

STRATEGIC PLAN

ACHIEVING NAIT 2021

**WE
ARE** **ESSENTIAL
TO ALBERTA**



NAIT'S VISION

To be the most relevant and responsive post-secondary institution in Canada and a world leading polytechnic by 2021.

OUR VALUES

Respect

We treat each other with respect, including behaviours of honesty, integrity, transparency, trust and an appreciation for diversity.

Collaboration

We work together to advance NAIT and its academic mission in fostering relationships and in building community.

Celebration

We come together in fun and enjoyment to recognize accomplishments and successes and to show appreciation.

Support

We support people through empowerment, providing a safe and caring workplace and providing opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Accountability

We are accountable, individually and collectively, to each other and to NAIT for our actions and for achieving our promises.

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BRENT HESJE

**Chair, NAIT Board
of Governors**

BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Alberta is forward-looking, bold, entrepreneurial and plays an important role in our increasingly global economy. NAIT is an essential part of this amazing province. As Board Chair, I have great admiration for our vision, leadership and collaboration with so many stakeholders.

As a business leader, I value the highly skilled, innovative individuals that are part of NAIT's growing family. With over 190,000 alumni, our graduates are building Alberta in areas that align to the institution's four educational pillars: business; health; trades; and science, technology and the environment. For over 50 years, NAIT has built strong relationships with industry to make sure they have the skilled employees and applied research they need. NAIT is an essential partner in helping industry and our province succeed.

I am excited by this Strategic Plan. Our Board of Governors played an important role in its development and believes the strategies identified in this document, and the strength of stakeholders in NAIT's family, will contribute to realizing our vision of becoming a world leading polytechnic.

PRESIDENT AND CEO'S MESSAGE

This Strategic Plan identifies how we will achieve NAIT 2021 to become the most relevant and responsive post-secondary institution in Canada and a world leading polytechnic. We will fulfill our promises to Alberta, our students, industry and our staff.

Thank you to the over 3,200 individuals who helped to develop NAIT 2021 and this Strategic Plan. The discussions with our students, staff, alumni, Board of Governors, government and industry partners contributed greatly to our vision, values, promises, outcomes and strategies.

As a polytechnic, NAIT is known for its technology-based, experiential, hands-on learning. We work directly with industry to ensure we are meeting labour market demands. We also conduct applied research that solves real-world problems faced by Alberta's industry. By finding solutions, companies become more competitive and efficient.

NAIT offers an inclusive community that fosters diversity. We have a range of supports for our students to help them reach their greatest aspirations. One example is our Encana Aboriginal Student Centre that has elders on-site to help Aboriginal students transition successfully to NAIT. This is only one example of our many programs that we will continue to develop to meet our students' needs.

As Alberta grows, NAIT is positioned to respond. Together, we will contribute to this province's continued success.



DR. GLENN FELTHAM
President and CEO



= POLYTECHNIC

Learn more at
nait.ca/polytechnic

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

To develop NAIT's vision and this Strategic Plan, over 3,200 students, staff, alumni, Board of Governors, government, industry partners, the NAIT Academic Staff Association, the NAIT Students' Association, AUPE and other stakeholders were engaged. Each of these groups has a continued role to play in the successful implementation and achievement of this Plan, and each requires support from the institution.

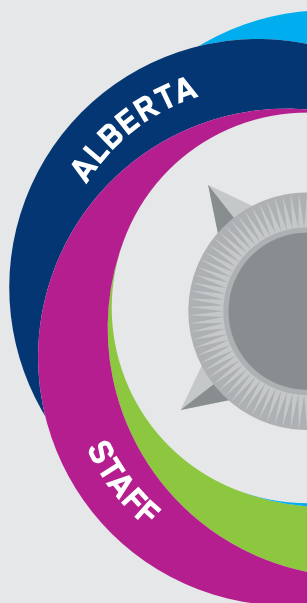
THE PROMISES

PROMISE TO ALBERTA

NAIT meets the current and emerging needs for polytechnic education and applied research in Alberta. NAIT is relevant and responsive and provides outstanding technical education. While serving the needs of Alberta, NAIT is globally competitive and recognized.

