

UBC'S NEXT CENTURY



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

UBC'S NEXT CENTURY - PHASE 3 PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

June 2017

In March 2017, we embarked upon Phase 3 of the *UBC's Next Century* strategic planning process. The purpose of our community engagement was to gather feedback and ideas on the plan's draft vision statement, core commitments, strategic priorities and directions for change. The overall process is described at: <http://president.ubc.ca/strategic-initiatives/our-process/>

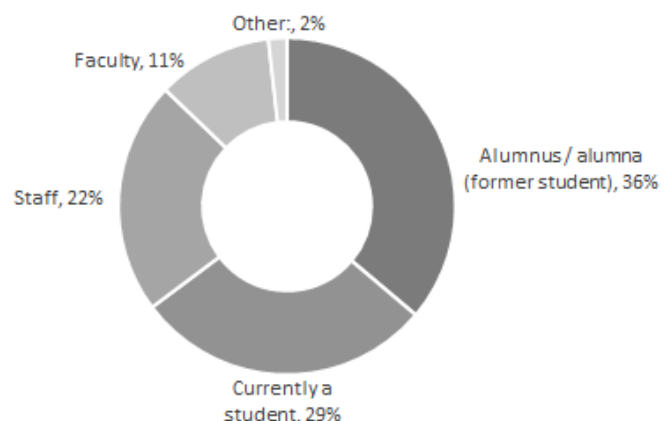
Over **350** students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members provided input at six public open house events that were held in Vancouver and the Okanagan. **7,530** people submitted input via a survey.

The process was designed in accordance with UBC's engagement principles, to ensure that we obtain input from UBC's diverse communities. The overall engagement objectives were to foster active and broad awareness of the planning process; create meaningful opportunities to inform, involve, consult and collaborate with UBC's diverse communities; generate timely and meaningful input from a diverse range of community members and stakeholders; be transparent and responsive about how community input is informing the plan's development; and give community members and stakeholders agency and trust in the process.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Public engagement for Phase 3 of *UBC's Next Century* consisted of six public open house events and a survey made available from March 20 to April 20, 2017. At the open houses we gathered **2574 comments** from more than 350 registered participants on the interactive display boards, in event guidebooks and at roundtable discussions. A total of 7530 students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members provided input via the survey, and over **17,000 open-ended responses** were captured.

Survey responses indicate that alumnus / alumna, students, and staff provided the greatest number of responses with a smaller number of faculty and others (such as broader community members) also taking part.



Participants commented on what they liked about the proposed vision, commitments and priorities. They also identified areas in which the elements of the plan could be improved or the focus could be refined; and collectively identified eighteen trends the university may need to adapt to over the next ten years. Finally, participants were invited to suggest how the draft strategic priorities might be pursued over the next decade, including opportunities and anticipated challenges.



Overall, participants were supportive of UBC advancing the draft strategic priorities over the coming decade, but we received limited input on the potential goals and actions that could be developed in each priority area. We will seek further input on this question in our next engagement phase, in fall 2017.

DRAFT VISION

“Learning, research, and engagement for a better world.”

In total, **40 comments** were made on the interactive display boards, in event guidebooks and at roundtable discussions at the open house events.

Comments (8) that supported the draft vision statement focused on its ambitious scope, simplicity, inclusivity and emphasis on meaningful local, regional and global impact.

Comments (32) on aspects of the draft vision that could be improved suggested (9) more definition and clarity around concepts such as "engagement" and a "better world"; (9) greater focus on research and local - global community; (7) a shift to active and specific language to better reflect UBC's aspirations, for example to use the word "leading" rather than "learning"; (5) that UBC should be more realistic and practical about promises it is willing to make; and (4) desire to see UBC be even bolder in its vision and to include an emphasis on sustainability and global leadership.

