



coast  
mountain  
college

## International Education Strategic Plan

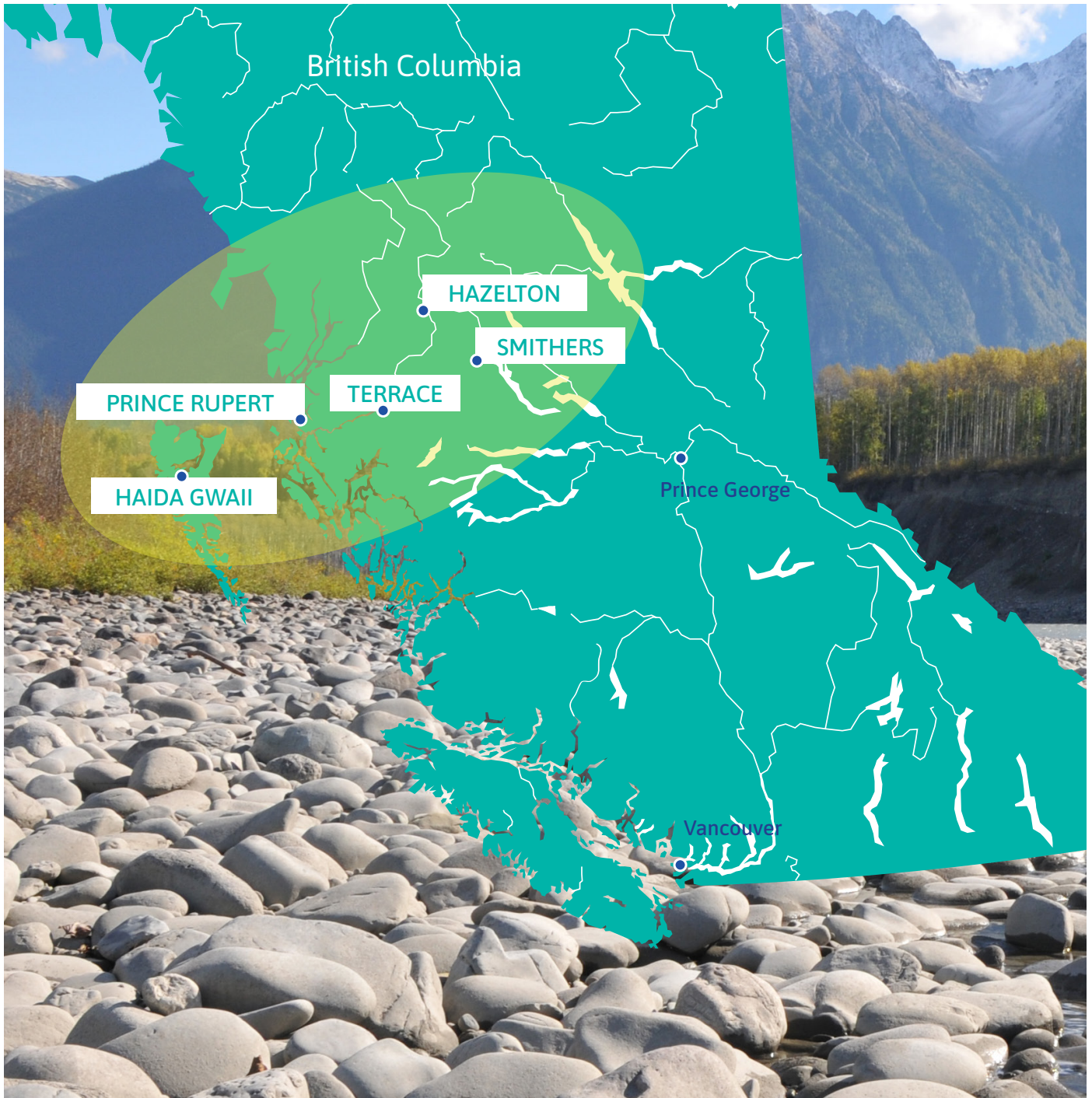
For Academic Years 2024/25 through 2027/28

Updated February 10, 2025









## Land Acknowledgment

Coast Mountain College (CMTN) acknowledges the unceded traditional territories of the Haida, Ts'msyen, Nisga'a, Haisla, Gitksan, and Wet'suwet'en Nations where students, staff, and faculty are privileged to work, learn, and live.

