



**An agency of the Government of Ontario**

## **2022-23 Business Plan**

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## Executive Summary

Science North plays a vital role as an economic, tourism and cultural engine for Northern Ontario. Science North and Dynamic Earth are the second and eighth largest science centres in Canada, located in the country's 28th largest city. They are large and successful attractions—Science North and its various attractions receive nearly 300,000 annual admissions in a relatively small market of 162,000 people. Moreover, Science North delivers science educational programming, exhibit experiences and events to more than 100 communities across the 800,000 square km territory of Northern Ontario, serving a diversity of audiences including a large Indigenous population. It also produces, sells and leases travelling exhibitions, large format films, exhibits and multimedia experiences to clients around the world. In fact, Science North is one of Canada's largest producers and exporters of science themed travelling exhibitions and one of the few non-profit IMAX film producers in the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on science centres around the world. Ontario's attractions and agencies, including Science North, have been particularly impacted by the significant decline of the tourism industry. Science North's 2022-23 Business Plan sets out a path for the organization to achieve the priorities and goals of its 2022-25 Strategic Plan and its Mandate as it travels the road to recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. To maintain its vital role as an anchor for economic growth, tourism, job creation and culture in Northern Ontario, Science North will capitalize on its strengths and opportunities and overcome challenges. The organization's resources will be focused to benefit its audiences and clients, partners, stakeholders and funders, with a lens on providing value and meeting the expectations of the Government of Ontario.

Key achievements projected for 2021-2022 include:

- 61,884 visitors to Science North and Dynamic Earth, generating and anticipated \$672,947 in revenue (32% of pre-pandemic levels)
- \$2.6 million in external sales revenue, generating an anticipated profit of 14%
- \$4.0 million in capital grant funding commitments and \$1.7 million in operating grant funding commitments, in addition to MHSTCI funding
- \$1.0 million in private sector and philanthropic funding commitments
- Science experiences delivered to First Nations in Northern Ontario reaching 7,187 participants in 41 communities
- Education and outreach experiences in Northern Ontario reaching 153,209 participants in 53 communities

For 2022-23, clear and specific strategies have been developed according to the Ministry's business planning criteria and Science North's mandate letter. Key priorities in 2022-23 are to:

- Launch new visitor experiences to promote increased attendance and generate revenues, including Go Deeper at Dynamic Earth, two new travelling exhibitions (a 600m<sup>2</sup> and customized 100m<sup>2</sup> version) themed around climate action, and exhibits and workshops at Science North and Dynamic Earth
- Increase engagement Indigenous audiences with new outreach and exhibit experiences developed and delivering in partnership with Indigenous Tourism Ontario, Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Nuclear Waste Management Organization, and the Canadian Association of Science Centres
- Support a potential 2 million+ Ontario students and 16,000+ teachers throughout the 2022-23 school years, including digital workshops, inquiry-based lesson plans, virtual science centre visits and professional development opportunities to help bridge the learning gap resulting from school closure and providing science, financial literacy and digital skills resources
- Continued work on new expansions in Thunder Bay and Kenora, including new facilities, staffing, visitor amenities and programs
- Implement new communication and technology strategies to support a flexible and increasingly remote-based workforce
- Launch a fully integrated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Software to better manage visitor and partner relationships and maximize revenue generation
- Build on established and diverse government relationships to seek and build grant opportunities to support operating, capital renewal and infrastructure needs
- Continued growth of engagement with First Nation communities
- Expanded relationships with tourism and attractions across Northern Ontario

# Our Mandate & Vision

## Mandate

Science North is governed by the Science North Act. The Centre is an operational enterprise with a mandate to:

- Offer a program of science learning across Northern Ontario
- Operate a science centre
- Operate a mining technology and earth sciences centre
- Sell consulting services, exhibits and media productions to support the Centre's development

## Our Vision

We will be the leader in engaging audiences with entertaining, educational and inclusive science experiences.

## Our Purpose

We inspire all people to interact with science in the world around them.

## Our Professional Values

At Science North we are all Bluecoats. Bluecoats are innovative and collaborative. We value accountability, inclusion and striving towards excellence.

## Governance

Science North is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The Board manages the affairs of the Centre by establishing policy and strategic priorities. The Chief Executive Officer directs the operation and administration of the Centre and is responsible to the Board.

## Link with Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries Mandate

Science North is an agency of the Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. The Ministry is providing leadership in supporting and delivering tourism and cultural experiences to improve the quality of life and promote economic growth for all Ontarians. The Ontario Government's mandate for Science North, outlined in its most recent mandate letter, is the underpinning of both Science North's Strategic Plan and its annual Business Plan. The Centre's vision, priorities, goals, key performance indicators and resources are in alignment with this mandate.

## Strategic Direction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had major impacts on Science North's workforce, attractions, programs and business model. At the same time, it's allowed staff to be innovative and creative, and shown an organization with resiliency and abilities to adapt. The Science North team have exceeded expectations to achieve the Centre's mandate in ways we never thought possible.

Science North launched its 2018-2023 Strategic Plan with optimism and has made solid progress in achieving the plan; however, due to the impacts of the pandemic, Science North decided to revisit, modify and pivot the plan. While the purpose, vision and key priorities in our Strategic Plan are still valid, many of the assumptions, the environmental scans and other parameters we operate in have changed.

For these reasons, Science North has taken steps to revitalize its strategic plan, incorporating lessons learned from the past 18 months to capitalize on the opportunities the pandemic created and our great innovative success during this time. This 3-year strategic plan will start in fiscal 2022-2023 and continue through to 2024-2025.