CORE COMMITMENTS

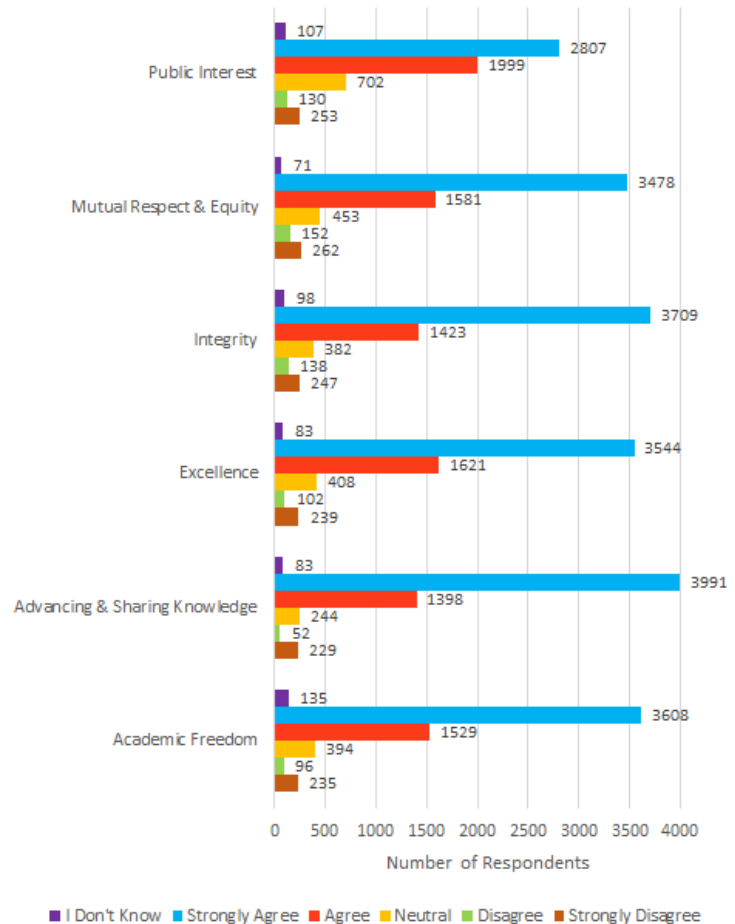
When Place and Promise was being developed, thousands of people helped define and express six “core values” to guide UBC’s institutional decision-making. These values (now called Core Commitments) guide how the University plans, makes decisions and evaluates its activities.

Participants made **245** comments at the events, and **3616** responses through the survey.

At the open house events, a total of 19 comments across all six core commitments agreed that they reflect UBC's values. 97 comments suggested areas for improvement.

Through the survey (chart right) a great majority of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that the six core commitments capture UBC's values as a public university.

Academic Freedom (85.7% agree or strongly agree, 8 event comments, 324 survey responses) Feedback suggested this commitment is a central aspect of UBC's identity. Some suggested that it could be defined as part of other core commitments rather than separate. Suggestions converged around the importance of freedom of inquiry and expression, and freedom from outside corporate and political influence. Responses also indicated a strong desire for Academic Freedom to be defined and exercised ethically, in ways that recognize and respect people and the environment and serve broader public interests.



Advancing and Sharing Knowledge (89.9% agree or strongly agree, 9 event comments, 194 survey responses)

Some respondents saw this commitment as a primary value, with UBC as a “gatekeeper” of knowledge for society. Some respondents identified threats such as the need to protect scholars from outside influences, and to ensure ideas are equitably advanced and accessible. Some respondents indicated that they would prefer UBC to focus less on research and more on teaching and learning. Opportunities included being more action-oriented and to focus on “proactive innovation and creative problem solving”, or to separate Advancing Knowledge from Sharing Knowledge to demonstrate that both are equally valued.

Excellence (86.1% agree or strongly agree, 29 event comments, 362 survey responses)

Comments indicated that there needs to be a more specific definition and understanding of “excellence”, such as a focus on Excellence in teaching, learning, research and athletics, and one that aligns with the other goals and commitments of the university. There was concern over who defines Excellence, how it will be measured, and how UBC can address current gaps and barriers to high quality teaching and learning. Suggestions included the importance of considering the relationship between equity and Excellence, innovating through experimentation, and embracing a culture of risk-taking.