CMTN also acknowledges our close neighbours of the Tahltan Nation. CMTN campuses are located in the following communities and traditional territories:

- Hazelton, Gitksan
- Prince Rupert, Ts'msyen
- Smithers, Wet'suwet'en
- Terrace, Ts'msyen

The College has classrooms on Haida Gwaii (traditional territory of the Haida people) and Houston (traditional territory of the Witsuwit'en people).



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## President's Accountability Statement

At Coast Mountain College, we cultivate safe, supportive learning environments for all students. We understand that student health and wellbeing are integral to student academic success and we offer extensive wrap-around support services for all our students.

The College's mission statement, "we create adventurous pathways to transform lives," defines our core purpose and the ways in which we show up daily for our students, employees, and the communities we serve. We are committed to delivering quality training and education, informed by the values outlined in our institutional strategic plan: adventure, transformation, and integrity. These are the guiding principles that help us make decisions and determine priorities in our work, including our international education activities.

Coast Mountain College celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. This marks half a century of serving Northwest BC and building economic prosperity in our region. We are proud of our history. Only in the last few years have we begun hosting international students in our classrooms, but we are excited about the opportunities that come with this interest in our institution and our region, as well as the global opportunities we can provide to local citizens.

The following plan provides an overview of our approach to international education, as well as four key goals to enhance equitable access to education and sustainable growth of the College and our communities.

I thank our Education Council and our First Nations Council who are instrumental in meeting our goals, along with all the faculty, staff, and students of the Coast Mountain College community who work to uphold our values and commitments.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laurie Wayne

President and CEO, Coast Mountain College



## Overview

### History of International Education at Coast Mountain College

Coast Mountain College (CMTN) began its international education program in 2017. In 2018, an external consultant developed the first international education strategic plan for the College. Since then, CMTN has progressed significantly in its international education journey. Many of the recommendations from that original document were achieved; others no longer apply.

The College revisited that plan in 2024 and the Board of Governors approved a new plan in April 2024. The new plan is being updated in February 2025 to add additional details recommended by BC's Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS), to support a more uniform approach to international education planning and accountability across the sector in British Columbia.

Underscoring the international education strategic plan (IESP) are the broader *Coast Mountain College Institutional Strategic Plan*, mandates from the provincial government, and the College's core values of adventure, transformation, and integrity, as well as the institutional goal to become the college of choice for experiential, place-based learning by 2027.

### Key Programs Enrolling International Students

CMTN is funded to provide education and training to the residents of Northwest BC and this is its primary focus. The College is continuously developing programs to meet the needs of the community and is committed to maintaining access to programming and program seats for domestic students first. When seats are not filled, space is available for international students who wish to experience living and learning in the Northwest. A set number of program seats is designated for domestic students who complete applications by the registration deadline and meet the academic criteria of their programs. These will not be filled by international students until the registration deadline is met.

All eligible programs are open to interested international students. In accordance with the 2024 policy updates from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), international students who applied for their study permit after November 1, 2024 and who wish to apply to IRCC for a post-graduation work permit (PGWP) are now limited in the programs they can consider. This has shifted international student interests away from programs such as management and human resources, and towards science, technology, health, human services, and allied health and trades programs.

### Indigenization with Internationalization at Coast Mountain College

Although the *College and Institute Act* outlines a bi-cameral governance structure, with clear roles for the Board of Governors and the Education Council (EdCo), the College has a quasi tri-cameral governance system that includes a First Nations Council (FNC). The Board provides long-term direction to the College and works in partnership with both the EdCo and FNC, leading to more inclusive perspectives in policies.

The FNC, founded in 1996, provides CMTN with a process of direct consultation with First Nations communities in the region to receive strategic and operational feedback on many issues, including student supports, community education needs, and College programs.

EdCo is the advisory body to the Board on educational policy. The council acts as an overarching body to assist the College in achieving its mission of being a post-secondary institution dedicated to excellence in teaching and learning. In addition, the Articulation and Curriculum Committee (ACC) of EdCo is a major contributor to curriculum quality assurance and ensures that steps are taken to Indigenize programs and courses before they receive EdCo approval.





