



An agency of the Government of Ontario

2025-26 Business Plan

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Land Acknowledgement

Science North and Dynamic Earth are situated on the traditional and ancestral lands of Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and Wahnapiatae First Nation in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory. Our Thunder Bay operations are situated on the traditional and ancestral lands of Fort William First Nation in Robinson-Superior Treaty territory. Our Sault Ste Marie operations are situated on the traditional and ancestral lands of Ketegaunseebee and the Ojibways of Obadjiwan in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory.

We give thanks to the Indigenous Peoples who have cared for this land since time immemorial and pay respect to their traditions, ways of knowing, and we acknowledge their many contributions to innovations in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, past and present.

We also recognize the Métis Nation of Ontario for their historic and ongoing contributions.

We commit to deepening engagement, relationships, and partnerships in order to advance truth and reconciliation, honour and reflect Indigenous ways of knowing, grow economic opportunities, and collaborate with Indigenous peoples as partners in order to inspire all people to be engaged with science in the world around them.

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. 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 large Francophone and Indigenous populations. 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.

Science North's 2025-26 Business Plan sets out a path for the organization to achieve the priorities and goals of its 2025-2028 Strategic Plan and aligns with both its annual Letter of Direction from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming and its Mandate. Science North will build on its strengths, embrace new opportunities, and successfully navigate challenges to remain a key driver of economic growth, tourism, job creation, and culture in Northern Ontario. The organization's resources will be focused to benefit its audiences and clients, partners, stakeholders, and funders, with a lens on driving value and exceeding the expectations of the Government of Ontario.

Key achievements projected by the end of 2024-25 include:

- 146,000 admissions at the Bell Grove site, and an additional 46,000 visitors engaged in IMAX and Planetarium experiences.
- 81,000 admissions at Dynamic Earth, anchored by a transformation of the MacLean Engineering Gallery, launch of the Regreening Film, and a new operational model that will increase operation days on site to capture more school visits, local visitors, and increased tourism from bus tours.
- 7,550 Indigenous participants through in-person school outreach, e-workshops, and summer camps.
- Activating the next phase of the Dynamic Earth Expansion Project, including launching the *Planting Hope: A Regreening Story* film in English, French, and Anishinaabemowin in November 2024, and awarding the construction contract for the new modern mining facility onsite at Dynamic Earth.
- Launching a Net Zero Strategy that will guide the actions needed to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across all operations.

For 2025-26, clear and specific strategies have been developed according to the Ministry's business planning criteria and Science North's letter of direction. Science North will leverage the opportunities presented in the 2023 Auditor General of Ontario Value for Money Audit of the organization and will seek to implement recommendations as resources allow, through specific and targeted actions as described in this 2025-26 Business Plan.

Key priorities in 2025-26 are to:

- Reach 166,000 visitors at the Bell Grove site and 95,700 visitors at the Dynamic Earth site, anchored by new experiences like the Sean Kenney's Brick Masters Studio travelling exhibition and Dynamic Earth Expansion Project experiences.
- Engage over 73,000 participants across Northern Ontario with STEM content through science festivals, public and school outreach, Northern Partner Exhibits, and summer camps.
- Engage more than 11,000 Indigenous participants through in-person school outreach, e-workshops, and summer camps, as well as reach 5,000 Indigenous participants at the science centres.
- Develop new and comprehensive frameworks to inform the development of future exhibits and programming, including a framework for engaging with underrepresented audiences, a long-term visitor experience renewal plan, and a framework to build and maintain mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Develop new strategies to drive self-generated revenues, with a focus on International Sales and Fundraising.
- Finalize and launch the Dynamic Earth Expansion project, including completing drift work and construction, and operationalizing the new facility, visitor experiences, and services to open to the public.
- Complete the Northwest Expansion project Development Phase and build strong reciprocal partnerships to advance the project into Pre-Construction.

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.

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming Mandate

Science North is an agency of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. 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

Science North's 2025-2028 Strategic Plan includes the following big goals that will drive its success over the upcoming three fiscal years:

- We will modernize our visitor experience to meet and exceed the expectations of our diverse audiences.
- We will diversify revenue streams to enhance financial resilience, support ongoing reinvestment and growth, and uphold operational excellence.
- We will expand our science centre facilities to better serve our audiences in Northern Ontario.

To guide Science North's progress towards these goals, the centre has developed a series of Step Goals that will be implemented in 2025-26:

- We will engage and learn from diverse audiences to create experiences with and for them.
- We will develop a comprehensive visitor experience plan to ensure we deliver meaningful, relevant, and educational exhibits, programs and events.
- We will build a partnership framework to define and manage mutually beneficial relationships.
- We will create a financial management framework to enhance overall financial literacy and improve decision making.
- We will develop and implement an International Sales strategy.
- We will develop and implement a fundraising strategy.
- We will finalize and launch the Dynamic Earth Expansion Project.
- We will complete the Northwest Expansion Project Development Phase.
- We will build strong reciprocal partnerships to advance municipal agreements and community relationships in the Northwest.

In addition to its 2025-2028 Strategic Plan, Science North has developed a North Star document that will reimagine the centre's Vision, Purpose, and Professional Values, defining a shared culture that all staff will work within and towards as we strive to achieve our Strategic Goals for the upcoming three fiscal years.

Together with its 2025-26 Letter of Direction from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Gaming, this Strategic Plan will guide Science North to be:

- **Innovative** by streamlining interactions with clients and customers, enhancing and optimizing digital services, improving client and customer satisfaction, and making data-driven decisions through shared procurement information.
- **Sustainable** by optimizing organizational capacity, using public resources efficiently, operating within financial allocations, and managing workforce size.
- **Accountable** by developing and reporting on outcome-focused performance measures, managing data and cybersecurity, reporting Artificial Intelligence uses, reporting all high risks with effective mitigation plans, aligning hybrid work policies with the OPS, developing diversity and inclusion initiatives, and increasing non-government, non-fare, non-fee revenue.

These plans will further guide the centre towards priorities specific to Science North, such as:

- Implementing the recommendations of the 2023 Value-for-Money Audit: Science Centres, conducted by the Auditor General of Ontario.
- Prioritizing short-, medium- and long-term financial sustainability, including alternative and innovative strategies that increase self-generated revenue, while enhancing accountability and oversight.
- Driving tourism and increased attendance to Science North, Dynamic Earth and outreach programs.
- Continuing to increase engagement in innovative learning through outreach to rural and remote communities, including First Nations, across Northern Ontario.
- Exploring capital and operating ratios to assess the lifetime financial sustainability of grants and gifts.