Over the next 3 years, Science North will:

- Re-Connect in new and exciting ways with Audiences, External Partners, Staff and Volunteers
- Re-Imagine how we Grow and Innovate
- Re-Engage more deeply and significantly with our Customers and our Community

Our focus will be to:

- Leverage technology to enhance the visitor experience providing an opportunity for visitors to access deeper content and to remove barriers.
- Develop engaging virtual science experiences to engage and reach audiences.
- Develop programs, services and sales opportunities linked to Northern Ontario communities ensuring reciprocal based relationships.
- Enhance and expand the dining experience at Science North as a strong community presence.
- Fully implement and integrate the Customer Relationship Management system into all activities in the cycle of service.
- Seek outdoor opportunities with partners to deliver unique science experiences throughout Northern Ontario
- Develop a culturally competent workforce.
- Create a flexible work environment enhancing collaboration and innovation.
- Deepen our awesome culture through expanded learning opportunities.
- Develop a long term, sustainable program where all component parts contribute to deepening Indigenous reciprocal relationships.
- Deepen and diversify education audience and relationships through significant growth with teachers and students involved with science
- Expand underground experiences through modern mining and critical minerals.
- Grow our community presence by opening centres in Thunder Bay and Kenora.

# Overview of Current and Future Activities

Science North's 2022-23 Business Plan is based on the Centre's revised Strategic Priorities and Goals, which are well aligned with its Vision, Purpose and provincial mandate letter. The Business Plan focuses on the road to recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on diversity and financial sustainability to accomplish changes and renewal that will increase attendance and revenues, attract tourists and increase their length of stay.

## Re-Connect

### **Cultural Competence**

Science North is committed to fostering a spirit of diversity and inclusion across the organization by ensuring a workplace environment in which diversity and inclusion are interwoven into our core values, strategies, HR policies and day-to-day practices. Initiatives in 2022-23 will be developed and supported through Science North's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee, including offering training opportunities for staff, completing a review of Science North's policies and practices and making suggestions on how they might be amended to provide more diverse experiences, and exploring other ways Science North can promote diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness within the scope of its operations and business plan.

### **Flexible Work Environment**

Science North understands that the world we live in and how we work has changed dramatically, and that adapting to these new norms will be integral to the centre's success moving forward. In 2022-23, Science North will adopt a more flexible work approach, allowing staff for whom it is feasible to work remotely from home to continue to do so. Several factors will be considered when determining the appropriateness of a flexible work arrangement, and in some cases working remotely may not be possible.

### **Awesome Culture**

Science North has a compelling vision and strong organizational culture that seeks to attract and grow talent, inspire employees and drive success. Science North's culture reflects high achievement and excellence in leadership and innovation. Operating within a pandemic environment, Science North has adjusted its talent management strategies to meet the needs of its operations and workforce and adapt to the constantly changing "norms" of COVID-19, resulting in significant levels of unpredictability and uncertainty.

Science North recognizes that mental health and wellness involves finding a balance in all aspects of life, including physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Science North will continue to help support the health and well-being of staff by providing resources and activities to staff and volunteers to promote health and wellness across multiple dimensions. New communication and technology strategies will be implemented in 2022-23 to help support a flexible and increasingly remote-based workforce, including the expansion of Science North's new Intranet. Science North will explore new digitized approaches to orientation, enrollment, and employee development.

Science North will place significant importance on its professional development initiatives to ensure its workforce is well positioned to meet organizational needs in 2022-23, including its Leadership Series offering to all staff with increased focus on personal growth and business acumen. The centre will continue to grow leaders through the Northern Leadership Program, exploring options to develop a custom, tourism focused version of this program that will generate revenue for Science North while supporting attractions in the region and contributing to their resilience and recovery.

## Re-Imagine

### Go Deeper at Dynamic Earth

The \$6.7 million *Go Deeper* project is the next phase of Dynamic Earth's continued evolution and expansion, creating new visitor experiences that showcase modern mining and the future of mining. The project will be implemented in a phased approach and features six project components. By March 2023, Science North will have completed and launched a multimedia experience for the Vale Chasm elevator and Regreening film, an expanded underground tour, and the soft launch of a digital mining game. *Go Deeper* will support Science North's recovery by increasing annual attendance, local engagement and memberships while generating a new revenue stream from rentals and increasing partnerships with the mining industry across Northern Ontario.

### Northwest Expansion

Science North's Northwest Expansion project has outlined the potential for new expansions in Thunder Bay and Kenora, including a 33,750 sq ft science centre facility on a new or existing site in Thunder Bay and a 4,000 sq ft expansion to the Lake of the Woods Discovery Centre in Kenora. These facilities will engage an estimated 80,000 visitors annually through a full range of exhibits, visitor amenities and programs. The Schematic Design Phase is the next step in development of the Thunder Bay and Kenora science centres before the Science North Board of Trustees approves construction of two new tourism attractions in Northern Ontario, pending secured capital and operating funding. Key activities to be completed in 2022-23 include community and stakeholder engagement, visitor experience design and program development, architectural schematic design and development of an operating business plan.