As part of CMTN’s ongoing commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, the College has outlined some important ways in which it weaves together Indigenization and internationalization:

- Orientation activities and materials are provided to inform and educate international students about the diverse Indigenous Peoples of this region, their histories, and the effects of colonization.
- CMTN works with its advisors to deliver programs and courses that include Indigenous content and share Indigenous worldviews as part of the curriculum, with regular updates, reviews, and amendments.
- First Nations access coordinators at all campuses provide cultural activities to create awareness and increase understanding. A location-based approach to Indigenization means that students experience the specific cultural traditions of the territory and region where their home campus is situated.
- Elders from the communities served by CMTN are invited to attend on-campus events and participate in key student activities such as orientation and convocation ceremonies, feasts, and workshops.
- International students are provided opportunities to share their own experiences with colonization and decolonization in their home countries, where applicable.
- The College provides many opportunities for international students to share their culture and learn about others. CMTN’s student leaders-in-action plan events for Diwali, Onam, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Orange Shirt Day, National Indigenous Peoples’ Day, Hoobiyee, and others.

## **Institutional Integrity**

### **Institutional and Community Sustainability**

A balanced international education plan considers many factors, including the housing and service capacity of local communities, the sustainability of CMTN campuses, and the mandate for CMTN staff and faculty to offer high quality, accessible, local education and training opportunities.

Program alignment with labour market demand is also very important. CMTN has a thoughtful mix of programs and continues to develop more options in high-demand sectors, including health, trades, and technology, to benefit the region with highly employable graduates.

CMTN welcomes international students at three of its campuses, all of which are situated in small, friendly communities that offer a range of services such as settlement agencies, places of worship, international food stores, and active cultural community associations. The College continues to build cross-cultural connections by engaging students in community volunteer opportunities and work-integrated learning activities to support local businesses and to foster networking and future opportunities.

### **Enrolment Management**

At each recruitment cycle, key administrators establish target numbers of international applications for each program area, based on the estimated number of seats that will be unclaimed by domestic students, institutional PAL<sup>1</sup> allocations, and recent study permit approval rates from different countries. These target numbers are shared with the Admissions Team and the in-country representatives. When the target number of applications for a program is reached, that program is closed to new international applications. This strategy supports both diversity in the

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<sup>1</sup> Provincial Attestation Letter – The provincial government determines the number of PALs the College can issue to prospective or transferring international students each year.



classrooms and maintains CMTN’s international student enrolment at a level that the College and its local communities can support and accommodate.

### **Projected International Enrolment at CMTN**

International enrolment projections are difficult to make given that past data cannot inform future data in a rapidly changing international education sector. While it is important for Northwest communities and CMTN to continue welcoming international students, the proportion of international students within the overall student population is expected to decrease significantly each year for the next three years, as current students graduate and fewer new students apply. CMTN is committed to monitoring its student enrolment to ensure that no more than 30% of these are international students. The actual numbers will likely be lower than this.

### **Transparent Tuition Fee System**

CMTN publishes current fees on each program page of its website. The fee tables provide a transparent breakdown of the tuition for two semesters (one academic year), as well as lab fees, student union fees, health and dental insurance, and descriptions of what each of these costs covers. Estimates are also provided for books, supplies, and field school fees, where applicable. Tuition and fees are in effect from August 1 to July 31 of the current academic year.

Each August, CMTN raises tuition fees by the standard 2% for both domestic and international students. In the event that a larger increase is considered for international students, this proposal would require approval of the Board of Governors and would grandparent the standard 2% increase for any current students for a period of one year so that all students would have extended notice of future fee increases.

Fees are also printed on the letters of acceptance (LOAs) sent to international applicants so they are aware of what they can expect before choosing to proceed with their applications.

CMTN has a payment and refund policy that stipulates when fees are due and the refund process to be followed when a student withdraws from their studies or is denied a study permit by IRCC. The policy is publicly available on the CMTN website.

### **Regional Representatives**

CMTN phased in a regional representative (or in-country representative) model over the past four years to improve control over its agent network and ensure that the College is working with reputable organizations. CMTN currently has three regional representatives based in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Latin America. To support ethical recruitment practices and transparency, CMTN undertakes several important measures:

- Within their first year of employment, in-country representatives come to Canada to tour all campuses and meet faculty, staff, and current students as part of a week-long orientation. This experience allows CMTN’s exclusive representatives to know what each of the different communities has to offer in terms of services and amenities, to hear directly from students about their experiences, and to develop personal connections with the CMTN team so they can quickly answer applicant and agent questions with accurate information.
- In-country representatives have a direct connection with agents in their region with whom CMTN has agreements, so they can monitor recruitment practices, check references, conduct office visits, and advise CMTN about the partnerships that best align with the College values of adventure, transformation, and integrity.
- In-country representatives or the international recruitment coordinator conduct reference checks on all new agents before onboarding can begin.



