

# Create. Change.

A better world through art + design.



Emily Carr University of Art + Design (ECU) is situated on the unceded, traditional and ancestral territories of the x̱w̱məθḵw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̱x̱ wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) and sə́ilw̱ətaʔṯ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples.



With gratitude and respect, we acknowledge our accountability to the host nations and the responsibility we hold to be good partners as we live, work and create together on these lands.

As ECU embarks on a new strategic plan, we commit to advancing truth as a step towards reconciliation and decolonization, to promoting Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous student success and to breaking down any barriers that exist for Indigenous communities in accessing the transformative potential of art and design education.





## A Message from the President Forward to 2030

Emily Carr University of Art + Design's (ECU) new Strategic Plan provides a seven-year roadmap outlining our new vision, mission, values and commitments to guide us into our next chapter as an institution.

This document is the result of our collaborative effort over the past two years. More than 400 students, staff, faculty, alumni and partners participated in an inclusive engagement process that ensures that this plan reflects the diversity of voices of our community. It sets the course for our future, guiding us as we continue to ensure that creativity, innovation, inclusivity and collaboration remain at the core of everything we do.

In our rapidly changing landscape, the transformative role of art, design and media is more crucial than ever. This plan reflects our belief that education in these disciplines can be a powerful force for meaningful personal, societal and cultural change. By centering our focus on student success, equity and sustainability, our goal is not only to inspire the next generation of artists and designers but also to challenge traditional boundaries and open new possibilities for creative expression.

As we approach our centennial in 2025, we do so with a renewed sense of purpose. This milestone offers a unique opportunity to reflect on ECU's rich history as we boldly envision the



tomorrow we want to create. As we move forward, this plan will serve as our roadmap by outlining the priorities and initiatives that will help us achieve our shared goals. From expanding research and practice-based learning to fostering partnerships across industries and communities, this strategy will ensure that ECU remains at the heart of art and design education, both in our local and global communities.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to this process, for your insights, ideas and dedication. Together, we will continue to build a thriving, inclusive and innovative institution that creates meaningful change in the world.

**Dr. Trish Kelly**  
*President + Vice Chancellor*



# Where **curiosity** + **bold creative thinking** meet.

We are artists, designers, experimenters, thinkers, educators and leaders advancing the critical role of art and design education in a complex and changing world.

We are committed to using the transformative power of art and design to address the challenges of our time, to imagine new ways of being that we didn't know were possible and to catalyze personal, social and cultural change.



## Reflecting on the past **Making Changes for the Future**

Emily Carr University of Art + Design (ECU) is the only institution focused exclusively on art and design education in the entire post-secondary system in British Columbia.

We are recognized nationally and internationally for the excellence of our programs and the quality of our graduates.

As the institution celebrates its 100th anniversary and plans for the future, it is important to reflect on our past successes, build on our strengths and position ECU for future growth as the leading art and design university in Canada.

### **Informing the Plan**

Our strategic plan is based on our new vision, mission, values and commitments. Together, these foundational statements outline *what we do, why we do it and our shared purpose* as a public university of art and design – they also underpin the priorities and objectives outlined in this plan.







## OUR VISION

# A better world through art + design



## OUR MISSION

We inspire and prepare the next generation of artists, designers and creative thinkers, to make meaningful change in the world, through innovative, practice-based art and design education.

## OUR COMMITMENTS

We evaluate our decisions through several key lenses: student learning and success, reconciliation and Indigenization, equity and inclusion, sustainable and ecological practices and economic responsibility and opportunity.

## OUR VALUES

### **Leading through Practice**

We are change agents – moving beyond the theoretical to engage with the broader social and cultural world.

### **Innovating through Collaboration**

We work with others to co-create, explore, discover, innovate and make change.

### **Learning with Curiosity**

We inquire, listen, reflect and adapt.

### **Relating with Care**

We embrace diversity in all its forms and we treat each other and ourselves, with compassion and care.

## Co-Created with Community An Inclusive Engagement Process

Our task was to create a strategic plan that truly reflects the hopes and ambitions of Emily Carr University's diverse community of students, faculty and staff. A plan that is both ambitious and realistic, visionary and practical – one that can be successfully implemented and evaluated.

To undertake this work, we created an inclusive plan development process that involved widespread engagement. This will be complemented by an implementation plan that will help us measure our progress.