PROMISE TO STAFF

NAIT will continue to be one of Canada's outstanding places to work, which follows from a culture of how we work together. This culture reflects the values of respect, collaboration, celebration, support and accountability.



The Strategic Plan builds on the four promises of NAIT 2021 – promises to Alberta, to students, to industry and to staff. These promises are interdependent and cannot be achieved in isolation of one another.

The strategies also work closely together. In fact, some strategies are intentionally designed to achieve more than one promise. It is this interdependence between promises and strategies that leads to the ultimate achievement of the vision.



PROMISE TO STUDENTS

NAIT provides a positive student experience that encompasses students' mental, emotional and physical well-being and defines success broadly. We prepare students to succeed in meaningful careers, find employment in their chosen field and have the skills necessary to have an immediate impact.

PROMISE TO INDUSTRY

NAIT produces an exceptional skilled workforce, aligned directly to industry needs. Our programs are developed with industry's input and our research is industry-driven to create enterprises that compete worldwide.

WHY A STRATEGIC PLAN?

This is NAIT's long-term roadmap to achieve NAIT 2021. It identifies outcomes, the strategies to be implemented and the metrics to measure our progress. This Plan takes into account the external environment, NAIT's internal resources and emerging opportunities within, and external to, the organization. The Plan aligns tightly to other institutional plans, including our Academic Plan and the Comprehensive Institutional Plan.

The Strategic Plan is a living document and will be reviewed as part of the institution's annual planning processes.



1. Vision, values
and promises

2. Institutional
outcomes, strategies
and performance
measures

3. Academic and
applied research
priorities

4. Three-year
business plan,
including budget
and forecasts

5. Department plans
and priorities aligning
to NAIT 2021

6. Aligns position
descriptions,
performance
and personal
development with
the institution's plans



Promise to Alberta

NAIT meets the current and emerging needs for polytechnic education and applied research in Alberta. NAIT is relevant and responsive and provides outstanding technical education. While serving the needs of Alberta, NAIT is globally competitive and recognized.

The Government of Alberta and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce forecast a shortage of workers over the next seven to nine years. A significant component of these shortages is within the programs that NAIT trains students.

To meet this promise, NAIT needs to grow strategically, provide lifelong pathways, ensure there is an understanding of, and support for, polytechnic education in Alberta and we must do so in a financially sustainable manner.

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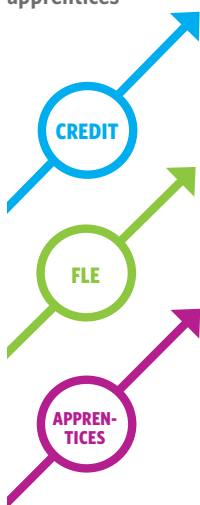
◀ As NAIT’s research chair in peatland restoration, Dr. Bin Xu’s passion is his day job. His research, conducted at the NAIT Boreal Research Institute in Peace River continues to protect and restore northern ecosystems. It’s one of many industry-focused solutions that contribute to a sustainable future for Alberta and the rest of Canada.



1. STRATEGIC GROWTH

METRICS:

Growth in the number of students and apprentices



NAIT uses feedback from industry and labour market data to determine the volume of graduates, skills and training needed today and into the future. The largest expansions in NAIT programs will be in the areas of greatest demand in Alberta.

Over the last 10 years, NAIT's student volume has grown by almost 35 per cent, mirroring the population growth of Alberta. Both NAIT and Alberta continue to ride an economic wave unrivalled in North America. It could properly be described as two waves – one of energy resource development and one of accelerating technological development. A third wave is also coming – one of demographic change. Alberta, similar to many western jurisdictions, has an aging population. However, unlike most of those jurisdictions, Alberta's population continues to grow, with people arriving from other countries and Canadian provinces.

OUTCOME 1

Our growth anticipates and meets the emergent polytechnic needs of Alberta

As a result of this economic and population growth, the Government of Alberta forecasts an unmet demand of over 96,000 new workers by 2023. The shortages are forecast to be greatest in the program areas taught by NAIT.