## **Agent Management Plans**

CMTN currently has written agreements with all of its agents and these are reviewed annually or bi-annually. In an effort to improve our processes, the standard written contract has been revised to more directly address education quality assurance (EQA) guidelines. CMTN will also implement agent management best-practices recommended by Edified, an Australia-based education consultancy firm.

The contract template includes a termination clause should CMTN determine that any terms of the agreement have been breached.





## Strategic Direction and Planning

This strategic plan consists of four primary goals that address diversity, student success, community alignment, and expanded opportunities for people living in Northwest BC. Operational plans to support these goals are set and monitored by the relevant departments and the CMTN Global Strategy Committee.

### Goal 1: Increasing Classroom Diversity at Coast Mountain College

Diversification provides benefits to local students and a truly diverse experience for our international students. Much can be learned from exposure to different cultural perspectives, including self-awareness, intercultural skills, social awareness, curiosity and empathy, enhanced problem-solving, and new language skills, all of which are beneficial in future studies and workplaces. CMTN is committed to providing these benefits to all of its students through diverse classroom experiences.

#### Diversifying Recruitment Efforts

The CMTN Recruitment Team continues to work on the diversification of recruitment.

Currently CMTN has representatives based in three regions:

- Region 1: South Asia
- Region 2: Latin America
- Region 3: Southeast Asia.

The College also receives applications and students from outside these regions through our agent agreements.

CMTN will continue to adjust its marketing and recruitment activities in its attempt to meet the following targets by the start of the 2027/28 academic year:

- Continue to have a broad range of home countries represented in our international student population and adjust the proportions so that no more than 30% of international students are from a single country. This will help increase diversity in individual classrooms and reduce risk related to any future political or geographical incidents.
- Show a measurable increase in enrolment from the following countries: Mexico, Columbia, Peru, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.
- Explore options to connect with BC offshore schools and International Baccalaureate (IB) schools as potential new markets.



## Goal 2: Continued Commitment to Student Success for Inbound International Students

At CMTN, we understand that every learner's educational journey is unique and that each person has different opportunities and challenges. Each year we refine our services and processes to better meet the needs of all students and we are committed to this ongoing journey.

### A Student-Centred Approach

CMTN academic advisors are available to meet one-on-one with students to put together individual education plans to support student success and wellbeing. When required, this may mean referring students to financial aid, learner assistant specialists, accessibility services, the CARE Team, or health supports. It could mean a short-term reduction in course load or a planned break from studies for family or medical reasons. Each student's needs are different and CMTN strives to provide the individual attention and support that is possible at a small college.

### Key Services and Supports

Each year, CMTN refines its services and supports to better meet the needs of all students, and the College is committed to this ongoing journey.

Health and wellbeing are key determinants in student success and CMTN shapes student services with this in mind. Indigenous, domestic, and international students are all able to benefit from these supports.

Annual student surveys and faculty reporting help the Student Services Team to set incremental goals for improving services and measuring success. In addition, increased retention and timely program completion rates for international students are priorities for CMTN and will be assessed regularly, as compared to the baseline metrics calculated for the 2023/24 academic year.

Current services and opportunities that are available to CMTN students include:

- pre-departure information sessions online (for those coming from abroad)
- in-person orientation events at the start of each semester
- organized community outings and campus events led by the Student Engagement Team
- on-campus workshops to address student issues (e.g., budgets, safety, stress management, immigration information, employment)
- learning assistance specialists
- accessibility coordinators
- academic advising and education planning
- international advising (RCIC/RISIA qualified staff)
- director of student health services (a registered pharmacist can provide prescriptions for minor ailments, referrals to counselling services and medical care, and substance use supports)
- *Green Shield* and *Guard.me* health insurance access
- campus food banks and breakfast clubs
- emergency grocery cards
- emergency bursaries