Integrity (85.6% agree or strongly agree, 9 event comments, 224 survey responses)



Responses expressed a desire for Integrity to be embedded in all UBC activities, to advance Integrity through reciprocity, and foster meaningful engagement and reciprocal conversations with and between members of UBC's communities. There was concern that there needs to be a more specific definition, understanding and indicators of success for Integrity. It was also noted that Integrity could be confused with Mutual Respect & Equity, or operate in tension with Academic Freedom.

Mutual Respect and Equity (84.4% agree or strongly agree, 25 event comments, 346 survey responses)

Respondents acknowledged that UBC strives to provide a safe, respectful and equitable environment, but also that instances of inequity, discrimination, and harassment occur. Some respondents expressed an interest in better understanding how UBC plans to implement and evaluate Mutual Respect and Equity, and also a desire for UBC to commit to providing safe and inclusive environments. Suggestions included incorporating diversity and inclusion of people and ideas into this core commitment. It was also noted that this commitment could be confused with Integrity, or have tensions with Excellence and Academic Freedom.

Public Interest (80.1% agree or strongly agree, 17 event comments, 358 survey responses)

Comments indicated that the term Public Interest may be too ambiguous and subjective, and that more clarity is needed on how and by whom this commitment is being defined. Comments indicated excitement for Public Interest to focus on the advancement and sharing of knowledge; foster student capacity to become agents of positive change; ensure that UBC appeals to, and is relevant to and "partnering" and "collaborating" with, the wider local, regional and global community; and place emphasis on the 'local' public interest. Other comments indicated concern about the influence of corporate interests, and that there may be some tensions with Academic Freedom.

Comments suggesting **new core commitments** included:

- Change, Transparency & Accountability (230)
- Environmental Sustainability (157)
- Diverse (123)
- Affordability (111)
- Teaching and Learning (105)
- Holistic Learner Experience (123)
- Innovation (65)
- Truth and Reconciliation (62)
- Meaningful Engagement (57)
- Investing in Staff (52)
- Health & Wellbeing (57)
- Global Outlook (51)
- Serving the Local (49)

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Participants at the public open house event series were asked: “What trends will demand significant change at UBC over the next ten years and how do you think we should respond?”

Participants made **247** comments at the events, and **5499** responses through the survey. Responses converged around eighteen trends: the importance of an equitable institution committed to social equity and safety; educational reform and transformation; changing government funding models for universities; changing global politics; changing global markets and corporate influences; changing job markets; the rise of a perceived era of ‘post-truthism’; changing composition of communities (including aging and increasingly multicultural scholars); climate change; digitization and technological change; increasing need for local public service; globalization; rising costs of living and learning; declining trust in institutions; mental health and stigma; changing learner expectations of higher education; and accommodating UBC’s growing communities through improved and expanded infrastructure and facilities.

To address these trends, some comments suggested UBC develop adaptable institutional systems such as a more horizontal decision-making structure and intentionally fostering a "culture of change" from top down and bottom up.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic Priorities are broad, high-level areas of focus that drive the planning process and establish key directions for change at UBC over the next ten years.

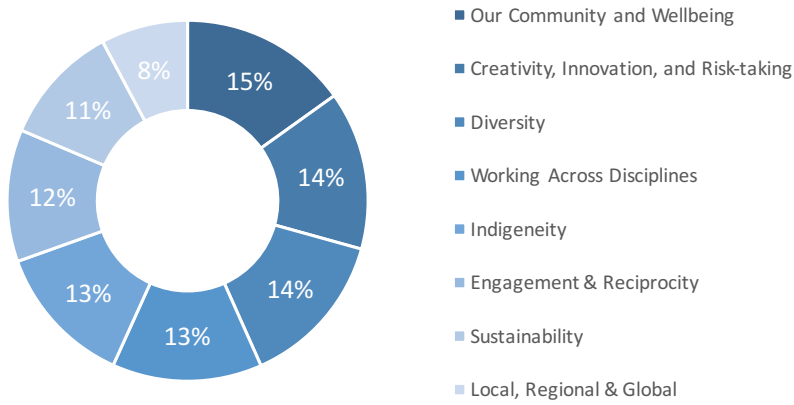
Participants made **2053** comments at the events, and **8389** responses through the survey. The input received covered what the strategic priorities could mean to participants and UBC, and what challenges, opportunities and big ideas we might face or pursue in advancing these priorities.