Environmental Scan

Legislative, Regulatory & Policy Changes

- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is undergoing a legislative review to foster a barrier-free Ontario beyond 2025. Science North may need to implement further accessibility measures to comply with evolving standards.
- Canada's federal climate policies are set to significantly impact various sectors by 2030. Science North anticipates a need to adapt to these policies, which may influence operational practices and public programming.
- Ontario's "Working for Workers" legislation proposes significant changes to employment laws, including those affecting workplace conditions and employee rights – Science North may implement reforms to ensure compliance.
- Ontario's Culture Strategy aims to promote cultural engagement and economic growth, which may be leveraged to enhance Science North's cultural programming and community involvement.

Source: Ontario.ca, Government of Canada, Fasken.com

Fiscal Environment & Economic Outlook

- Canada's economic growth is forecast to average 2.25% through 2025, with steady improvements expected.
- Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation is projected to stabilize near 2% into 2025-2026, easing financial pressure.
- Bank lending rates are expected to decrease to 2.5% by 2025, reducing borrowing costs and potentially increasing consumer spending.
- After five quarters of decline, consumer spending per person is projected to rise in the second half of 2025, driven by lower interest rates and increased household wealth.
- While lower interest rates benefit many borrowers, households renewing fixed-rate mortgages will face higher debt-servicing costs, tempering some consumption growth.
- Unemployment is expected to rise modestly, reaching 7% by early 2025, more than 1% above pre-pandemic levels, potentially affecting disposable income.
- Strengthening economic conditions are anticipated to boost spending among younger and lower-income workers, contributing to overall recovery.
- Consumer confidence is projected to gradually improve as economic conditions stabilize, further supporting spending and business activity.
- Improved economic conditions, along with lower interest rates, are expected to enhance disposable income, fostering increased spending across demographics.

Source: Bank of Canada, TD, RBC

International Market

- In 2023, 153 science engagement organizations reported over 44 million visits, with 41.7 million onsite and 2.4 million through offsite programs.
- The global museum market is expected to grow to USD 17.23 billion by 2029, with museums, historical sites, zoos, and parks expected to reach USD 133.09 billion.
- The COVID pandemic accelerated virtual experiences, such as online exhibitions and interactive content. Post-pandemic, global visitor numbers have rebounded, driven by increased travel.
- Non-traditional locations like retail spaces, outdoor venues, and festivals are growing in popularity, expanding audience reach.
- Visitors increasingly favor immersive, digital experiences leveraging AR/VR. Object-led exhibits are declining, with a focus on shareable and memorable experiences.
- Rising shipping costs and geopolitical instability are significant concerns. Collaborative partnerships are becoming essential to share costs and resources.
- Institutions are adopting modular designs, using recycled materials, and prioritizing regional adaptations to reduce environmental impact. Opinions on reducing touring volumes remain divided.
- Exhibitions tied to popular intellectual properties, such as "The Science Behind Pixar," are strong draws for global audiences due to their entertainment value.
- Traveling exhibitions increasingly feature multilingual content, tactile displays, and culturally adaptable narratives to engage diverse audiences.

Source: Newswire, ASTC, Research & Markets, Bloolooop

Tourism

- International visitors to Canada have nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels, with U.S. visitors at 97% and international visitors at 92% of 2019 levels as of Q1 2024. Total tourism spending has exceeded pre-pandemic levels, with domestic spending at 121% and international spending at 97%.
- Ontario's tourism revenues are projected to exceed \$83 billion by 2025, driven by strong domestic tourism recovery and increasing international arrivals.
- Domestic visitors dominate the market, accounting for 75% of tourism revenue in Canada. Regional attractions in Ontario are especially popular with local residents.
- While summer remains peak season, fall and winter visitation is increasing due to targeted marketing and expanded offerings such as festivals and cultural experiences.
- Outdoor activities like hiking and camping, along with visits to museums, galleries, and Indigenous experiences, are growing in popularity among tourists in Ontario.
- The top spending categories for tourists in Ontario are accommodation, food and beverage services, and transportation. International visitors have higher per capita spending than domestic tourists.
- Tourists increasingly prioritize sustainable experiences, including eco-friendly accommodations and nature-based activities. Ontario's natural assets position it well to attract environmentally conscious travelers.
- Demand for cultural and experiential tourism is rising, and the centre's Indigenous programming and hands-on science experiences align well with this trend.

Source: Destination Canada, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, Tourism Skillsnet Ontario,

Demographic Shifts

- Married and common-law couples without children significantly outnumber those with children.
- Seniors (65+) will grow from 18.3% of Ontario's population in 2023 to 21.3% by 2051, with rapid growth through 2031.
- While the number of children (0–14 years) is projected to grow, their share of the population will decrease to 13.6% by 2051.
- Rural areas are seeing strong population growth due to urban out-migration, affordable housing issues, and increased remote work opportunities.
- Ontario has the largest Indigenous population in Canada, which is growing faster than the non-Indigenous population. By 2041, Indigenous peoples will comprise 5.4% to 6.8% of the Canadian population.
- 78% of Ontario's First Nations communities are in Northern Ontario, with 25% accessible only by air or ice roads.
- International migration is the key driver of Ontario's population growth, but Northern Ontario sees minimal growth from this source.
- The proportion of racialized groups in rural Ontario increased to 4.2% in 2021, reflecting growing diversity.

Source: Statistics Canada, Ontario.ca

Labour Market Conditions

- Sudbury's unemployment rate was 5.9% in October 2024, lower than Ontario's (6.9%) and Canada's (6.5%), reflecting a highly competitive labour market.
- Sudbury's participation rate stands at 60.2%, with approximately 6,391 individuals unemployed, indicating a limited local labour pool.
- Sudbury's population grew to 179,965 in 2024, with 64% of residents being of working age (15–64 years).
- Sudbury's average wage (\$23.89/hr) is significantly lower than Ontario's (\$36.03/hr) and Canada's (\$34.82/hr). Science North's combined average wage (\$25.89/hr) is slightly above the local average but behind the provincial and national averages.
- The true living wage in Sudbury increased to \$20.30/hr in 2024. Despite annual minimum wage increases, many local wages remain below this threshold.
- Labour shortages persist across sectors, with recruitment times increasing. This is compounded by the need for diverse hiring, particularly for roles requiring specific skills or language abilities.
- Science North's voluntary turnover rate (15.3%) aligns with the national average (15.5%), indicating retention challenges in a competitive market.
- Flexibility in work arrangements is increasingly important, with 65% of workers prioritizing flexible schedules and 53% preferring remote work options.
- 49% of employers are addressing skills gaps through upskilling, while 44% focus on reskilling for new roles, emphasizing the need for targeted training programs.
- AI and automation skills are in high demand, particularly among younger workers. Science North can leverage AI for efficiency while addressing training gaps in emerging technologies.