- counselling referrals
- work-integrated learning opportunities
- early alert referral system (EARS) for students who are struggling
- peer tutoring programs
- Peer Writing Centre
- WriteAway online writing support service
- dedicated librarians, technicians, and clerks to support access to quality resources and foster research skills and information literacy
- “Library of Things” that can be borrowed with a CMTN library card (e.g., bikes, small household appliances, games, sports equipment, laptops, photography and video equipment)
- “Ask a Librarian” service available through the CMTN website
- on-campus recreation options (e.g., table tennis, basketball hoop, pool table)
- student housing on campus in Terrace
- rental housing link information website and partnership with Skeena Diversity (Terrace)
- free access for students to on-campus fitness centre (Terrace).

In addition to these supports provided by CMTN, external social service providers regularly visit campuses to keep students informed of the many community services that are available to them off campus. Some organizations that periodically set up information tables and share information include Skeena Diversity and other settlement organizations, Foundry and other youth wellness organizations, Service Canada, RCMP, Elections Canada, Elections BC, Work BC, and BC Transit.

### **Information Sources**

The CMTN website carries up-to-date information for international students. This is where students can find housing options, both on and off campus, as well information about the region, transportation options, typical costs of rental accommodation, residential tenancy rights, and the kinds of considerations that students should think about when choosing accommodation, as well as employment information.

In addition to these resources, CMTN reaches out to its international students through social media channels. Students who follow CMTN International on Facebook or Instagram can find frequent updates about important information that is helpful in navigating the student journey in Canada. Topics covered include how to dress for cold weather, how to apply for a social insurance number, relevant CMTN policies, and other subjects of interest to international students.

Many student groups have created WhatsApp and Facebook communities to share relevant information, experiences, and resources. The College also has international student ambassador volunteers who share videos, photos, and experiences on their own social media channels, allowing current and prospective students to reach out and ask questions and understand what the CMTN experience is all about.





## **Financial Aid**

Finances can be a challenge for all students. The CMTN Foundation and the College's financial aid office work hard to support students who need extra funds to complete their training. The CMTN Foundation routinely adds new awards and bursaries to the list of opportunities available, including some that are specified for international students.

As of 2025, the CMTN Foundation offers eight awards and bursaries that are open to international students each year, totalling more than \$13,000. In addition, CMTN offers up to 14 international entrance awards per year (\$5,000 per award) for new international students from locations in which CMTN is working to increase awareness of the College and its uniqueness. These are in addition to the emergency bursaries, emergency grocery cards, and food bank services available through the financial aid and student engagement offices.

## **Student Preparation**

Well-prepared incoming students are very likely to succeed in their studies. This includes financial preparedness, to manage the high cost of living in Canada, academic preparedness, including registering in a program that aligns closely with their previous training and future goals, and sufficient English language skills to succeed at the College level.

CMTN entry requirements, such as a minimum international English language testing system (IELTS) score of 6.0 and a tuition deposit of \$9,000, help ensure that students are both academically and financially prepared for studies at CMTN and are highly committed.

CMTN will continue to review and adjust processes for thorough application evaluation. The managing leads will provide ongoing access to training for the Admissions Team, academic advisors, and in-country representatives so they can keep incoming students informed and well set up for success from the day they arrive at the College.



### **Goal 3: Program Alignment to Meet Local Labour Market Needs in Northwest BC**

CMTN remains focused on programs that provide clear pathways to further education and/or meaningful careers in Northwest BC and aims to support this focus through increased community connection and understanding.

Over the period of this international education strategic plan, CMTN is committed to:

- increasing program options in high labour market demand sectors based on the regional labour market outlook published by WorkBC and feedback from industry contacts
- maintaining international program availability across the region at the Prince Rupert, Smithers, and Terrace campuses to support regional sustainability
- establishing program enrolment targets for key programs and ensuring that in-country representatives and agents are trained to recruit for these programs
- creating or updating pathway documents to show program outcomes, including further study options and/or careers
- updating admission and evaluation processes to reduce barriers for international students entering key program areas.

To support these aims CMTN has established program advisory groups that include industry specialists who provide advice on local training needs. In addition, the College holds regular regional Education Advisory Committee meetings for all its regions, to share information and hear from community organizations about how the College can support shared goals.