### Engaging Youth in Climate Action

With support from Environment and Climate Change Canada, Science North will provide learning opportunities youth across Canada, empowering them to commit to climate actions that will contribute to Canada's goal of net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. The Climate Action Show object theatre launched in Summer 2021 and will be evaluated throughout 2022-23 to evaluate its impact on Canadian youth. Design and Development for a 600m<sup>2</sup> and customized 100m<sup>2</sup> travelling exhibition featuring hands-on interactives and exhibits on current climate change science and climate actions is underway and will continue into 2022-23. The 100m<sup>2</sup> exhibition will begin its tour to rural, remote and Indigenous communities across Canada in May 2022, and the 600m<sup>2</sup> version will begin its tour to urban centres across the country in November 2022.



## **Innovation Space**

Innovation is the lever through which Science North introduces new products, processes and services to drive business growth, create competitive advantages and respond to customer expectations. Science North will accelerate its innovation agenda by building and maintaining a foundation that supports, finances and drives a culture of innovation. The pandemic has created an even greater need for the organization to explore, adapt and innovative new and alternate business lines. In 2022-23, Science North will increase investment into driving innovation across the organization through a staff-led Innovation Committee and the launch of two new innovation funds to drive new initiatives.

## **Re-Engage**

### **Indigenous Relationships**

Science North has cultivated relationships with organizations across Northern Ontario to develop and deliver programming in First Nations communities. Science North will collaborate with Indigenous Tourism Ontario (ITO) to host *Indigenous Ingenuity: Timeless Inventions*, a travelling exhibition produced by the Montreal Science Centre, through which visitors experience First People's ancestral values and knowledge through the lens of science and innovation. A customized version of the exhibit will tour a minimum of 20 communities across Northern Ontario beginning in June 2022. Science North and ITO will partner with regional attractions and Indigenous tourism operators to augment the exhibit with Northern Ontario content and authentic cultural experiences.

Science North will engage with 1,500 Indigenous youth in summer 2022-23 through a partnership with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine that aims to support Indigenous youth on the pathway to health sciences related careers, raising collective expertise within their community on health matters. Funding from the Nuclear Waste Management Organization will support virtual program delivery reaching an additional 1,000 First Nations students attending provincially funded schools and schools run by First Nations communities. A partnership with the Canadian Association of Science Centres will support development and delivery of programming for Indigenous youth that focuses on acting on the climate emergency. Programs will be developed in 2022-23 and implemented during the 2023-24 school year, reaching 5,500 Indigenous students.

Science North's Northwest and Northeast Indigenous Advisory Committees (IAC) will continue their work advising Science North on how to Indigenize its operations, visitor experiences and programming. The committees underwent several changes throughout 2021-22, and will meet with increasing frequency in 2022-23, allowing Science North the opportunity to engage more deeply and meaningfully with IAC members.

### **Education Growth**

In response to the challenges to education posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Science North has worked with the Ministry of Education to support Ontario's teachers and their students in online learning, ensuring that Ontario's students are competitive and leading on the world's stage in terms of transferable, foundational skills and academic achievement. Science North will continue to support education in Ontario and its own

recovery by delivering high quality, scientist-led online and in-person STEM experiences for Ontario students and teachers from K to grade 12. Digital workshops and inquiry-based lesson plans, virtual science centre visits and professional development opportunities for Ontario teachers will help bridge the learning gap resulting from school closures, providing science, financial literacy and digital skills resources that will support blended learning, at home and in the classroom, for a potential 2 million+ Ontario students and 16,000+ teachers during the 2022-23 school years. Science North will officially launch its Northern Ontario Board Membership program in September 2022, allowing the centre to better serve school boards in Northern Ontario with virtual offerings and curriculum-linked science centre programming.

In 2022-23, Science North will engage families across Northern Ontario in a revitalized Summer Science Camp program, with a goal to deliver camps in 30 communities and reach 2,800 participants. In addition, Science North will continue to engage with over 30 partner organizations across the North to deliver outreach experiences for student and family audiences, including Northern Ontario Science Festivals reaching a combined 6,000 participants in Sault Ste. Marie, Kenora, North Bay and Thunder Bay, Nature Exchange Experiences in 9 Northern communities and hands-on THINK Hub experiences at 6 host partner attractions.

### **Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Plan**

Science North will implement a fully integrated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Software. In a three-year, phased approach, Science North will use the CRM to enable a fulsome cycle of service, allowing for enhanced pre-service, service, and post-service interactions. The fully integrated CRM will be used across the organization to better manage relations with visitors, donors, clients, and partners, maximizing revenue generation and visitor interactions. It will allow Science North to reach new audiences through targeted fundraising and marketing campaigns, as well as increasing sales through add-on options and a seamless online purchasing experience. In 2022-2023, Science North will engage existing contractors to assess and evaluate the current organizational needs. Within the first year of the phased approach, systems will be implemented into core operations such as the Sales, Marketing, Development and Finance units, contributing to revenue and attendance goals for 2022-2023.

### **Community Engagement**

Central to Science North's plan for recovery is *The Great Northern Ontario Roadshow*. This coordinated and strategic series of events in 50 communities across Northern Ontario will drive hyperlocal tourism, highlighting the incredible opportunities for cultural, art, heritage, culinary and recreational tourism that exist across the region and leading to economic recovery in communities across the region. The Great Northern Ontario Roadshow will engage both public and private sector partners to attract visitors and generate economic activity for host communities and local businesses.

Change is critical to the success of attractions, especially in light of the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry. Science North and Dynamic Earth will deliver new and changing exhibits, workshops, activities, programs, events

and other experiences in 2022-23 to attract new audiences and support the growth and diversification of the tourism sector. From May to September 2022, Science North will host the *Reinventing Reality: Explore the Science of Virtual Reality* travelling exhibit, which will be seen by 41,000 visitors. Dynamic Earth will host the *Northern Science of Guinness World Records* travelling exhibit, which will be seen by 24,000 visitors.