Source: Statistics Canada, Ontario.ca, Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Canadian Real Estate Association

Key Cost & Program Delivery Drivers

- Fuel costs are expected to hold steady in 2025, influenced by global trends and the U.S. presidential election. Ontario's extended gas tax cut until mid-2025 will provide some relief.
- Hotel rates in Canada are projected to increase by around 1% above inflation, with specific cities like Toronto and Ottawa seeing a 3.1% annual increase. This will affect Science North's outreach and summer camp costs.
- Minimum wage in Ontario increased to \$17.20/hour in October 2024 and is projected to rise to \$18.50/hour in 2025, impacting program delivery costs.
- Cost of materials has risen, with a 3.9% annual increase in October 2024. Niche markets for supplies like chemicals and gold flakes continue to drive expenses.
- Animal care expenses are rising due to increased food costs and a shortage of veterinarians, especially those specializing in exotic animals. The need for private veterinary services further increases costs.
- Shipping disruptions, fuel costs, and limited secure shipping options to Sudbury are driving up costs for importing butterfly pupae.
- Rising demand for event-based security and staffing challenges in Northern Ontario are contributing to higher contract costs.
- Hiring costs for performing artists are increasing, particularly for high-profile acts. Fees for regional talent range from \$1,000 to \$10,000, while external acts can exceed \$25,000.
- Licensing fees for IMAX films range from \$5,000 to \$30,000 annually. Extended leases on STEM and conservation topics are popular for maximizing audience reach.
- Niche equipment like lapidary machines and supplies for live shows are increasing in cost due to limited competition and higher demand.

Source: Canadianveterinarians.ca, Statistics Canada, CBC, Deloitte, Ontario.ca, travelweek.ca, AMEX

Program Reviews, Audits, & Recommendations

- Summer Science Camps: Surveys of parents/guardians revealed high satisfaction levels. Feedback on desired topics led to the introduction of a "Watertastic Camp," focusing on water resources, habitats, aquatic animals, and conservation.
- On-Site School Programs: Teacher feedback indicated a 94.5% positive response for school programs and a 96.6% positive response for interactions with staff. However, 44.4% of bookings were for grades 1-3, while only 2.4% were for grades 9-12, suggesting a need to diversify program offerings to attract higher grade levels.
- Education Student Programs: Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs received a 90% positive response from students and 95.9% from teachers. E-Workshops had a 95.4% positive response.
- Education Teacher Programs: All teachers surveyed would recommend Science North's resources to peers. There is a demand for more lessons on environmental science, land-based learning, and contributions of Indigenous scientists.

- **Sensory Sundays:** Surveys showed that 14% of visitors attended specifically for Sensory Sunday programming, while 48% were unaware of it. This highlights the need for better communication about these offerings.
- **Nightlife on the Rocks:** Visitor surveys indicated high satisfaction, with over 78% reporting learning something new. Motivations for attendance included a child-free environment and social opportunities.

Source: Internal Data from Surveys

Impact on Science North

Science North has significant opportunities to enhance its operations and expand its impact. Rising costs in areas such as fuel, wages, and programming materials present a chance to innovate through cost-management strategies and alternative revenue streams, such as responsive program evaluation and the development of modular, sustainable exhibit designs. Diversifying program offerings, particularly for grades 9-12, and building on successful themes like Indigenous education and environmental science, can strengthen audience engagement. The increasing focus on domestic tourism and winter travel creates opportunities to position Science North as a year-round destination, supported by partnerships with local attractions and targeted marketing. Embracing sustainability and technological innovation, including AR/VR experiences and eco-friendly practices, aligns with visitor preferences and reinforces Science North's role as a leader in science education and environmental stewardship. Additionally, improving communication and accessibility for programs like Sensory Sundays and Nightlife on the Rocks, while addressing logistical challenges, offers opportunities to enhance visitor satisfaction and solidify Science North's reputation for inclusivity and excellence.

Overview of Current and Future Activities

Science North's 2025-26 Business Plan is based on the Centre's 2025-2028 Strategic Plan and North Star documents, which are well aligned with its Vision, Purpose, and annual Letter of Direction. The Business Plan focuses modernizing visitor experiences, enhancing STEM engagement, and fostering strategic partnerships to deliver a consistent visitor experience across Northern Ontario, while building the centre's financial resilience and reputation across the region.

Big Goal #1: We will modernize our visitor experience to meet and exceed the expectations of our diverse audiences.

By the end of the three-year Strategic Plan, Science North aims to deliver a consistent visitor experience across all its programs to all audiences across Northern Ontario. Science North will have strong, reciprocal partnerships that serve to advance our work in STEM engagement across all of Ontario, and will be efficient in our practices to identify, build, maintain and strategically evaluate partnerships with this new framework. A comprehensive exhibit renewal strategy will create a cohesive visitor experience across its locations and outreach programs. This plan will include systematic updates of exhibits, ensuring they meet developed standards in graphics and design and engage diverse audience groups effectively, with a goal to increase visitor engagement across Northern Ontario. In 2025-26, Science North will make progress towards this goal through the following initiatives:

Step Goal #1: We will engage and learn from diverse audiences to create experiences with and for them.

- We will conduct consultations to engage with diverse audiences across all Northern Ontario. This initiative aims to enhance tourism and attendance as Science North fosters relationships with underrepresented groups, allowing us to better understand their challenges and how we can effectively serve their needs.
- We will develop a training plan to help staff engage effectively with diverse audiences, ensuring Science North remains welcoming and inclusive, particularly increasing engagement with rural, remote, and Indigenous communities.

Step Goal #2: We will develop a comprehensive visitor experience plan to ensure we deliver meaningful, relevant, and educational exhibits, programs and events.

- We will create a new Standard of Excellence for Bluecoats, content, and visitor experience to ensure Science North has a well-trained team that engages the public in innovative ways, enhancing our brand and encouraging repeat visits.
- We will develop an audience engagement framework for Northern Ontario to guide programs and events. This will help Science North make data-driven decisions to enhance revenue, growth, attendance, and audience engagement.
- We will create a long-term exhibit plan across our science centres and experiences, planning the future development of our centres with strong interpretive themes and a clear plan of renewal. This directly addresses finding in the Value-for-Money audit and will strengthen a pathway towards developing innovative experiences that excite visitors in audience-focused STEM learning.

Step Goal #3: We will build a partnership framework to define and manage mutually beneficial relationships.