We are well-positioned at the crest of all three of these waves – the demand for our programs is at a historic high, the full-time employment rate of our graduates exceeds 92 per cent, our staff are talented and dedicated and our programs and people are fueling the province’s prosperity. Further, there is a far greater understanding of the opportunities offered through polytechnic education. Yet we know we have the opportunity to contribute much more.

Over the next decade and beyond, NAIT will grow strategically to meet the province’s needs.

METRICS:

Graduate satisfaction with improved employment opportunities



Employment post-graduation



STRATEGIES

1.1

Align programs to the changing labour market needs of Alberta.

1.2

Optimize NAIT’s physical, technological and human resource capacity to accommodate growth.

1.3

Ensure business processes are nimble and responsive.

2. LIFELONG PATHWAYS

METRICS:

Growth in non-credit student enrolment



Growth in the number of graduates and apprenticeship completers



To meet the emerging needs of the province for polytechnic education, people must be able to access our education. NAIT has been a leader in supporting learner pathways, including the introduction of the Trades to Degrees program. This program recognizes trades professionals and provides them the opportunity to progress from a trades credential to the third year of a degree program. This is just one example of how NAIT is enabling access into the institution for interested learners. We are also creating seamless transitions from high school, developing mobility agreements with other post-secondary institutions, providing flexible arrangements for learners employed in the workforce, and offering training that many professionals need to maintain their accreditation.

Pathways into NAIT, within NAIT and beyond NAIT are necessary to ensure we produce graduates with the right skills in the right number at the right time for our province. NAIT believes education should never have an end-point and a person should be able to upgrade their skills without having to start their education over again.

OUTCOME 2

There are lifelong learning pathways and connections



Dr. Sara Ghotbi is a physician and clinical researcher who characterizes herself as a forever learner. After searching the internet and comparing curricula, she chose NAIT's Project Management Program for its comprehensive courses, competitive pricing and convenient part-time weekend classes. The skills Sara acquired are transferable to any project or industry and have improved all aspects of the projects that she manages. She has been able to apply these same skills successfully in her position as a policy analyst in health care.

STRATEGY

2.1

Enhance barrier-free learner pathways into NAIT, within NAIT and beyond NAIT in support of lifelong education.



The NAITitForward campaign provides an opportunity for faculty and staff to direct charitable dollars to NAIT. By 2021, we aim to increase the participation rate to 25% and generate \$87,000 in gross revenue towards Essential: The NAIT Campaign.

3. KNOWLEDGE, PRIDE AND UNDERSTANDING

There is a long-standing North American perception of a post-secondary hierarchy. Polytechnics and their hands-on learning environment become a second choice to university education for some students. It is time to embrace a parity of esteem across all forms of post-secondary education. NAIT education is second to none. Higher learning needs to focus on aligning interests and aptitudes to the most appropriate learning environment. This can only happen through knowledge of the value of all forms of post-secondary education and greater understanding of the unique role that polytechnics play.

Polytechnic education and applied research are not universally well understood. Too often, learners come to NAIT after enrolling in other learning environments. The average entering age of a NAIT student is 24 years, and over 50 per cent have prior post-secondary experience. When polling NAIT students,

OUTCOME 3

There is demonstrable pride in the unique polytechnic advantage

the number one reason they come to the institution is for a career. It takes too long – at great costs to students, to industry and government – for students to enrol in an institution that aligns with their interests and aptitudes. We expect students, parents and governments will increasingly understand the nature of this education and make informed decisions to ensure Alberta achieves its full potential.

There is incredible pride in being a part of the NAIT family. A student's introduction to NAIT is the beginning of a life-long relationship. The institution offers learning opportunities throughout all aspects of one's life, creates alumni opportunities and makes the campus a welcome space for current and past students to return. Our relationship with students does not end when they graduate; they are forever members of NAIT's large and growing alumni family.

METRICS:

Growth in volume of donations from alumni



Percentage of NAIT graduates that would recommend NAIT to others

Total amount of student scholarship and bursary funds available



STRATEGIES

3.1

Build knowledge and understanding of polytechnics and the value proposition of applied, hands-on, technology-based education, applied research and innovation.