Science North will support continued recovery post-COVID and maintain its reputation as a supplier of high-quality exhibitions by beginning production of its 14th travelling exhibition in Fall 2022. This 600sqm exhibition will open in March 2024 and encourage visitors of all ages to delve into science through hands-on exhibits, immersive activities, and innovative multimedia experiences. Science North will lease the exhibit to other science centres and museums, generating external sales revenue as it tours across Canada and the United States, reaching a projected 2.4 million people.

### **Food Services Plan**

Elements, Science North's onsite food service operation, will modify its services in 2022-23 and issue an RFP to encompass all food and beverage operations. The successful proponent will renew the restaurant space and catering, including improved take-out through a lakefront-facing window and the continuation of the online ordering systems. The renewal will include a redesign of the indoor and outdoor dining space, equipment, menu, and seating area to more fully encompass the science learning experience. The changes are expected to bring an increase in revenue, visitor satisfaction and repeat visitation. Catering offerings will be included in this RFP streamlining resources and creating a wholesome food and beverage experience offered by Science North.

### **Digital Strategy**

Throughout the pandemic, Science North has been able to pivot powerfully and leverage its experience, relationships, expertise and capacity to continue offering science programming to its audiences. Science North has gained extensive experience adapting and creating virtual programming to engage audiences at home, including webinars, virtual training sessions and workshops, video series and a suite of new content on Science North's social media platforms. Science North will build off its digital success in 2020-21, focusing on generating content and stimulating substantial audience growth across all its social platforms; in particular, TikTok and Instagram. In 2022-23, Science North will launch a podcast aimed at communicating current and relevant science tied to major science centre projects and exhibitions, offering a new platform through which our science communicators can engage directly with audiences.

Science North will continue to be a leader across all digital platforms by implementing a review of its current digital assets and resources, their alignment with the centre's strategic plan, and building an analytics dashboard. Once this review is completed, Science North will activate its new digital strategy. Key findings from the digital review may result in implementing new digital assets within the science centres and online to better serve visitors' needs and develop new experiences. Broader development of the digital strategy will expand Science North's digital presence over the next three years to include a variety of digital offerings while focusing on monetizing online experiences.

# Resources Needed to Meet Goals and Objectives

## Emergency Stabilization Funding

Emergency Stabilization Funding from the Ministry contributed greatly to Science North's ongoing operations and recovery, supporting the Centre's stability and financial solvency while management sought ways to lessen the impacts of the pandemic. This included increasing self-generated revenues through digital and virtual programming; providing innovative and safe indoor and outdoor programming; modifying operations to meet public health guidelines while offering a minimum level of operations to the public; adapting quickly to changes in guidelines to ensure customer needs were met; and seeking ways to reduce expenditures and increase efficiencies.

Funding helped to maintain 94 full time jobs in a safe and productive environment, grow the Centre's knowledge of virtual programming to assure its future digital presence, and maintain the physical facility infrastructure. It has allowed Science North to overcome the challenges of the pandemic and assure a sustainable future.

## Government Funding

Science North's revenues have been impacted by a frozen operating grant over the past 11 years, creating additional financial pressures on the organization and its ability to meet key objectives. The 2022-23 budget assumption is that the operating grant will remain at \$6,828,900 with equal payment flowed in April and May 2022.

Science North will continue to build on established and diverse government relationships to seek and build grant opportunities to support its operating and capital requirements, including government grant opportunities that may become available to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. Systems will be put in place to support internal coordination of projects and deliverables to achieve grants targets. The Centre will continue to leverage smart business practices and strong relationships to maximize grant growth.

Science North will support its operating, capital renewal and infrastructure needs, achieving government funder commitments of \$4.0 million in capital and operating grant revenue from municipal, provincial and federal sources (outside of the MHSTCI operating grant).

## Private Sector Funding

Science North's efforts to secure private sector funding will be heavily focused on the successful execution of a \$2.0 million Capital Campaign to support the organization's *Go Deeper* at Dynamic Earth project. In addition, Science North will focus on developing its cultivation and stewardship strategies to include the use of donor and sponsor data to achieve its philanthropic and sponsorship targets. Targeted strategies will include an analysis and expansion of Science North's corporate giving program and increase its online and onsite opportunities to encourage individual donations.

## **Self-generated Revenue**

The operating funding provided by the Ontario Government is the foundation of Science North's success allowing the Centre to meet core financial needs. Earned income has grown from 55% of total revenue in 2012-13 to 60% of total revenue budgeted in 2022-23. The Centre has adapted its operations to be efficient while meeting its objectives and building for a sustainable future.

## **Staffing**

Achievement of Science North's strategic priorities and goals will require a high performance and incredibly talented workforce. Science North will continue to implement strategies to attract, retain and develop the best staff possible. This will be achieved by continued implementation of its Leadership Development and Innovation strategies, which ensure continued focus on key engagement drivers, a fluid and adaptable talent management plan and strong leadership and business solutions that enable, recognize and grow employees. Increased planning will take place to develop and implement formal succession plans and increased leadership development opportunities. More robust performance management systems will also be developed to better link performance, goal setting and development plans with the goals of the organization.