- We will define “mutually beneficial partnerships,” clarify types of collaborative relationships, and establish reciprocity standards for various partnerships. This framework aims to foster innovation, sustainability, and accountability, guiding effective collaborations. It will enhance tourism and attendance by promoting meaningful engagement with rural, remote, and Indigenous communities.
- We will create a partnership evaluation matrix and an evaluation tool for partnership lifecycles. This supports innovation and sustainability by assessing and prioritizing partnerships for long-term value and alignment with organizational goals. It will improve accountability and address Value-for-Money audit recommendations through transparent, measurable criteria.
- We will create a management plan and allocate resources to maintain a partnership framework. This ensures sustainability and accountability, aligning with Value-for-Money audit recommendations. It also supports innovation through a structured yet adaptable approach to maintaining partnerships.

Big Goal #2: We will diversify revenue streams to enhance financial resilience, support ongoing reinvestment and growth, and uphold operational excellence.

By the end of the three-year Strategic Plan, Science North aims to create a robust financial base that supports its strategic objectives. This will involve a comprehensive approach to financial planning, including developing new revenue models, optimizing existing assets, and fostering a culture of financial literacy and accountability among staff. By identifying and pursuing new revenue streams, expanding partnerships, and leveraging innovative financial management practices, Science North will ensure sustainable growth and continued excellence in its operations and programs. In 2025-26, Science North will make progress towards this goal through the following initiatives:

Step Goal #4: We will create a financial management framework to enhance overall financial literacy and improve decision making.

- We will create a training system to improve financial literacy, addressing organizational needs and gaps. This will help ensure Science North has a workforce accountable in their roles and supports proper reporting and financial management across all teams and projects, enhancing financial sustainability.
- We will standardize tools and processes to improve training, workflows, and financial literacy aids for staff. This will foster innovation and sustainability through streamlined operations and enhanced capabilities, while ensuring consistent and transparent processes.
- We will create a decision-making framework to guide financial decisions that align with our mission. This will enhance transparency, accountability, and long-term sustainability, following recommendations from the Value-for-Money audit.

Step Goal #5: We will develop and implement revenue-generating strategies for International Sales.

- We will improve our traveling exhibitions sales cycle to reduce risk and serve clients better. This goal will drive innovation, promote data-driven decisions, and

provide insights for Science North's exhibit production with the aim to enhance financial viability and ensure long-term sustainability.

- We will build a robust Nature Exchange community to add value for clients, attract new ones, and explore new markets. This goal supports revenue diversification and financial sustainability by enhancing Science North's ability to draw new clients and expand through the Nature Exchange.
- We will enhance our understanding of Science North's value proposition to boost internal expertise and drive revenue growth. This will diversify revenue streams and support financial sustainability by expanding our consulting capacity, leveraging expertise for additional income and long-term resilience.

Step Goal #6: We will develop a fundraising strategy.

- We will assess needs and set financial targets to align fundraising goals with organizational priorities and community impact objectives. This ensures accountability and sustainability, supporting Value-for-Money audit recommendations through a measurable funding approach.
- We will analyze donor data to segment audiences and craft engagement strategies for individuals, corporations, and foundations. This approach leverages data analysis to boost donor engagement and diversify funding sources, aligns outreach with organizational goals and community impact, and addresses recommendations from the Value-for-Money audit for resource management.
- We will design targeted fundraising campaigns with clear messaging, timelines, and methods like events, digital platforms, and grants. This approach supports innovation by using diverse tools to engage donors effectively, ensuring sustainability and accountability by aligning with financial goals and priorities.

Big Goal #3: We will expand our science centre facilities to better serve our audiences in Northern Ontario.

By the end of the three-year Strategic Plan, Science North aims to significantly expand its physical presence and impact across Northern Ontario through two major infrastructure projects. The Dynamic Earth Expansion Project will be fully realized with a new immersive multimedia experience and operational facilities serving the public. In addition, the organization will have made substantial progress on its Northwest Expansion Project, having secured essential municipal and community partnerships, obtained necessary funding commitments, and completed comprehensive facility and visitor experience designs with input from local and Indigenous communities. These expansions represent Science North's commitment to enhancing its ability to serve audiences throughout Northern Ontario by creating new, engaging science centre spaces and experiences while building strong community relationships in the process. In 2025-26, Science North will make progress towards this goal through:

Step Goal #7: We will finalize and launch the Dynamic Earth expansion project.

- We will contract a constructor to complete the new facility, boosting tourism and attendance at Dynamic Earth. This ensures accountability to Science North's funding partners in meeting project goals. Processes and reports follow recommendations from the Value-for-Money audit.

- We will complete the installation and commissioning of visitor experiences and services to boost tourism and attendance at Dynamic Earth, ensuring we meet our funding partners' goals and targets. The new, innovative visitor experiences align with relevant science and educational goals. Project processes and reporting follow recommendations from the Value-for-Money audit.
- We will operationalize the new facility, visitor experience, and services, and open to the public. The development of tracking tools and KPIs will ensure the operations are sustainable and accountable to project goals and targets. The new venue will increase revenue and build financial sustainability by expanding the centre's capacity for hosting conferences, meetings, and private events.

Step Goal #8: We will complete the Northwest Expansion project Development Phase.

- We will finalize Capital and Operational Readiness Project Plans, ensuring detailed and sustainable project plans for new facilities in Northwestern Ontario with clear responsibilities, as recommended by the Value-for-Money audit.
- We will conduct site due diligence for the Pool 6 site to support informed decision-making for large capital projects, as recommended in the Value-for-Money audit. This will help understand capital costs, project risks, and the construction schedule before agreements with the City of Thunder Bay.
- We will create a detailed plan to secure funding for the Northwest Expansion project, ensuring informed decision-making as recommended in the Value-for-Money audit. This will support accountability to funders and contribute to the project's financial sustainability.

Step Goal #9: We will build strong reciprocal partnerships to advance municipal agreements and community relationships in the Northwest.

- We will create an engagement framework for the Northwest Expansion project, aiming to ensure equitable access to science programming. This will involve fostering partnerships to engage rural, remote, Indigenous, and other underrepresented groups in Northern Ontario.
- We will create a communications plan for the Northwest Expansion to ensure transparent and consistent communication. This will build trust, support accountability, and align with innovation through strategic messaging. It will also engage rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, and boost municipal and community support for tourism and attendance growth.
- We will enter into a general form of agreement (ie: term sheet, MOU) with the municipalities regarding the proposed sites and their financial support to the project.

Implementation Plan

Big Goal #1: We will modernize our visitor experience to meet and exceed the expectations of our diverse audiences.