Overall, the majority of respondents indicated that all eight strategic priorities are important to participants and UBC over the next 10 years.



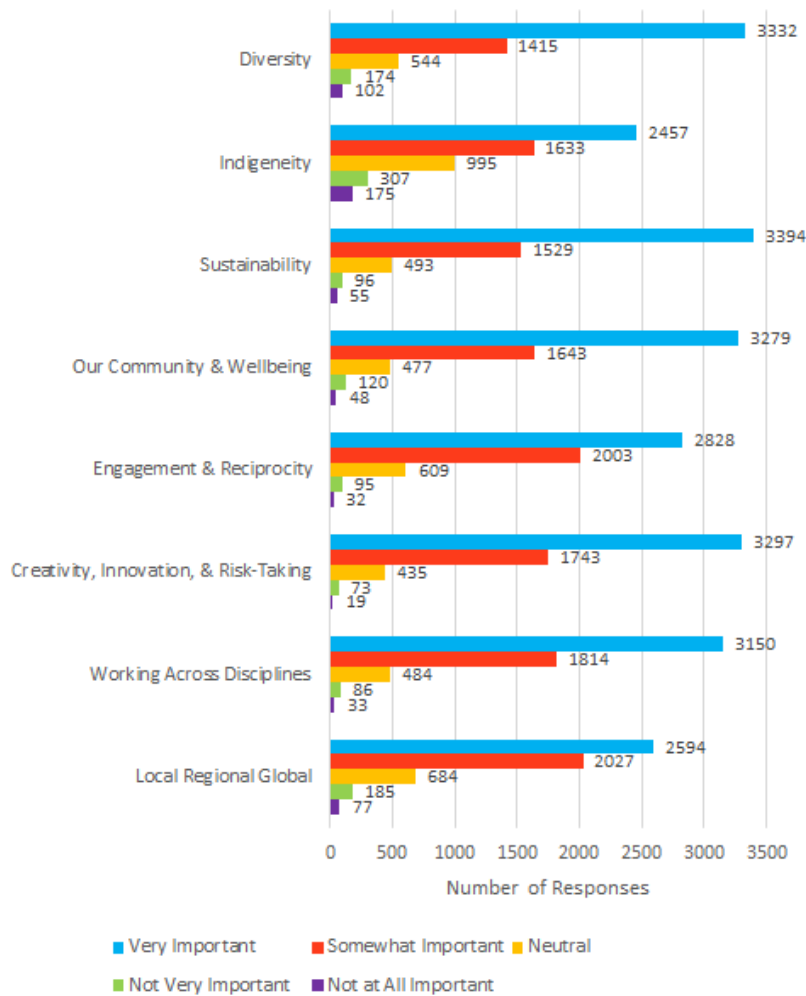
Public Open House Events

Percentage of Responses by Priority



**Comments were placed on display boards, worksheets, and in event guides*

Survey Responses





Local, Regional & Global (83.0% somewhat important or very important, 271 event comments, 893 survey responses)

Comments indicated that Local, Global and Regional could mean UBC is committed to promoting equal access to teaching, learning and research for all; dedicated to providing safe learning environments for scholars to engage with and understand diverse global perspectives; and being a 'globalized' institution with new programs, projects and technologies that enable local and global students, faculty, staff, community groups and other institutions to connect like never before.

Opportunities for advancing this strategic priority included designing programs and initiatives that address intercultural inequity and injustice; collaborating with international institutions to promote global research and knowledge sharing; and facilitating greater global citizenship among students, staff and faculty as UBC's campuses provide a greater range of international and intercultural opportunities.

Challenges to advancing this priority included limited funding for and opportunities to bring local and international students, faculty and staff together. Many comments indicated strong concern for the rising costs of living and learning at UBC and the impact this has on UBC's ability to attract and retain world class local, regional and global scholars. Another concern suggested this priority may lead to an over-emphasis on the global and that there is a desire for UBC to equitably support the 'local', from students, faculty and staff to neighbouring communities.