## Risk Identification

Science North is well positioned to anticipate, prepare, respond and recover by utilizing the Enterprise Risk Management framework, particularly as the centre recovers from the pandemic. Managing the risk culture by evaluating risk at every level of the organization is key to the Centre's success. Science North's Business Affairs Committee regularly evaluates risk as a key component of its accountability to the Board and encourages employees to share and communicate risks. Identification and mitigation action plans are established using the Ontario public sector risk assessment placemat to evaluate likelihood and impact. Science North regularly monitors and evaluates progress to mitigate or eliminate risk. Current higher risk items are listed below.

Risk	Description	Risk Level	Update / Mitigation Plan
A frozen operating grant	Revenues have been impacted by a frozen operating grant over the past 11 years, creating additional pressures on the organization and its ability to meet key objectives.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draw on a strong compliment of board members with diverse skills and experience.</li> <li>- Build on established and diverse government relationships to seek and build funding opportunities</li> <li>- Continue to demonstrate strong accountability to our Ministry</li> <li>- Increase self-generated revenues through strong business models and high return on investment.</li> </ul>
Workforce availability and retention	A competitive labour market for skilled talent and a limited ability to offer and sustain higher wage rates to attract talent impacts Science North's ability to secure the resources needed to execute strategic and operational initiatives.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular talent reviews</li> <li>- Increased internal growth opportunities and targeted professional development</li> <li>- Increased feeder pools through volunteer and co-op programs</li> <li>- Leverage internship and partnership opportunities to access talent.</li> </ul>
Lack of information technology standardization	Lack of funds and resources to upgrade information systems resulting in deficiencies in supporting and managing multiple versions of hardware, software and operating systems	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing investment in new technology and software</li> <li>- Information technology strategy update and monitoring</li> <li>- Implement projects as funds are secured</li> <li>- Secure funding from non-traditional sources</li> </ul>
Deferred information technology infrastructure upgrade rapid technology change	Lack of information technology infrastructure funding and lack of skilled resources resulting in failing infrastructure and potential risk for information infiltration.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborate with Ministry to establish longer term planning horizons</li> <li>- Seek new funding sources</li> <li>- Establish information technology model that meets resourcing needs related to highly skilled talent and retention</li> </ul>

# Environmental Scan

## Science North Strengths and Opportunities

- Category leading brand awareness and strong positive overall image
- Dedicated, passionate, knowledgeable and experienced staff and volunteers
- Strong connection with the community
- World-class exhibit development team creating a slate of new and changing experiences appealing to a variety of audiences across Ontario, and beyond
- Build on strong relationships with school boards and teachers to engage students in in-person, online and hybrid classroom learning to support learning loss recovery resulting from the pandemic
- Develop new curriculum-linked school and outreach programming aligned with elementary and secondary science and math curriculums, including coding, financial literacy, and Indigenous ways of knowing
- Create new benefits for corporate members, including private tours, science kits, and increased visibility at science centre events
- Dedicated grants unit to build relationships and pursue public sector funding
- Clear understanding of strategic priorities of private sector funders to align our projects with their needs

## Science North Weaknesses and Threats

- Updates to IT and digital infrastructure requiring significant capital investment
- Improvements to base building infrastructure, as well as aging equipment and accessibility infrastructure requiring significant capital investment
- Decrease in discretionary and leisure spending coming out of the pandemic, especially among low-income and family audiences
- Ongoing and changing public gathering restrictions and public health guidelines
- Virtual fatigue and the need to develop and deliver in-person experiences while still ensuring a comfortable and safe learning environment
- Ambitious audience and revenue targets (return to pre-pandemic levels) are achievable only with increased resources

## Audience Demographics

- Population of Northern Ontario projected to remain relatively stable to 2040, with a decrease of 2.1% from 798,000 in 2015 to 781,000 by 2040
- Population is aging faster in the North than in the rest of the province; proportion of seniors in the Northwest population is projected to rise from 16.9 to 27.8%
- Proportion of children in the region's population is projected to decline from 14.4 to 13.4% and from 16.9 to 15.6% for the Northeast and Northwest, respectively.
- Proportion of the core working-age population is projected to decline from 65.7 to 55.3% in the Northeast and from 66.2 to 56.6% in the Northwest
- Average age of Ontario population is 41, with 66.8% of people between ages of 15 and 64; 16.4% under age 15 and 16.7% over age 65

Source: Ministry of Finance, Census 2016

## **Tourism Landscape**

- Ontarians are comfortable with hyperlocal and provincial tourism – 50% of Ontarians would welcome visitors from nearby communities, 41% from other parts of Ontario, 35% from other parts of Canada and only 14% from the US and 13% from other international destinations
- 75% of Canadians are consider domestic travel this year
- 36% of Canadians feel comfortable travelling and staying in a hotel right now, provided that the price is reasonable, cancellations are flexible, and travel destinations have up to date COVID-measures in place
- 76% of working age Canadian's will be working remotely this year, and 80% of this group plan on traveling. This increase in digital nomads provides additional opportunities to engage audiences who are travelling while working

*Source: Destination Ontario, Rogers Media Decoded: Travel Edition webinar*

## **Economic Development**

- Tourism is an economically important sector in Northern Ontario, welcoming 8.2 million visitors who spend 1.6 billion dollars annually. This sector has been disproportionately negatively impacted by the pandemic
- Slower economic growth is expected across most regions globally over the next 20 years while the economy recovers from COVID-19
- Economic growth expected to be higher in provinces hit hardest by the economic fallout of COVID-19 in 2020
- Ontario, which had the strictest health restrictions in 2020, could experience the country's strongest economic growth in 2021 and 2022
- Ontario will benefit in the medium- to long-term from key infrastructure projects announced by the Governments of Ontario and Canada, including investments in broadband, transportation, digital and green initiatives that will help stimulate the economy, job creation, innovation and growth in real GDP
- Recovery in the tourism, accommodation and food service sectors is likely to be slower, as they must wait until the pandemic is almost completely under control before their activity levels return to normal