Step Goal	Actions to be taken in 2025-26	Major tasks (sub actions) that will be undertaken in 2025-26 to achieve targets	Risks and Mitigation Strategies	Outcomes and Performance Measurement
Step Goal #1: We will engage and learn from diverse audiences to create experiences with and for them.	We will conduct consultations to listen and learn with diverse audiences across all of Northern Ontario.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will identify and build relationships with a minimum of 6 unique audience groups that are underserved at Science North. We will hold a minimum of 12 community consultation and co-creation sessions with these audiences, including 4 sessions with Indigenous communities. We will generate a detailed best practices document that will inform future engagement sessions using decolonized co-creation practices, as well as an in-depth report on community aspirations and barriers faced to accessing our centres and programming. 	Science North recognizes the potential reputational risk if engagement sessions are not conducted in a respectful and decolonized manner and fail to produce clear results. We will mitigate this risk by approaching communities with humility and open communication, and by establishing clear expectations of outcomes and our commitment to implementing recommendations. Science North will mitigate the risk of lack of participation by collaborating with existing community partners to recruit participants.	Output: Community insights and best practices document. Government Priority: Accountability. We will increase direct engagement with diverse audiences and underrepresented groups (Indigenous, 2SLGBTQ+, newcomers, minority groups, at-risk youth, persons with disabilities, low-income, etc.).
	We will create a training plan that helps staff engage effectively with diverse audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will incorporate new training on Leadership and EDIA strategies into the mandatory onboarding processes, as well as through the Leadership and Catalyst learning series and through cultural awareness sessions (including specific staff training as part of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation). We will build a new training plan that includes learnings and best practices from Action #1 under this step goal. The content and format of these sessions will be developed through co-creation practices with groups consulted under Action #1. 	Science North recognizes the risk associated with staff buy-in and commitment to EDIA and Belonging and has made this training mandatory as part of its onboarding process, as well as made a goal of 95-100% staff attendance at all training opportunities a key performance indicator in the organizational scorecard.	Output: Training plan. Government Priority: Accountability. We will promote an inclusive environment and provide opportunities for dialogue and conversation around sensitive topics at Science North. We will advance staff understanding of and commitment to EDIA and Reconciliation,

Step Goal #2: We will develop a comprehensive visitor experience plan to ensure we deliver meaningful, relevant, and educational exhibits, programs and events.	We will establish an updated Standard of Excellence for Bluecoats, content, and overall visitor experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will complete an environmental scan of all internal documentation and external best practices • We will develop the new Standards of Excellence, along with an implementation plan that includes schedules and systems for training and quality assurance. 	The greatest risk to this goal is staff time required to deliver, as it will utilize internal resources only. This will be mitigated by reprioritizing the workloads of individuals needed to work on this goal to ensure it is completed.	Output: Bluecoat Standards of Excellence. Government Priority: Innovation. We will achieve high levels of visitor satisfaction and/or meet visitor expectations.
	We will create an audience engagement framework that informs programs and events across all of Northern Ontario.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will complete an analysis of all current programs, including audiences, locations offered, revenue targets, and success rates. • We will develop a decision matrix to help determine the feasibility of new events or programs, including which programs are to be delivered in specific regions or formats and which can be delivered more widely across Northern Ontario. We will utilize the newly developed Standards of Excellence for content when creating programs and events. 	There is a risk of creating an unbalanced framework that prioritizes financial success over audience engagement, or vice versa. Science North will mitigate this risk by establishing a clear set of guidelines from the onset of matrix creation to ensure well-rounded decisions. Science North will mitigate the risk that this framework is not widely adopted across different units and program areas by developing a detailed implementation plan, including training and ongoing support for users.	Output: Audience Engagement Framework. Government Priority: Innovation. We will achieve high levels of satisfaction and meet visitor expectations. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will drive attendance to Science North, Dynamic Earth, and outreach programming and events across all of Northern Ontario.
	We will create a long-term exhibit plan across our science centres and experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will complete a detailed assessment of all exhibit assets and experiences at Science North and Dynamic Earth. • We will contract a design firm to aid in the development of the interpretive plan and framework, with a goal to award the successful proponent in Summer 2025. • We will consult with key stakeholders to develop overall educational and experience objectives for Science North. • We will begin the development of a visitor flow plan and graphic and signage standards for each centre. This work will continue into the 26-27 fiscal year. 	Science North recognizes that the review and assessment process is lengthy and will require external consultation. This risk will be mitigated by building longer timelines into our workplan and creatively soliciting feedback to streamline the process. There is a risk that the final plan may result in an exhibit renewal plan that is too ambitious and not affordable; conversely, if the plan is too limited, it may not reach its full potential. We will set a clear direction and desired outcome from the beginning, allowing for blue-sky thinking only for a portion of the time, and ensuring the plan aligns with realistic resource	Output: Initial content for a long-term exhibit plan. Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will drive attendance to Science North, Dynamic Earth, and outreach programming and events across all of Northern Ontario.

Step Goal #3: We will build a partnership framework to define and manage mutually beneficial relationships.	We will define “mutually beneficial partnerships”, breaking down collaborative relationship types and standards of reciprocity that can be applied across different partnership types.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will review internal and external documents to identify existing definitions of partnerships, benchmarked against similar industries. • We will create a clear, adaptable definition of “partnership” and identify distinctions between partnerships and other collaborative relationships. • We will develop criteria for “mutually beneficial” that are broad enough to apply across all partnerships but specific enough to guide decision-making. • We will include practical examples to illustrate the definitions and criteria, ensuring they are easy to understand and apply. 	There is a risk of ambiguity in definitions, with overly broad or narrow criteria, as well as a risk of stakeholder resistance and lack of buy-in. Science North will engage stakeholders in a transparent process, testing and refining definitions for clarity and communicating the value of the framework to ensure adoption. Simplifying the framework and focusing on practical, adaptable criteria will further reduce complexity.	Output: Partnership definition. Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives. We will achieve high levels of visitor satisfaction and/or meet visitor expectations.
	We will develop a partnership evaluation matrix to inform new partnerships, as well as an evaluation tool to be used in the lifecycle of the partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will conduct benchmarking assessments to identify key evaluation criteria and consult stakeholders to define metrics for partnership success. • We will create an evaluation matrix with scoring criteria and a lifecycle tool to assess partnerships at key stages, focusing on alignment, impact, and sustainability. • We will pilot the tools with selected partnerships, gather feedback, and refine them for implementation. 	There is a risk of developing overly complex tools that are difficult to apply and result in stakeholder misalignment on evaluation criteria. Science North will prioritize simplicity and clarity in tool design, engaging stakeholders early to build consensus on criteria, and providing training to ensure understanding and adoption.	Output: Partnership evaluation matrix. Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives.
	We will develop a management plan and define the resources required to ensure the ongoing maintenance of a partnership framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will identify human, financial, and technological resources required to maintain the framework, and allocate responsibilities within the team. • We will create a detailed management plan outlining processes for monitoring, maintaining, and evaluating partnerships, including roles, timelines, and communication protocols. 	There is a risk of underestimating resource requirements, resulting in insufficient support for maintaining the partnership framework, and a lack of stakeholder buy-in. Science North will conduct a thorough resource assessment and engage stakeholders in the development process to ensure alignment and ownership. Regular reviews and adjustments will ensure it remains practical and effective over time.	Output: Partnership management plan. Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives.