Working Across Disciplines (89.2% somewhat important or very important, 252 event comments, 1339 survey responses)

Responses indicated that this priority could mean embracing interdisciplinary education models to solve complex societal problems; encouraging and creating new opportunities for collaboration between diverse scholars; providing diverse and collaborative learning environments that prepare students for lifelong learning; and maintaining a balance between interdisciplinarity and specialized teaching, learning and research.

The potential opportunities UBC could explore included serving the public through interdisciplinary teaching, learning, research, knowledge mobilization and community engagement; advancing knowledge through interdisciplinary research; staff and faculty collaboration across diverse disciplines and groups in mutually beneficial ways; and fostering UBC's global reputation as a leader in interdisciplinary scholarship.

Comments indicated concern about existing disciplinary silos, as well as for securing the financial and human resources needed to enable interdisciplinary work. Some comments suggested that UBC may need to explore how siloed departmental ethos' and mindsets impact this priority, and how incentives (such as awards, credits, funding) and disincentives (such as additional time and effort) may impact the advancement of interdisciplinary collaboration.



Creativity, Innovation & Risk-taking (90.5% somewhat important or very important, 288 event comments, 1300 survey responses)

Participants indicated that this priority could mean fostering a culture of risk-taking and safe failure; embracing flexible and interdisciplinary educational models and pedagogies; serving the public interest through research and community projects; enabling alternative ways of producing and advancing knowledge through greater exchange of ideas between scholars; and forging new collaborations and partnerships with industry and community.

The opportunities identified included deepening UBC's global reputation as an innovative leader that advances new ideas and discoveries; fostering the next generation of innovators through experiential and engaged student learning opportunities; further pursuing and investing in new research and development; shaping future employment opportunities through yet undiscovered fields of research and innovation; expanding collaborative efforts across disciplines and with industry, and facilitating more student-faculty partnerships.

Comments also suggested that limited funding was a barrier for innovation and risk-taking in new research and development projects, teaching and learning, and knowledge-mobilization. Comments also converged around the need to address institutional cultures and mindsets and the benefits and ethical and financial risks associated with this priority. Comments indicated a desire to recognize and enable innovation in all disciplines, in addition to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and in particular in the humanities and social sciences. Some comments indicated concern for the potential of outside corporate interests to influence and shape innovative teaching and learning, research and knowledge mobilization.

Engagement & Reciprocity (86.8% somewhat important or very important 240 event comments, 691 survey responses)

Many comments suggested that this priority could entail a commitment to collaborative relationships with broader communities, in particular relationships in which research and communities inform each other; a commitment to innovative teaching (such as online and in community experiences) and knowledge mobilization (such as open education, open access, and open data) that further democratizes learning; and ensuring teaching and learning, research and knowledge mobilization serves local, regional and global communities.

The opportunities identified include increasing connections and mutually beneficial partnerships with community groups and industry to provide diverse experiences for students to learn and mobilize knowledge. Other comments indicated excitement for policies that ensure public engagement is included in teaching, learning, research, land use and development to better represent UBC's diverse community perspectives and to improve the living, working and learning experiences of the community.

Potential challenges include the need for improved communication channels between disciplines and departments to create more collaborative, engaging and reciprocal teaching, learning and research communities. Comments indicated concern for limited funding



available to research laboratories that have community collaborators. Comments also pointed to the need for mutually supportive and trusting relationships between local community groups and UBC to advance this priority. Suggestions included enhancing the rewards (such as funding and institutional support) for research that engages broader communities and their diverse perspectives and experiences.

Our Community & Wellbeing (88.4% somewhat important or very important, 306 event comments, 1233 survey responses)

Responses indicated that this priority could entail a commitment to providing comprehensive services that support the health and wellbeing of all community members; addressing the health of learning and working environments, such as social norms, physical conditions, work pace and stress, working hours, work safety, opportunities for self-expression and individual development and work-life balance; fostering a greater sense of community belonging; ensuring equal opportunities for and treatment of all UBC community members; and investing in buildings, facilities, outdoor and indoor spaces and infrastructure that promote healthy lifestyles and community wellbeing.