Many members of the CMTN Management Team are also board members for local organizations, including the local chambers of commerce and Rotary clubs, and therefore meet regularly with business owners and managers in the communities CMTN serves. These members bring additional insights to the attention of the executive when there is a potential opportunity for CMTN to support community needs through education and training.

The College hosts two career fairs per year, where students and community members can network with local employers to learn more about opportunities and apply for work in their fields. Leading up to these fairs, the Work-Integrated Learning Team provides student workshops on resume writing, interview skills, and networking skills to help students prepare for their next steps. As well, employment resources and links are on the CMTN website to help students prepare for employment and find meaningful work.



## **Goal 4: Expanding CMTN’s Outbound International Education Program to Better Serve Local Students and Faculty**

CMTN has the strategic goal of becoming the college of choice for experiential, place-based learning (EPBL) by 2027. To support this goal, the College seeks out international education partnerships, locally and globally, to support the exchange of knowledge and culture.

### **Thoughtful Partnerships to Support Specific Goals**

CMTN forms partnerships with international post-secondary institutions that will appeal to its local students and faculty. These partnerships can support EPBL professional development for faculty, EPBL learning opportunities for students, and the possibility of special projects and field schools.

### **International Partnerships, Agreements, and Memorandums of Understanding**

CMTN is a founding member of the Western Canada Mobility Network (WCMN), a consortium of seven post-secondary institutions seeking to provide expanded study-abroad opportunities for students. Such programs allow students from several institutions to join together in study-abroad opportunities. Successful outbound student opportunities have already begun.

CMTN is actively involved in the Global Skills Opportunity Consortium (GSOC) of 10 different post-secondary institutions, which also provides expanded study-abroad opportunities for students. Like the WCMN programs, the GSOC programs allow students from several institutions to join together in study-abroad opportunities.

The manager of community and inclusion is responsible for reviewing existing international transfer pathways and partnership agreements to evaluate their benefits and renew the ones that best align with CMTN’s goals, outbound activities, and local interest. This work is ongoing.

### **Accessibility of Outbound International Education Opportunities**

CMTN is creating and revising documents to help domestic students more easily access and participate in outbound international education opportunities. These “one-pagers” will provide a user-friendly checklist to prepare for international travel and will feature direct links to Global Affairs Canada, passport regulations, and other critical information.

The College is actively engaged in developing study-abroad field schools with its consortium partners. Often, through such consortiums, travel bursaries are available to participating students to lower the cost of international travel. For example, one study-abroad opportunity to Mexico featured a \$2,500 bursary, and another proposed study-abroad field school opportunity to New Zealand (ECCE) will offer a similar bursary to participating students.

To support CMTN’s core aim of experiential, place-based learning, instructors can apply to the CMTN Foundation for funds to support field school opportunities abroad. These applications are reviewed by the CMTN Foundation Board on a case-by-case basis. In 2024, a field school for hairstylist students provided a subsidized opportunity to attend a training conference in Anaheim, California. Similarly, a university credit field school in Japan is planned for 2025 which will qualify for a subsidy through the CMTN Foundation. Additional opportunities are expected in the future.

All international field school proposals are presented by the dean to President’s Council for review and approval. These presentations include learning outcomes, itineraries, equity, diversity, and inclusion measures, detailed budgets, and risk assessments.

CMTN continues to work with its partners to provide study-abroad opportunities to all students, regardless of possible barriers, while also working internally to promote rich international student experiences.





## Conclusion

This high-level overview and four key goals make up the revised international education strategic plan for Coast Mountain College. A dedicated team of administrators, support staff, and faculty will be working to achieve these goals over the next three years. This strategic plan will be reviewed annually by the CMTN Global Strategy Committee. Detailed progress on these goals and the activities that support them will be reported annually in our institutional accountability report and plan to the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.

If you have questions about this strategy document, please contact Heather Bastin, Executive Director of External Relations at [hbastin@coastmountaincollege.ca](mailto:hbastin@coastmountaincollege.ca) or phone 250-635-6511 Ext. 5494.





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college



Contact information:  
5331 McConnell Avenue, Terrace, BC V8G 4X2  
Phone: 250.635.6511 | Toll free: 1.877.277.2288  
Email: [info@coastmountaincollege.ca](mailto:info@coastmountaincollege.ca)  
[coastmountaincollege.ca](http://coastmountaincollege.ca)