Big Goal #2: We will diversify revenue streams to enhance financial resilience, support ongoing reinvestment and growth, and uphold operational excellence.

Step Goal	Actions to be taken in 2025-26.	Major tasks (sub actions) that will be undertaken in 2025-26 to achieve targets.	Risks and Mitigation Strategies	Outcomes and Performance Measurement
Step Goal #4: We will create a financial management framework to enhance overall financial literacy and improve decision making.	We will design and develop a training system to address organizational needs and gaps in financial literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will conduct an internal assessment of staff levels of financial literacy and comfort with reporting systems and processes. We will develop financial literacy training to ensure a baseline of financial acumen is achieved by all staff required to do so. Training will be incorporated into Science North's existing 6-month Management Leadership Development program 'Leading Blue', as well as through its Leadership Series offerings. 	Science North will mitigate the risks associated with staff adoption of this training by completing the development and delivery internally, ensuring that content is directly linked to the systems and tools that staff use on a day-to-day basis. Metrics will be developed to assess participation rates and transference of knowledge.	Output: Financial Literacy training plan. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will improve financial performance to achieve organization wide budget targets. Government Priority: Accountability. We will engage staff in internally led employee learning and professional development.
	We will finalize and standardize current tools and processes to inform training, workflows, and financial literacy job aids for staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will finalize reporting tools in the SparkRock financial management system and align them with knowledge gaps identified in the staff financial literacy assessment. We will integrate existing workflows and processes, including CRM systems, into SparkRock to ensure standardizes systems across the organization. We will develop job aids and training tools to support more widespread adoption and confidence in using new financial reporting tools. 	Staff may be resistant to adopting new processes, especially if they are accustomed to existing methods; Science North will mitigate this risk by implementing a comprehensive change management plan that includes clear communication, involvement of key stakeholders, and a comprehensive training programs to ensure that all staff are proficient in using the new tools and processes.	Output: SparkRock reporting tools and workflows. Government Priority: Accountability. We will engage staff in internally led employee learning and professional development.
	We will develop a decision-making framework to inform key financial decisions that align with our mission and objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will complete a comprehensive assessment of the current financial decision-making processes in use to define the financial and mission-driven objectives that guide our decision making. 	Science North acknowledges that internal resource constraints, particularly within understaffed teams such as Organization Development and Research, may present challenges. To mitigate these risk, Science North will	Output: Financial decision-making framework. Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop a decision-making framework that incorporates detailed guidelines for financial decision-making, including criteria for evaluating financial options and risk assessment to drive goals. • We will continuously monitor the effectiveness of the framework and make improvements to ensure it remains relevant and aligned with the organization's evolving mission and objectives. 	implement the framework in phases to manage complexity and staff capacity, allowing for adjustments based on feedback and performance.	frameworks to inform operational initiatives. We will implement collaborative innovation cycles across operations with a goal to identify opportunities for new revenues and/or increase efficiencies and drive cost savings.
Step Goal #5: We will develop and implement revenue-generating strategies for International Sales.	We will transform our traveling exhibitions sales cycle to minimize risk and better serve our clients and partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will develop a framework to define the Science North exhibition sales process from pre-production to postproduction. • We will define the process by which we evaluate new traveling exhibits for development, brokering, or exhibition purchases. • We will optimize our use of our current International Sales CRM. 	Science North recognizes the inherent limitations of relying on self-reported data from other developers, which may include biases or incomplete information. To mitigate these risks and enhance the reliability of findings, Science North will leverage its comprehensive analytics capabilities and insights from its expert team to ensure that the development of business plans is informed, validated, and aligned with market realities.	Output: Exhibit sales cycle and framework. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will improve financial performance to achieve organization wide budget targets. We will secure budgeted revenue, where lead time exists, for the 2026/27 fiscal year through travelling exhibit lease, facility rentals, summer camps and membership sales.
	We will develop a strong nature exchange community to enhance value for our clients, attract new clients, and expand into new markets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will modernize the digital infrastructure and physical experience of the NEX to better serve our clients. • We will develop a “road map to execution” that maximizes resources and efficiencies. • We will develop a comprehensive sales strategy so we can better communicate the NEX value proposition to increase participation and revenue. 	Achieving this goal necessitates close and ongoing collaboration between TREX Project Managers and the Marketing team. However, potential challenges, such as limited resources, could hinder progress. Proactive resource allocation, clear communication, and prioritization will be critical to ensuring the success of this collaboration.	Output: Nature Exchange sales strategy. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will improve financial performance to achieve organization wide budget targets. We will secure budgeted revenue, where lead time exists, for the 2026/27 fiscal year through travelling exhibit lease, facility rentals, summer camps and membership sales.

	We will deepen the organizational understanding of Science North's value proposition to elevate our internal expertise and unlock unprecedented revenue growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will have a consulting-ready workforce identified to successfully execute projects. We will define new revenue opportunities (markets and products) available within or through the expansion of existing resources. We will promote and build a positive sales culture across the broader Science North organization. 	Science North recognizes that internal resource constraints, particularly within understaffed teams like Organization Development and Research, may pose challenges. Science North will strategically leverage HR systems to identify the skillsets of former staff members and align them with the expertise of new hires, maximizing the organization's talent pool and ensure critical competencies are addressed to support the successful execution of the plan.	Output: Resource document to support consulting projects. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will improve financial performance to achieve organization wide budget targets. Government Priority: Innovation. We will implement collaborative innovation cycles across operations with a goal to identify opportunities for new revenues and/or increase efficiencies and savings.
Step Goal #6: We will develop a fundraising strategy.	We will conduct a needs assessment and set financial targets to align fundraising goals with organizational priorities and community impact objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will collaborate with internal teams to identify funding requirements, including specific programs, projects, and operational needs. We will evaluate past fundraising and donor trends to identify strengths and opportunities. We will set clear, measurable fundraising targets that align with organizational priorities and community impact objectives. 	There is a risk of underestimating organizational needs or setting unrealistic financial targets, which Science North will mitigate by engaging cross-functional teams of staff and stakeholders to ensure comprehensive needs assessment and realistic goal setting based on historical data and market research.	Output: Fundraising needs assessment. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will improve financial performance to achieve organization wide budget targets. We will secure private and public funding from new and returning funders.
	We will identify and segment donor audiences by analyzing existing donor data and developing tailored engagement strategies for individuals, corporations, and foundations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review donor databases to understand giving history, demographic patterns, and donor behavior trends. We will identify key donor segments, such as individuals, corporations, and foundations, based on contribution levels, interests, and engagement history. We will create customized approaches for each donor segment, focusing on their interests and motivations to maximize engagement. 	Risks include inaccurate donor segmentation due to incomplete or outdated data and ineffective strategies that do not align with donor interests. To address these risks, accurate and thorough data analysis will be prioritized and donor profiles will be regularly updated. Strategies will be piloted with smaller segments before broader implementation to ensure effectiveness.	Output: Donor database. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will secure private and public funding from new and returning funders. Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives.