The process began with an open call sent to the entire ECU community inviting participation in the new Strategic Planning Advisory Group. This 29-member group oversaw a series of engagement activities to ensure the entire community had opportunities to provide input and contribute to the plan.

As a result, over 400 students, faculty, staff and alumni participated in consultations to shape the plan. This resulted in five key priorities and corresponding objectives that were refined through additional engagement with community members, with a strong focus on inclusivity and open dialogue at every stage.

- 400 students, faculty, staff and alumni took part in the process
- 29 members on the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee
- 6 project teams
- 13 focus groups
- 112 focus group participants representing students, staff, faculty and alumni
- 13 "question of the week" feedback opportunities
- 265 question of the week contributions

### A Focus on Implementation + Measurement

To ensure that the strategic plan moves off the page and into action, an implementation plan is being created to bring the plan to life. Each unit or department will initiate implementation planning to establish clear, measurable objectives.

The implementation plan will improve accountability and make it easier to measure progress on the rollout of the strategic plan.





## Our Priorities



**Elevating  
Teaching +  
Learning**

**Expanding  
Research +  
Practice**

**Supporting  
People +  
Culture**

# Create.

A person is seen from behind, painting a white wall with a purple roller. The roller is positioned at the top of the frame. Two callout boxes are overlaid on the wall: a green one on the left and a purple one on the right. At the bottom, the word 'Change.' is written in large orange letters.

**Stewarding  
Places +  
Spaces**

**Strengthening  
Systems +  
Support**

**Change.**

## PRIORITY #1

# Elevating Teaching + Learning

Teaching is *and will always be*, at the heart of everything we do at Emily Carr University. We support and encourage a diverse community of artists, designers and creative thinkers in their learning – both within and beyond the academic program.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Increase accessibility for domestic and international students of all backgrounds, communities, ages, abilities and intended career paths.
2. Ensure that curriculum is relevant, effective and adapts to the changing needs of students and society.
3. Support the success of all students, especially Indigenous students, by advancing Indigenization and reconciliation through curriculum, partnerships and educational opportunities.
4. Ground practice-based education in critical inquiry and making in a way that responds to broader social and cultural contexts and local and global circumstances.
5. Create flexible and diverse learning pathways that equip students with the skills and knowledge that they need to take full advantage of the professional, economic, cultural and creative opportunities available to them.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Accessible Education Programs and Curricular Pathways
- Robust Student Enrolment and Retention
- Diverse Student Body
- Academic Plan and Program Quality Framework
- Expanded Professional Opportunities for Students

## IMPACT

ECU's expanding leadership in art and design education empowers a new generation of learners and makers, equipping them with the creativity and skills needed to tackle pressing global issues and make a significant impact in a rapidly changing world.







## PRIORITY #2

# Expanding Research + Practice

Through research, we engage with materials, technology, visual representation and theory. This ongoing process of inquiry generates new knowledge and understanding, leading to healthier communities, more vibrant economies and culturally resilient futures.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Encourage student participation in research projects with faculty and peers as well as with community and educational partners.
2. Enhance capacity for students and faculty to conduct, apply, and disseminate critical and creative research.
3. Strengthen research partnerships and collaborations throughout ECU and with the community, including not-for-profit organizations, government and industry.
4. Advance art, design and media research methods in transforming communities, industries, disciplines and new technologies such as generative AI.
5. Unlock new ways to support researchers in creating new understanding and knowledge across the key research themes outlined in ECU's Strategic Research Plan.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Student Participation and Community Awareness
- Research Culture and Capacity
- Industry and Community Partnerships
- Outreach and Communication of Research Findings
- Grants and Funding

### IMPACT

ECU's ground-breaking creative research and innovation is globally recognized for solving real-world problems and demonstrating the value of practice-based learning, advancing the fields of art, media and design and driving creative solutions to complex challenges.

## PRIORITY #3

# Supporting People + Culture

We strive to cultivate a diverse and inclusive environment where everyone is recognized, valued and celebrated. We will invest in the appropriate structures and resourcing needed to support all members of our community.