The opportunities identified include fostering UBC's campuses as living laboratories for holistic approaches to wellbeing; improving the success and productivity of scholars through additional support for physical, mental, and emotional health; new self-care education curricula, programs and opportunities; and enhancing broader public health and wellbeing through research, knowledge mobilization and informed public policy.

Many comments converged around concern about the rising costs of living and learning at UBC and the impacts that trend has on personal health and wellbeing. Many participants also noted that an increasing number of scholars may face mental health challenges and there are stigmas around both mental illness and seeking help. Some comments also indicated a desire to foster and enforce respectful treatment of staff.

Sustainability (88.4% somewhat important or very important, 219 event comments, 1115 survey responses)

Comments indicated that pursuing Sustainability could mean a commitment to a low carbon future and instilling a collective responsibility for future generations; further fostering an interdisciplinary perspective on Sustainability that equally values the social, economic and environmental dimensions of Sustainability; and a commitment to investing in research and development that advances new solutions to sustainability challenges and mobilizes best practices.

The potential opportunities identified include continued leadership in UBC's sustainability policies, research and practices; expanding investment in new and existing programs such as the 'Living Lab' initiative; funding research so UBC becomes a national resource for greening of institutions and industry; and developing and implementing ethical and responsible funding models and investment strategies to support a low carbon future.



Concerns converged around the rapid pace of new development on campuses (in particular the Point Grey campus) and the need to better integrate sustainability policies, targets and practices in new and existing buildings. Many comments suggested a strong desire to reduce UBC's carbon footprint, achieve ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and shift campuses to be powered more by renewable energy sources. Respondents also indicated a desire to see zero waste campuses with research on how to recycle all plastics and household hygiene and hazardous laboratory materials and improved and widespread composting programs.

Indigeneity (73.5% somewhat important or very important, 259 event comments, 707 survey responses)

Responses indicated that Indigeneity could mean a commitment to providing more opportunities for forming sustained relationships of mutual respect, understanding and knowledge exchange with Indigenous communities and Indigenous people; incorporating Indigenous perspectives in teaching and learning and research; a commitment to meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities and scholars; equal access to and greater representation of Indigenous scholars in academic and leadership positions; and to advance collective understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories and practices. Some comments also suggested that Indigeneity is a fundamental part of embracing Diversity and asked whether these two strategic priorities might be combined.

Opportunities include modeling leadership in indigenous engagement as a Canadian university; participating in the truth and reconciliation process to increase awareness about and address Indigenous experiences of history; and collaborating with knowledge-keepers, artists, and community members to revive Indigenous cultures and practices on campus.

Many comments indicated that enduring colonial legal and decision-making structures still face Indigenous peoples and that decolonization is necessary to move forward in an inclusive and authentic manner. Furthermore, a lack of awareness, understanding and mutually supportive relationships from some at UBC, in addition to a lack of funding and resources to support Indigenous scholars, was seen to pose a major barrier to advancing Indigeneity as a priority.

Diversity (85.3% somewhat important or very important, 284 event comments, 1124 survey responses)

Comments indicated that Diversity could further engage UBC's diverse community members on issues of equity, justice, and intercultural respect and understanding; showcase how leadership responds to the changing needs of UBC's diverse communities and learners; celebrate differences through creating spaces for intercultural expression; and build intercultural fluency amongst students, faculty and staff.

Opportunities identified included fostering intercultural understanding and respect through enabling scholars to interact with diverse people, ideas and perspectives; deepening existing networks of support for diverse communities to connect, communicate and feel a sense of

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belonging with; and providing ongoing dialogues, workshops and programs that enhance understanding, inclusivity and capacity for intercultural teaching, learning and research.

Challenges centred on a concern of unsafe environments for intercultural dialogue and expression. Other comments identified a desire to see greater gender equality in teaching, learning and research, and ensuring UBC is accessible to scholars of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Comments suggested personal biases, ignorance, and discrimination still pose a challenge to open and respectful relationships.