3.2

Embrace alumni as ambassadors, forever learners and givers within the NAIT family.

4. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

METRICS:



Net revenue from continuing education and contract training

NAIT's vision can only be achieved if the institution remains financially strong through the efficient and effective use of all resources. Governments at all levels around the world have increasing financial pressures with finite resources and competing priorities. All public sector organizations will be challenged to do more with less. Many post-secondary institutions across Canada have seen reductions in government funding, a trend that could continue into the future. This will require greater scrutiny of expenditures and an increased focus on the value for dollars spent.

NAIT is well-positioned to plan long-term and adapt to these new fiscal realities. A balanced approach to financial planning has always been and will continue to be fundamental to the institution's operations, focusing on both fiscal prudence and revenue generation.

OUTCOME 4

We are financially sustainable



NAIT's Financial Sustainability Task Force is looking at opportunities for greater efficiencies and increased revenue. One exciting action NAIT has underway is the development and implementation of financial performance measures that will support enrolment growth and optimal space utilization.

STRATEGY

4.1

Develop and implement short-and long-term financial strategies.



Promise to Students

NAIT provides a positive student experience that encompasses students' mental, emotional and physical well-being and defines success broadly. NAIT prepares students to succeed in meaningful careers, find employment in their chosen field and have the skills necessary to have an immediate impact.

NAIT's learning environment is transformative for students. It is an environment where instructors with industry experience guide and provide hands-on learning opportunities. We also provide wrap-around supports that include: counselling, academic advising, health services, diverse student clubs and much more. A NAIT credential leads to a meaningful career that helps support a graduate's family and contribute to their community.

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Jaenelle Cardinal dreams of opening her own construction business and mentoring young Aboriginal women. Now she has the credentials she needs to make this dream a reality. She has a diploma in Business Administration - Management and has nearly completed her Carpenter journey person's certificate.

5. TRANSFORMATIVE POLYTECHNIC CAREERS

METRICS:

Percentage of
graduates and
apprentices employed
after graduation



Satisfaction with
the quality of
program

 **APPRENTICES**

 **GRADUATES**

 **EMPLOYERS**

NAIT's education is applied, hands-on, and relevant to the needs of industry. Our instructors at NAIT are preparing students not for a job, but for a rewarding career. The technical skills, critical inquiry, learning outcomes and enabling skills will ensure that graduates enter the workforce with ease and quickly add value to their organization. Employers see tremendous value in NAIT graduates. In 2014, 95 per cent of employers surveyed were satisfied with the performance of their NAIT graduates and 99 per cent indicated they would hire a NAIT graduate again. These are powerful results and continue to affirm progress towards the institution's vision of being the most relevant and responsive post-secondary institution in Canada.

OUTCOMES

Polytechnic education
that enables
transformative careers



As a leading polytechnic, technology is integrated throughout our programs at NAIT. Students gain the skills they need through hands-on experiential learning. Our graduates have the knowledge and skills employers want - they leave NAIT prepared and in demand.

STRATEGIES

5.1 | Deliver programs that incorporate leading practices and are hands-on, relevant and applied.

5.2 | Integrate quality and continuous improvement processes.

5.3 | Ensure that learners have the enabling skills (in addition to the technical skills) that provide the foundation for a meaningful career.

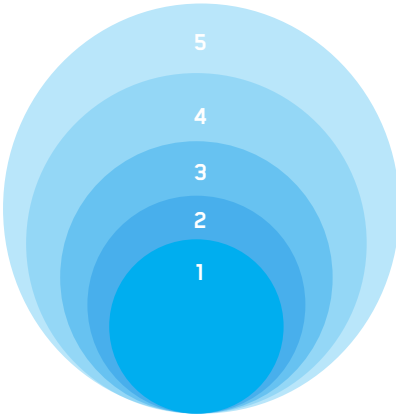
6. HOLISTIC LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

NAIT will have student housing on its main campus which is close to the heart of Edmonton's city centre. Whether full-time or apprentice, single or a family, our students will have a range of options to suit individual preferences.