*Sources: Ontario.ca, Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Business Development Bank of Canada*

## **Digital Trends**

- Science centres and museums have shifted their engagement strategies to reach audiences digitally, including virtual tours, unique social campaigns, live streams, virtual experiences, AR and member hubs
- Virtual offerings increase science centre reach and engagement and creates new opportunities to monetize visitor experiences
- Radical shift in consumer behaviors and expectations have forced attractions to embrace advanced technologies to provide customer satisfaction, including offering more self-serve items (i.e. ticketing, food services, etc.) to help meet changing customer behaviors



## Human Resources Strategy

As a visitor-based organization that relies on in-person attendance to generate revenues, Science North has been challenged to operate in an increasingly competitive labour market. The risk of losing key members of the organization’s workforce to other local business less impacted by the current pandemic and gathering restrictions remains high. In addition, ongoing work-from-home requirements have placed significant stress on the Centre’s workforce. Addressing these challenges will be essential as part of Science North’s ongoing recovery. In 2022-23 years, Science North will focus on the ongoing development of strategies to help staff with:

- increased challenges and stress associated with mental health and wellbeing
- adapting to the new norms of working remotely
- keeping the workforce connected and engaged while largely being disconnected
- coping with extreme levels of uncertainty

Science North will also focus on professional development of its staff to ensure its workforce meets the organizations’ needs during and after recovery. Science North will continue to prioritize delivering on its Employee & Leadership Development strategies, including Science North’s flagship development program, the Northern Leadership Program. For the past 8 years, Science North has worked with ten local organizations to lead a “made in Northern Ontario” executive leadership program focused on developing skills and growing the talent pool in the region. To date, more than 150 participants have completed this program. Over the next three years, Science North will explore options to develop a custom, focused version of this program which will be marketed to the tourism sector, generating revenue for Science North while supporting tourism attractions in the region and contributing to their resilience and recovery.

	2021-22 (Projected)		2022-23	
	Salaries	FTE	Salaries	FTE
Core Supervisory and full-time staff	\$7,240,546	94	\$ 8,202,590	103
Hourly, part-time and casual staff	\$1,115,643	25	\$ 2,017,455	45
<b>Salaries &amp; Benefits - Total</b>	<b>\$8,356,189</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>\$ 10,220,045</b>	<b>148</b>
% increase over 2021-22			22%	

Over the past two years, much of Science North’s operational work has been supported by core supervisory and full-time staff in the absence of hourly, part-time and casual staff. The need to reduce operational expenses and seek efficiencies was necessary during the pandemic. In 2022-23, staffing assumptions include a partial recovery back to 2018-19 levels, increases from pay plan adjustments in 2021-22 and increases in minimum wage costs. Staffing increases in 2022-23 are budgeted to support self-generated revenue, which is expected to increase by 72% over 2020-21 projections.

## Performance Measures

By following the following the actions described in “Overview of Current and Future Activities” above, Science North will work towards the following performance measures and achieve the following high-level outcomes in 2022-23.

Performance Measure	Outcome
Budget Achievement	Improve financial performance to reduce projected \$1 million deficit.
Customer Satisfaction	Achieve 95% satisfaction for Science North, Dynamic Earth, outreach, science camps, school programs and online engagement.
Attractions Attendance and Associated Revenue	Achieve a total of \$2 million in attractions and membership revenue with an overall attendance of 190,856 and \$598,757 in on-site businesses and parking revenue.
External Sales Revenue	Achieve an overall external sales profit, including travelling exhibit leases and administrative expense, of \$638,849.
Grants Revenue	Achieve government funder commitments of \$4M in capital grant revenue for visitor experience renewal.
New Digital Audience Experiences	Develop and implement digital science content on all social media channels, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube.
Science Experiences Delivered to First Nations in Northern Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deliver 30 e-workshops in First Nation schools</li> <li>- Distribute 5,000 STEM Kits to First Nations students and families in Northern Ontario.</li> </ul>
Education and Outreach Experiences in Northern Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage 100,000 students in virtual education programming</li> <li>- Engage 10,000 students through in-person school visits at Science North and Dynamic Earth</li> <li>- Reach 60,000 participants with the Great Northern Ontario Roadshow in 30 communities</li> <li>- Reach 10,000 people in 12 communities through public outreach activities, Science Festivals, and Northern Initiatives.</li> <li>- Provide summer camp experiences for 2,800 students in 30 Northern communities</li> </ul>
Digital Presence	Achieve 3% engagement with digital analytics on Facebook / Instagram / Twitter (increase over industry standard of 2%).
Green Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce tipping fees by 3% over 2021-22 actuals to measure impact of 3-stream waste management</li> <li>- Reduce the May to September electricity load by 3% over 2021-2022 actuals, tied to environmental controls and setting.</li> <li>- Generate 8% of Science North energy through solar power</li> <li>- Generate 20% of Dynamic Earth energy through solar power</li> <li>- Reduce natural gas consumption by 1% and water consumption by 2% over 2021-22 actuals</li> <li>- Achieve 8% savings in annual utility costs over 2020-21 actuals due to new HVAC upgrades</li> </ul>
Organizational Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote an inclusive environment and provide opportunities for dialogue and conversation around sensitive topics at Science North</li> <li>- Deliver a series of 12 monthly forums through the staff-led Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee</li> <li>- Deliver a Leadership Series for all staff consisting of 10 capacity building sessions.</li> <li>- Deliver a mentorship program over a 6-month period.</li> </ul>
Philanthropy	Achieve \$825,000 in corporate sponsorship revenue.