	<p>We will design and implement targeted fundraising campaigns with clear messaging, timelines, and diverse methods, such as events, digital platforms, and grant applications, to maximize reach and effectiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will define specific goals, target audiences, and key themes for each campaign to align with organizational priorities and donor interests. • We will plan and execute a mix of approaches, including in-person events, digital campaigns, social media outreach, and applications to foundations. • We will launch campaigns with clear timelines and ensure consistent monitoring to track progress and donor response. 	<p>Campaign messaging may not resonate with target audiences, insufficient reach across various fundraising methods, and resource constraints could pose a risk to campaign execution. Science North will conduct audience research to ensure messaging aligns with donor interests and will diversify outreach strategies will be diversified to maximize engagement. Regular monitoring and post-campaign evaluations will allow for timely adjustments and continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Output: Targeted fundraising campaigns. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will secure private and public funding from new and returning funders. Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives.</p>
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Big Goal #3: We will expand our science centre facilities to better serve our audiences in Northern Ontario.

Step Goal	Actions to be taken in 2025-26.	Major tasks (sub actions) that will be undertaken in 2025-26 to achieve targets.	Risks and Mitigation Strategies	Outcomes and Performance Measurement
Step Goal #7: We will finalize and launch the Dynamic Earth expansion project.	We will award a contract to a constructor and complete the construction of the new facility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will complete the construction of the new facility as well as all associated drift and site works. We will achieve substantial completion and receive a full occupancy permit allowing the installation and commissioning of the underground visitor experiences to proceed. 	Labour constraints and supply chains issues continue to pose a risk to the construction schedule; this risk will be mitigated through detailed review of the project schedule with the successful construction proponent to clearly defining project dependencies. Site unknowns may also lead to scope and budget increases, which will be mitigated by allocating contingency.	Output: Completed construction at Dynamic Earth. Government Priority: Accountability. We will improve project performance targets based on annual set milestones and deliverables (schedule, budget, scope).
	We will complete the installation and commissioning of visitor experiences and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will complete development of the renewed underground tour, including developing new content and scripts for delivery by Bluecoat staff; completing the installation, programming, and testing of AV 	Science North may be limited by internal resources, competing priorities and other project dependencies that could impact this scope. This will be mitigated through	Output: Completed visitor experience at Dynamic Earth. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will drive attendance to Science North, Dynamic Earth, and outreach

		<p>hardware; and completing training hand-over to the Dynamic Earth Science Operations team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will complete development of the Big Impact multimedia show, including the completion of AV, hardware and equipment purchases. Following substantial completion of the new facility, the team will install theatrical hardware and equipment, set-up the new control room, and program the multimedia show. • We will complete development of functions services, including mapping AV and hardware used for the multimedia experience to implement creative, experiential lighting and audio presets for external clients and events. 	<p>assigning dedicated team members, advance planning, and scheduling. Science North recognizes the strong inter-dependencies and reliance on the construction schedule above. Organizational efforts to prioritize resources for this project will be required.</p>	<p>programming and events across all of Northern Ontario.</p>
	<p>We will operationalize the new facility, visitor experience, and services, and open to the public.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will complete handover of the new facility and visitor experiences to the Dynamic Earth facilities and operations team, including operational requirements; budget forecasting; technical manuals and maintenance plans; staff training; and establishing KPIs for ongoing monitoring to meet goals • We will open these experiences fully to the public, with a grand opening event to recognize project contributors and promote the experiences. 	<p>Science North may be limited by internal resources, competing priorities and other project dependencies that could impact this scope. This will be mitigated through assigning dedicated team members, advance planning, and scheduling. Science North recognizes the strong inter-dependencies and reliance on the construction schedule above. Organizational efforts to prioritize resources for this project will be required.</p>	<p>Output: Technical manual and operating plan. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will drive attendance to Science North, Dynamic Earth, and outreach programming and events across all of Northern Ontario. We will drive new and returning visitation with strong marketing success and return on investment on marketing campaign dollars.</p>
<p>Step Goal #8: We will complete the Northwest Expansion project Development Phase.</p>	<p>We will complete Capital and Operational Readiness Project Plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will complete the Capital Project Plan, including a project charter; capital budget; risk management plan; reporting framework and project dashboard • We will complete the Operational Plan, which includes resource requirements and organizational 	<p>Science North will be limited by internal resources and competing operational needs. To mitigate this risk, external consultants with expertise in developing these project plans and documents will be engaged to efficiently solicit</p>	<p>Output: Capital and Operational Readiness project plans. Government Priority: Accountability. We will improve project performance targets based on annual set</p>

