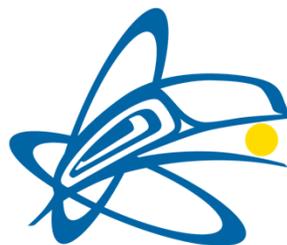


Advancing Indigenous Participation in BC's Tech Sector

Moving Beyond Inclusion Project Evaluation

February 2026



First Nations
Technology Council

Despite Indigenous Peoples in BC expressing a strong interest in technology and technology-enabled careers, they are underrepresented in the industry. Only 0.7% of the technology workforce identifies as Indigenous, which is significantly lower than the Indigenous population's representation in the province (nearly 6%).¹ This is attributed to multiple systemic barriers, including access to education and training, a lack of understanding of Indigenous culture and history among companies, and discrimination and bias in the hiring process.²

In 2020, as Indigenous corporate relations became an increasing priority for corporations across Canada, the First Nations Technology Council launched a new project, Moving Beyond Inclusion, aimed at addressing these barriers and increasing the number of Indigenous people in the technology sector. The project aimed to:

- Increase awareness of Indigenous history, cultures and issues;
- Complete foundational human resource, policy and process design work to increase recruitment, retention, advancement, and positive experiences of Indigenous peoples;
- Develop strategies to support Indigenous communities through corporate social responsibility activities; and
- Create a culture and environment that makes space for Indigenous worldviews, culture and thought leadership.

Running from 2020 to 2026, with a core delivery period from 2020 to 2023, the First Nations Technology Council partnered with four British Columbia-based technology companies: Microsoft, Pagefreezer, SAP, and Bench Accounting. A structured, multi-stage engagement process with each company combined interviews, workshops, and reviews of workplace policies and practices to identify barriers and opportunities for Indigenous recruitment, retention, and advancement. Each company received tailored training and a company-specific roadmap outlining practical actions to advance reconciliation and improve Indigenous workplace experiences.

Moving Beyond Inclusion was led by the Technology Council, an Indigenous-led, innovative non-profit mandated by First Nations leadership in British Columbia. The Technology Council works to advance digital literacy, improve internet connectivity, and provide guidance on data and digital technology for all 204 First Nations across the province.

This report brings together the findings from the evaluation of the Moving Beyond Inclusion project, documenting effective approaches, ongoing barriers and the changes required to support increased Indigenous participation in the technology sector.

¹ HR Tech Group, *2021 Diversity in Tech Dashboard*, TAP Network, 2021, <https://silkstart.s3.amazonaws.com/a6fdfe0c-86ca-426b-ac27-d92d914e4843.pdf>

² First Nations Technology Council, *Indigenous Leadership in Technology: Understanding Access and Opportunities in British Columbia*, 2022, https://www.technologycouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/FNTC_ILIT_eport_2022.pdf

Methodology

Reflecting on the project's core delivery period from 2020 to 2023, the evaluation focused on project design, delivery, and early outcomes related to organizational awareness, workplace practices, and readiness to support Indigenous recruitment, retention, and positive workplace experiences. A qualitative, mixed-methods approach was used, drawing on semi-structured interviews with employees from participating companies and a review of project-related materials, including training content, workplace policies, and company-specific roadmaps. The findings are based on qualitative, self-reported data from a small number of companies. They are intended to identify effective practices and areas for improvement, rather than provide a generalized assessment of the broader technology sector.

Building Understanding and Practical Change

The Technology Council collaborated with each company through a series of engagement activities designed to foster shared understanding and support meaningful change within their organizations. To develop training and recommendations tailored to each company's needs, the Technology Council conducted one-on-one interviews to learn about each company's approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the Indigenous employee experience. In parallel, the Technology Council reviewed each company's existing policies, programs, and workplace materials shared by partners, applying an Indigenous lens to understand current structures, identifying strengths and gaps, and finding patterns across organizations. This process was valuable in developing tailored training workshops and documents that educated and fostered conversations on Indigenous history, colonization, and cultural safety in the workplace.

These workshops helped companies further reflect on their workplace practices, identify gaps, and identify areas for improvement in Indigenous hiring, retention, and overall experience. Conversations from these workshops provided key insights for creating a company-specific roadmap outlining recommendations for each company to advance reconciliation, foster an inclusive work environment that accommodates Indigenous worldviews, and establish meaningful career pathways for Indigenous talent through changes to workplace systems and processes.

Challenges, Gaps and Opportunities

Throughout the project, companies demonstrated a genuine commitment to advancing reconciliation and building relationships with Indigenous communities, and continued to show interest in receiving additional training and information on implementing changes within their organizations. Each stage of the project served as a meaningful step towards reconciliation, as companies learned about Canada's colonial history from an Indigenous perspective and identified changes that would address existing barriers to Indigenous inclusion in the workplace.

Progress on action items was limited due to several challenges. For instance, the evaluation noted that both the roadmaps and workshops could have been more tightly scoped and highlighted a few priority areas rather than presenting an extensive list of recommended changes. It also found that the workshops and presentations would have benefited from a stronger emphasis on Indigenous-specific inclusion strategies, rather than broader DEI frameworks, as well as more opportunities for participant engagement. The project could have also done more to encourage companies to address economic reconciliation by incorporating more Indigenous companies into their supply chains, or by helping companies find Indigenous candidates for jobs that require less technical training.

In project delivery, the Technology Council faced challenges, including staff turnover, which disrupted operations and slowed momentum. Despite these challenges and areas for improvement, companies have continued to implement actions in their roadmaps, focusing on further developing their understanding of Indigenous recruitment processes and Indigenous data sovereignty.

Where This Work is Going

Building on the relationships, insights and lessons from Moving Beyond Inclusion, the Technology Council will continue to engage with the technology sector in British Columbia through initiatives that strengthen Indigenous participation in tech and tech-enabled careers. This includes expanding partnerships with companies to support work-integrated learning opportunities, delivering culturally grounded AI and digital skills training, and connecting Indigenous talent with meaningful employment pathways.

Moving forward, the Technology Council is realigning its efforts more closely with its core mandate of advancing digital literacy for Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia. This shift reflects a renewed focus on building the foundational digital skills, confidence, and capabilities Indigenous Peoples need to access, succeed in, and lead within the technology sector.

Future work will prioritize Indigenous-led approaches to digital skills development, workforce readiness, and data sovereignty, while continuing to collaborate with industry partners who are committed to reconciliation in practice. By centring Indigenous priorities and investing in long-term capacity building, the Technology Council aims to support sustainable career pathways and increase Indigenous representation across BC's growing digital economy.

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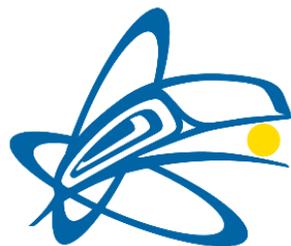
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