## **Performance Management**

Science North measures its overall performance using its Balanced Scorecard. This tool allows Science North to track its progress on a number of performance metrics, balanced based on its Strategic Priorities. They include both leading and lagging measures, as well as measures that focus on operational excellence, learning & innovation, financial and customer perspective. The scorecard is developed annually following the development of the business plan and metrics are measured on a quarterly basis. Science North's 2022-23 Balanced Scorecards will be informed by its 2022-23 Business Plan, 2021-24 Recovery Plan and 2022-25 Strategic Plan, and measures will take into account likely outcomes based on key assumptions and worse-case, medium-case and best-case scenarios.

## Financial Plan

Science North’s financial plan incorporates its recovery plan at a moderate level with a forecast of sustainability and growth beginning in 2024-25. Self-generated revenues will surpass 2018-19 levels by 2024-25 as Science North’s strategic plan revitalization including the digital strategy have a positive impact on attraction and programming revenue. Growth in Thunder Bay related to the new Science Centre have been incorporated into this forecast with an operating grant of \$500,000 in 2024-25 as the Thunder Bay Centre is expected to begin operations. Recovery from the pandemic is expected to take 3 years with deficits eliminated by 2024-25 assuring the sustainability of the Centre.

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
(in millions)	Actual	Projection	Draft Budget	Forecast	Forecast
<b>Total Revenues</b>	\$ 14.715	\$ 18.958	\$ 16.616	\$ 18.555	\$ 20.915
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$ 14.184	\$ 18.825	\$ 17,581	\$ 18.908	\$ 20.658
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	\$ 0.531	\$ 0.133	(\$ 0.965)	(\$ 0.353)	\$ 0.257

### Capital Repair and Rehabilitation

Science North’s approach to capital infrastructure investment is aligned with the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries “Capital Repair and Rehabilitation Program” by addressing needs related to Health and Safety, Asset Integrity, Code Compliance and Legislation, and Critical to Business. This approach allows for prioritizing at the agency level and provides the information necessary for the Ministry to prioritize its capital funding allocations. Science North considers the core criteria and risk assessment related to likelihood, impact and timeline. The organization’s infrastructure funding needs far outweigh the average Ministry funding, which has been on average \$1 million annually over a four-year period. Science North’s identified renewal requirements are on average \$8.9 million per year. Science North’s average funding allocation for Capital Repair and Rehabilitation represents less than 11% of its infrastructure needs. These renewal requirements are critical to ensure the organization’s facilities operate efficiently while remaining compliant with regulatory requirements, avoiding obsolescence and ensuring a safe environment for its visitors and workforce.

The 2021-26 Capital Plan was developed using a comprehensive planning process and risk-based prioritization that considered strategic alignment, asset condition, operational and revenue impact, threat assessment, customer service, safety, as well as regulatory or statutory requirements. The projects were determined by assessing the associated assets in two independent categories: 1) the current physical condition of the asset, and 2) the operational impact that the asset has on the site where it is located.

The 2021-26 Capital Plan also provides for significant advancement of Science North’s Vision through investment in critical infrastructure renewal; upgrades based on market and customer demands; exhibit and visitor experience renewal; and major, highly visible projects.

## Initiatives Involving Third Parties

In addition to the relationship with the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, Science North seeks and builds partnerships with third parties to meet its strategic priorities more effectively and to achieve its Vision and Mandate. Forging strong partnerships and mutually beneficial relationships provides Science North with additional resources to better serve its audiences. Partnerships include both financial and in-kind support, sharing of expertise, and, in some cases, collaboration to meet mutual goals.

For Fiscal 2022-23, Science North has the following third-party relationships:

<b>Name / Type</b>	<b>Nature of Relationship</b>
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)	Funding – Special Projects Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope IMAX Film, Science of Guinness World Records Northern Ontario Tour, Great Northern Ontario Roadshow, Indigenous Ingenuity Northern Ontario Tour
FedNor	Funding – Special Projects Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope IMAX Film, Science of Guinness World Records Northern Ontario Tour
Canadian Heritage	Funding – Special Projects Go Deeper at Dynamic Earth, Indigenous Ingenuity Northern Ontario Tour
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada	Funding – Special Projects Promoscience, Encouraging Vaccine Confidence Across Canada, Science Communication Skills Mentorship
City of Sudbury and Greater Sudbury Development Corporation	Funding – Special Projects Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope IMAX Film, Climate Action Show Object Theatre, Go Deeper at Dynamic Earth
Environment and Climate Change Canada	Funding– Special Projects Climate Action Experiences across Canada, Go Deeper at Dynamic Earth
Ministry of Education	Funding – Special Projects Science Curriculum Implementation
Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)	Funding– Special Projects Enabling Accessibility
Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR)	Funding – Special Projects Creating Interactive Mining Career Awareness Curriculum
Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)	Funding – Special Projects Immunization Partnership Fund
Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission	Funding – Special Projects Northwest Expansion Schematic Design Phase
Indigenous Tourism Ontario (ITO)	Exhibition design, development and tour Indigenous Ingenuity Northern Ontario Tour
Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM)	Program development and delivery
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	Program development and delivery
Canadian Association of Science Centres (CASC)	Program development, delivery, and evaluation

## Marketing and Communications Plan

In the face of the pandemic, the organization has pivoted to develop new and engaging ways for Science North and its Bluecoats (science communicators) to interact and communicate with its audiences, community and stakeholders. A regular schedule with our online channels has allowed Science North to deliver impactful and relevant communications in a fun and memorable style, increasing the reach to its audiences, as well as audiences online all over Ontario, Canada, North America and Europe. With this success, Science North is well positioned to actively convey pertinent communications to broader areas with a strong brand awareness.

