commitment to EDIB.



## Priority 2

### Policy Review & Development (Systems)

Lasting change within systems begins with a strong foundation. All policies and procedures must align with CNC’s EDIB values.

**Rationale:** Systemic forms of marginalization are transformed when policies and procedures align with the organization’s stated EDIB commitments.

**Anticipated Outcomes:** Policies and procedures will undergird and support CNC’s EDIB commitments. Leadership at CNC will be equipped with clear and effective policies and procedures to address harm when it occurs.

While clear and effective policies and procedures initially increase reporting of incidents of harm overtime, action based on EDIB policies and procedures will reduce incidents of harm at CNC.



# Priority 3

## Indigenous Engagement

Align CNC's EDIB commitment with the Indigenous Education Plan and the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

**Rationale:** While EDIB and Reconciliation are distinct areas of focus, they are deeply interconnected and strengthen one another. Greater engagement with Indigenous knowledge enriches academic offerings and enhance institutional learning. Greater representation and engagement with Indigenous employees and students create important opportunities for organizational learning and transformation ultimately reducing acts of harm to Indigenous-identifying students and employees. In turn, this work reinforces CNC's broader EDI commitments by ensuring that equity and inclusion efforts are grounded in the principles of justice, respect, and relationship-building. Alignment with the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act demonstrates CNC's commitment to both Reconciliation and EDI, recognizing that each area holds the other up in creating a more just and responsive institution.

**Anticipated Outcomes:** Increased academic offerings dedicated to, or integrated with, Indigenous knowledge. Increased Indigenous student enrolment and Indigenous employment. Increased reports related to acts of exclusion and harm, resulting in decreased acts of harm targeting Indigenous students and employees.



# Priority 4

## Institutional Learning

Enhance institutional learning related to EDIB.

**Rationale:** Transforming organizations to be more EDIB-oriented depends both on the application of effective policies and transforming ideas that contribute to marginalization. This initiative aims to reduce marginalizing practices by embedding equity commitments into the everyday operations of CNC.

**Anticipated Outcomes:** Normalizing EDIB at CNC by engaging in ongoing and intentional institutional learning, and by integrating EDIB into course curricula. As a result, CNC will be known by prospective students and by other colleges as an institution where EDIB is “how they do things.” Students and employees will experience CNC as an institution that encourages belonging, prioritizes equity, celebrates diversity, and fosters inclusion.



# Priority 5

## Intersectionality

Strengthen CNC's support of intersectional identities and diverse lived experiences within staff and students.

**Rationale:** Intersectionality recognizes that people's identities (*such as race, gender, culture, socioeconomic background, ability, and more*) interact in ways that shape their opportunities, challenges, and perspectives. The intersectional and diverse lived experience of CNC's staff and students bring a vital contribution to the CNC community. By acknowledging and valuing these interconnected identities, CNC fosters an environment where all individuals can be fully seen and supported. The integration and success of CNC's staff and students support their ability to thrive and strengthens the whole CNC community.

**Anticipated Outcomes:** CNC will be known as a welcoming and inclusive space for all staff and students. Everyone at CNC will experience this commitment to their individual and unique success.



# Priority 6

## Accessibility

Strengthen CNC's accessibility for students and employees living with diverse disabilities.

**Rationale:** Accessible spaces and mindsets that prioritize inclusivity and accommodate both visible and invisible disabilities improve the work and learning experiences of all employees and students at CNC. By recognizing the full spectrum of accessibility requirements, CNC supports a community where everyone can participate, contribute, and thrive.

**Anticipated Outcomes:** CNC students with diverse abilities will experience a welcoming and accessible environment. CNC will maintain an ongoing commitment to ensuring that the institution supports enrollment, inclusion, engagement, and success for all.



## Where we will begin

To improve our understanding, deepen our connections, and empower students, CNC will focus efforts in year 1 on:

**Priority 1:** Structurally integrate EDIB into CNC, by initiating engagement with staff and students to understand what is needed to have a successful EDIB office on campus.

**Priority 4:** Institutional learning, where an education framework and strategy will be created to support staff learning and public opportunities for all of CNC's community to learn and grow together.

## Where we aim to go

To create the change we want to see, we must work collaboratively on these six key priorities. CNC will build on the momentum and foundation established in the first year to advance all six priorities over the next four years. These priorities are deeply interconnected as progress in one area will strengthen and benefit the others.

Each year, CNC will conduct a review to assess progress, set priorities, evaluate resources and capacity, and clarify the focus for implementation.

CNC commits to reporting back to the larger CNC community on the progress of this plan and the actions prioritized each year.

## Conclusion

CNC has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging through the comprehensive work conducted with Credence & Co. The EDIB statement serves as a guiding compass, while the plan provides a concrete framework for change. The development of CNC's EDIB Plan represents a significant step forward in embedding EDIB values across the institution.

By implementing these priorities and by taking meaningful, measurable actions, CNC will foster a more inclusive, equitable, and welcoming environment for all students, and employees.

 **Priority 1**

 **Priority 2**

 **Priority 3**

 **Priority 4**

 **Priority 5**

 **Priority 6**

**Structurally Integrate EDIB into  
CNC (Foundation)**

**Policy Review & Development  
(Systems)**

**Indigenous Engagement**

**Institutional Learning**

**Intersectionality**

**Accessibility**

**The College of New Caledonia (CNC) is committed to embedding Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) as a strategic priority for students, faculty, leadership and staff.**

**Together, we will celebrate diverse voices, identities and ways of knowing and being in building a more inclusive and equitable future for members of our college community.**





## **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging**

### **Strategy 2026 - 2031**

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