## OBJECTIVES

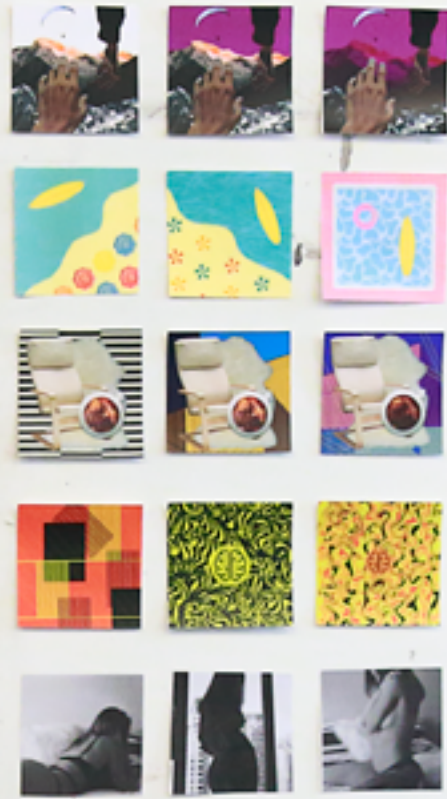
1. Build and invest in an organizational model that fully supports excellent student experience, learning and success.
2. Foster mutually beneficial relationships and support networks with host nations, community partners, alumni and the broader cultural community.
3. Create an inclusive community by embracing diversity, promoting understanding of differences and building intercultural competence.
4. Review and support clear organizational structure, work design, operational planning and leadership in all departments and areas of the university.
5. Support faculty and staff's creative work and career advancement by offering opportunities for professional development, career growth and partnerships.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Student Services Expansion
- Increased Relationship Building
- Faculty, Staff and Student Diversity and Recruitment
- Employee Engagement, Satisfaction and Retention
- Networks and Communities of Practice

## IMPACT

ECU's commitment to fostering a culture of belonging and inclusion catalyzes personal growth and community participation, attracts a diverse and vibrant team of faculty and staff and creates a welcoming and supportive campus culture.





## PRIORITY #4

# Stewarding Places + Spaces

Situated on the traditional, unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples, ECU strives to operate in a respectful, sustainable and beneficial way. We are committed to creating an accessible, state-of-the-art campus where our community can learn, create and connect.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Make our space more welcoming, supportive and accessible for students, promoting positive learning and social experiences.
2. Incorporate Indigenous knowledge into our operations and collaborate with Indigenous communities to provide equitable access to ECU facilities and resources.
3. Invest in our facilities, infrastructure and technical expertise to allow us to provide state-of-the-art practice-based learning and research.
4. Act sustainably and respond in a meaningful way to the climate crisis and habitat degradation.
5. Uphold a commitment to public service as a shareholder in the Great Northern Way Trust and be proactive and responsive to the social, cultural and economic contexts of the site.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Engaged and Vibrant Campus
- Accessibility Plan
- Community Presence and Engagement
- State-of-the-Art Production Facilities
- Climate Action Plan

### IMPACT

ECU's strategic resource management maximizes accountability to staff, faculty and partners while enriching the student learning experience, showcasing the institution's commitment to excellence and place-based responsibility.

## PRIORITY #5

# Strengthening Systems + Supports

We commit to the ongoing improvement of the systems, processes and technologies that form Emily Carr University's operational and organizational foundation. This will enhance the campus experience and ensure the ongoing stability, resilience and sustainability of the university.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Develop systems and relationships that support the entire student journey and the unique needs of domestic and international students, from admissions to graduation, to joining our alumni network and becoming a lifelong learner.
2. Coordinate our business systems – including workflows, resource allocation, teamwork and support – to enable smooth and efficient experiences for students, faculty and staff.
3. Improve our financial sustainability by working with funders, government, alumni and community organizations and by managing enrolment strategically and making efficient use of our resources.
4. Invest in the tools, systems, spaces and training required to provide a cutting-edge learning environment and enhance the user experience for all.
5. Enhance our information and communications systems to allow us to better share information, tell our story and build relationships.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Organizational Review and Effectiveness
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Development, Fundraising and Endowment Strategies
- Digital Strategy and Transformation
- Communication and Marketing Expansion

### IMPACT

ECU's forward-thinking business strategies and processes lead to responsible resource management, enhanced institutional resilience and optimized operational efficiency, driving significant improvements in our educational ecosystem.





Emily Carr University envisions  
a future where the world  
is enriched and improved  
through art + design.

As change agents, we move beyond the theoretical to actively engage with the broader social and cultural world. Guided by our vision, mission and values, we collaborate with others to co-create, explore, discover, innovate and drive change.


***Together***, we strive to make a  
lasting and positive impact on  
the world.


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**Learn more + track our progress:** [www.ecuad.ca/strategic-plan](http://www.ecuad.ca/strategic-plan)





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