In addition to preparing students for meaningful careers, NAIT provides a positive learning experience that encompasses students' mental, emotional and physical well-being and defines success broadly. Student services are integrated into NAIT's programs, including co-curricular programming, support for diverse communities, mental health and physical well-being, access to an ombudsman, assistance for academic success and targeted supports for faculty members as they focus on teaching. NAIT continues to expand its understanding of the ways in which student learning takes place, both inside and outside of the classroom. As NAIT's community grows, so will the breadth of services available to its students.

OUTCOME 6

A student-centred experience beyond the classroom that supports and inspires lifelong success



1. Learning within the physical or virtual classroom
2. Support for faculty teaching and student learning
3. Supports related to students' individual needs, including counselling and tutorials
4. Supports related to students' general needs including orientation and advising
5. Support for positive experiences such as Safe Spaces and recreation

METRICS:

Graduate satisfaction with quality of student services



Percentage of students satisfied with the quality of student services



Number of staff trained in Mental Health First Aid



STRATEGY

6.1

Create support structures and opportunities that enable student success.



Promise to Industry

NAIT produces an exceptionally skilled workforce, aligned directly to industry needs. Our programs are developed with industry's input and our research is industry-driven to create enterprises that compete worldwide.

Alberta's industries consistently identify, develop and adapt new products, materials, systems and services to stay globally competitive. NAIT helps Alberta businesses be competitive with applied research, innovation and productivity enhancement that play a key role in developing the economy and the social well-being of communities.

One example of NAIT's connection to industry is our Program Advisory Committees (PACs) that include industry representatives. PACs advise on program outcomes, trends and emerging skills requirements for employees. Based on this feedback, NAIT maintains, expands, shrinks or suspends our programs, in keeping with industry needs.

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◀ Jennifer Pendura, Group Lead for Cenovus's Community Affairs Department, is helping to build a brighter, more vibrant future for young people in Alberta. Cenovus's support of the NAIT Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program assists to identify and develop tomorrow's leaders by helping youth to reach their full potential.

7. PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT OF INDUSTRY

METRICS:

Total economic impact



Volume of people trained in the NAIT Shell Manufacturing Centre



Industry is a partner in all that NAIT does. An important part of this relationship is productivity improvement and competitiveness enhancement. One example is the Shell Manufacturing Centre that was created to elevate productivity in Alberta. Its focus is on assisting industry through process improvement and advanced technologies, as well as with manufacturing solutions. The Centre also provides education and assistance in technology adoption.

Over the years ahead, the Centre will continue to leverage and apply new and emerging technologies, such as robotics, Radio-frequency identification devices and drones, to enhance how businesses operate. The growth of the Centre will include more partners across Alberta and beyond our provincial borders.

OUTCOME 7

We help industry increase its productivity and competitiveness



For more than 25 years, NAIT's Shell Manufacturing Centre Director, Mave Dhariwal has worked with organizations in every major sector. NAIT will continue to be a leader in creating strategic economic opportunities, increasing innovation and improving productivity of existing or new enterprises in Alberta's key economic sectors.

STRATEGY

7.1

Expand NAIT's capacity, delivery models, and scope to support Alberta's economic growth, especially in the areas of productivity improvement and technological competitiveness.

8. APPLIED RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

METRICS:

Proportion of applied research projects that engage external partners



NAIT's applied research and innovation activities deliver economic and societal benefits for Albertans. There are three unique aspects of applied research at NAIT.

First, applied research and innovation is driven by industry – in fact, all research activities in a polytechnic institution occur through a full partnership with industry from idea to commercialization. These partnerships enhance the academic mission of an institution and, at NAIT, they align to our vision of being relevant and responsive.

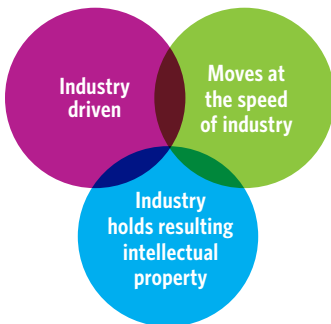
Second, we work at the speed of industry and support commercialization efforts where there is mutual benefit to industry's competitive edge and our academic mission.