Science North's partnerships with tourism partners in Northern and Southern Ontario will allow for the creation of unique marketing campaigns, content, cross-promotion, awareness, contests and attraction exposure. Science North actively provides annual and seasonal marketing initiatives, targets and attraction updates to collaboratively create digital content and contests to drive visitors to its website and to drive visits to Northern Ontario's largest tourism attraction, leveraging the tourism audience of its partners. Science North's strong relationships with these tourism organizations allows for a presence at many tourism tradeshow and conferences. A strong rapport developed over many years has provided strong communication and support, which helps drive attendance and awareness in both the Sudbury community and across Northern Ontario.

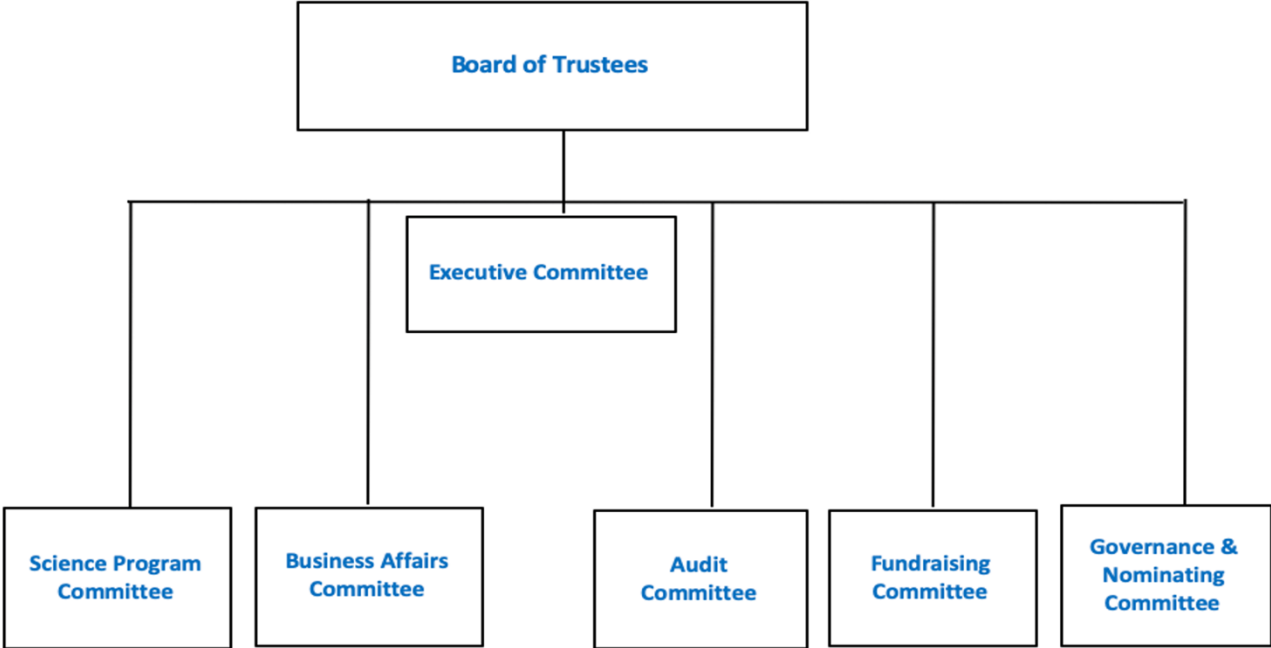
In 2022-23, Science North will continue to collaborate with leading partners to develop effective and targeted campaigns aimed at driving attendance, brand awareness and revenue at both of its science centres. Key priorities will be to:

- Increase brand strength, awareness, interest, attendance and revenue
- Promote new, enhanced and/or renewed science-based exhibits and experiences
- Communicate the diversified programming that appeals to various audiences
- Enhance value-added benefits of memberships and strengthen member loyalty
- Build community relations and strategic partnerships with partners such as Indigenous Tourism Ontario, Destination Ontario, Northeastern Ontario Tourism and Sudbury Tourism
- Create authentically inclusive marketing campaigns
- Evolve marketing strategies based on industry trends, including short-form video, audio content, and hybrid events featuring digital elements (virtual and augmented reality) to create immersive experiences

Under the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Chair of Science North and the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, Science North will continue to consult with the Ministry on its communications management and delivery as required.

# Organizational Chart

## Science North Board of Trustees Organizational Chart



*As of December 2021*



**[sciencenorth.ca](http://sciencenorth.ca)**

*Science North is an agency of the Government of Ontario and a registered charity. Dynamic Earth is a Science North attraction. IMAX® is a registered trademark of IMAX Corporation. The Science of Guinness World Records is a production of Science North, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, in partnership with Ripley Entertainment Inc. and Guinness World Records.*