OUTCOME 8

A leader in polytechnic applied research and its bridge to innovation, commercialization and new ventures

Third, ownership of intellectual property (IP) remains with industry. The typical, long-standing model of IP ownership is that it resides with the post-secondary institution – not industry. At NAIT, we believe that IP needs to stay with industry.

POLYTECHNIC APPLIED RESEARCH IS:



METRICS:

Number of applied research projects active during the year



STRATEGY

8.1

Develop leading edge applied research and innovation in partnership with industry.



Promise to Staff

NAIT will continue to be one of Canada's outstanding places to work, which follows from a culture of how we work together. The culture reflects the values of respect, collaboration, celebration, support and accountability.

As a learning and applied research organization committed to sustainability, NAIT recruits and retains outstanding staff and provides continuous professional and personal development opportunities. The five values of respect, collaboration, celebration, support and accountability define how staff work with students, industry, stakeholders and one another. Staff have a can-do attitude that creates a nimble and responsive environment in which to effect positive change.

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NAIT was recognized for promoting awareness of mental health and reducing the stigma about mental illness among staff and students by the Canadian Mental Health Association Alberta Division with a 2014 Workplace Wellness Award.



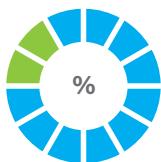
Top Alberta employer for the 4th consecutive year.

Professional development helps all staff to grow and learn. Lifelong learning is encouraged at NAIT for all employees. We provide financial support for our employees to pursue a professional degree or credential of up to \$15,000.

9. GROWING OUR TALENT

METRICS:

Percentage of staff that are aware of the NAIT Way values



Percentage of staff that report support for personal and professional development



Volume of staff nominated for recognition awards



NAIT faculty and staff have exceptional experience and connections that support instructional excellence and relevance of education. The institution will continue to provide a dynamic and vibrant learning culture for faculty and staff. This means continued personal and professional development and opportunities to create and maintain connections with industry.

Values are integral to all interactions. NAIT's values were co-developed with the NAIT community and, most importantly, with faculty and staff. These values have become the bedrock for how decisions are made, how relationships are formed and how people work together. Awareness and consistent application of these values are evaluated every year as part of the annual engagement survey.

While living our values, the faculty and staff will create a dynamic and vibrant learning culture for everyone.

OUTCOME 9

We will grow our talent while practicing the values of the NAIT Way



STRATEGIES

9.1 | Advocate and encourage staff involvement in personal and professional development programs.

9.2 | Ensure decision-making, actions and behaviours are guided by the NAIT values.

9.3 | Support all staff in their instructional, administrative, applied research and/or student services' activities.

10. A HEALTHY AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

METRICS:

Percentage of staff that like their job



Percentage of staff that would recommend NAIT to others



A critical element to NAIT's academic programs is safety. We are a leader in safety training and education in the classroom and this extends into our work environment. All staff need a healthy and safe place to work within.

NAIT developed a future focused health and safety model that describes how staff will be supported in their health, well-being and safety. This also includes access to support services, such as recreation, wellness benefits, counselling and mental health programs. The greatest strength of the institution is the excellence, competence and dedication of our staff.

OUTCOME 10

We will become one of the healthiest workplaces in Alberta



Flynn, NAIT's therapy dog, helps students and staff to reduce their anxiety and stress. He is especially popular with students during exams. Flynn's presence on campus is just one piece of the mental health and wellness supports available at NAIT.

STRATEGIES

10.1

Embed health and safety across NAIT that focuses on best practices.

10.2

Expand well-being supports to all staff.

"NAIT exists to serve Alberta and its people to meet the current and emerging needs of this province. NAIT belongs to the province and people of Alberta. Every decision we make has been informed by this simple fact."

- Dr. Glenn Feltham,
President and CEO



WE
ARE

ESSENTIAL
TO ALBERTA





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August 2015



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