		<p>structure; mapping of business processes; operational budgets; and a transition plan for the years preceding occupancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will complete the Operational Readiness Plan which includes a capital delivery roadmap to define roles and responsibilities in the organization to lead preparations for the new science centre 	<p>staff input and collate information. Unknowns in the project outside of Science North's control may impact costs and schedule. A detailed list of assumptions will be developed and approved and applied consistently to all project plans, and different operating scenarios will be developed to inform a flexible, yet sustainable, operational plan</p>	<p>milestones and deliverables (schedule, budget, scope). Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives.</p>
	<p>We will advance Site Due Diligence activities in order to support an informed decision regarding the Pool 6 site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review all existing Site Due Diligence documentation from the City of Thunder Bay, including environmental site assessments, archeological surveys, and geotechnical. We will engage a consultant to review the impact of the Pool 6 site and inform next steps, including executing further studies if necessary We will assess the impact of site remediation and construction monitoring requirements on the overall project budget to inform a site selection decision and agreements with the municipality 	<p>Science North does not have internal expertise to independently assess the Pool 6 brownfield site. This will be mitigated by consulting with experts in the field, seeking support from our architectural team, and working with local partners to define the cost and schedule impacts to the project and inform next steps. This goal relies on collaboration with the City of Thunder Bay to share information openly, which will be mitigated by maintaining transparent communication and a positive collaborative relationship.</p>	<p>Output: Site Due Diligence documents and assessments. Government Priority: Accountability. We will improve project performance targets based on annual set milestones and deliverables (schedule, budget, scope). Government Priority: Innovation. We will improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives.</p>
	<p>We will finalize a grants and fundraising strategy for the Northwest Expansion project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will complete a detailed scan of all public and private sector funding opportunities, leveraging key contacts of the Science North Board and Northwest Expansion oversight committees to identify opportunities. We will build a capital campaign strategy for Thunder Bay, including establishing a campaign cabinet, creating marketing and branding 	<p>There is a risk of misalignment with stakeholder expectations, if Science North's fundraising goals do not align with the capacity of public sector funders of private sector donors in the region. Science North will prioritize engagement of stakeholders to ensure that the messaging resonates with them and that</p>	<p>Output: Northwest grants and fundraising strategy. Government Priority: Sustainability. We will secure private and public funding from new and returning funders.</p>

		<p>guidelines, and finalizing an overall campaign goal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will develop a Fundraising Strategy that outlines clear communication goals and plans, key project decision dates for funding, and appropriate resourcing to secure the balance of funds needed to activate the next phase of the Northwest Expansion project. 	<p>their expectations are met and will leverage existing funding relationships wherever possible to foster greater enthusiasm and demonstrate accountability.</p>	
<p>Step Goal #9: We will build strong reciprocal partnerships to advance municipal agreements and community relationships in the Northwest.</p>	<p>We will develop an engagement framework for the Northwest Expansion project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will develop a comprehensive framework to support engagement with community stakeholders and Indigenous rights holders. This framework will guide collaborative approaches to the design of the facility, visitor experiences, and day-to-day operations, utilizing the ICICE lens (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Engage). 	<p>Science North will mitigate reputational risks by actively engaging with communities in an authentic way, ensuring genuine involvement and a link to tangible project outcomes. Science North will maintain transparent, concise, and consistent communication through regular touchpoints across all project phases to mitigate the risk of information gaps and minimize potential misconceptions.</p>	<p>Output: Partnership engagement framework for the northwest. Government Priority: Accountability. We will increase direct engagement with diverse audiences and underrepresented groups.</p>
	<p>We will develop a communications plan for the Northwest Expansion project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will gather input from key audiences, including municipal leaders, community groups, and partners in the Northwest, to understand priorities, concerns, and communication preferences. We will craft clear, consistent messages that highlight the benefits of the Northwest Expansion, aligning them with community priorities and goals. We will develop a multi-channel strategy to effectively reach diverse audiences, including timelines for communication activities, milestones to communicate, and communication mediums and materials. 	<p>Key risks include misalignment with stakeholder expectations, insufficient audience engagement, and delays or resource constraints affecting execution. To mitigate these, Science North will engage stakeholders early to ensure messaging resonates, use a multi-channel approach tailored to audience preferences, and develop a clear timeline with adequate resources to support timely delivery.</p>	<p>Output: Communications plan. Government Priority: Accountability. We will improve project performance targets based on annual set milestones and deliverables (schedule, budget, scope). Government Priority: Innovation. We will develop and implement digital science content on all social media channels.</p>

	<p>We will enter into a general form of agreement (ie: term sheet, MOU) with the municipalities regarding the proposed sites and their financial support to the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue engagement and foster dialogue with municipal partners to explore mutually beneficial opportunities that will ensure these projects achieve optimal success for all stakeholders. • We will conduct thorough due diligence processes, including internal and governance reviews, prior to formalizing partnership frameworks that advance mutual objectives. • We will develop a comprehensive partnership framework that articulates shared community benefits and establishes foundational principles for the project. We will seek to finalize a general form of agreement by the end of 2025. 	<p>Science North recognizes that the finalization of agreements will be dependent upon completion of site use studies and a master planning process currently being undertaken by the City of Thunder Bay and are also dependent on reaching mutually beneficial terms between the relevant parties. Science North will maintain transparent and consistent communication with key stakeholders throughout the project to support and expedite these processes wherever possible.</p>	<p>Output: General form of agreement (MOU) with the municipalities. Government Priority: Accountability. We will improve project performance targets based on annual set milestones and deliverables (schedule, budget, scope).</p>
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Resources Needed to Meet Goals and Objectives

The financial and human resources required to execute Science North's Implementation Plan are detailed in the preceding table. These resources are further elaborated within the centre's Human Resources Strategy, Financial Plan, and Digital and Technology Plan for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Risk Identification

Science North is well positioned to anticipate, 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 regularly evaluates risk as a key component of its accountabilities 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. At the time of this report, an overview of Science North's risks is provided in the heat map below, with additional details in Appendix.

	LOW Scores 1-5	MEDIUM Scores of 6-10	MEDIUM - HIGH Scores 11-19		HIGH Scores 20-25
5 ALMOST CERTAIN					FINANCIAL PRESSURES
4 LIKELY			EXHIBIT SALES	IMAX THIRD PARTY CONTRACTORS	
3 POSSIBLY			STAFF RETENTION & RECRUITMENT NW EXPANSION DYNAMIC EARTH EXPANSION PROJECT		IT FAILURE
2 UNLIKELY				EMERGENCY PROCEDURES SITE SECURITY	SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE
1 RARE		LEGAL ACTION		FIPPA	
	1 INSIGNIFICANT	2 MINOR	3 MODERATE	4 MAJOR	5 CRITICAL

Financial Pressure is the only currently area in High (Red) Level, largely due to increased competition in the leisure market, pressures on staffing costs, rising inflation and a frozen operating grant. As a not-for-profit organization, the tolerance for this risk will always be high, which is consistent tolerance within the not-for-profit sector. Science North will continue its focus on reducing costs and growing revenues, as well as investing in innovation and its new strategic plan, to mitigate this risk.

Medium-High risks and mitigation strategies include:

- IT – focus has changed from IT Failure to IT as risk is now more on Cyber Security and AI. Science North has sufficiently upgraded its systems and is now focused on continual server infrastructure updates and developing robust IT and AI policies to mitigate risk.
- IMAX – Medium-High risk informed by low attendance, which is attributed to increased competition, decreased school funding, and other regional economic factors. Science North continues to monitor results, industry trends, and visitor feedback to mitigate this risk, and has implemented new documentary offerings, daily family-friendly films and successful Planetarium shows.
- Third Party Contractors – remain a Medium-High risk due to concerns surrounding Ministry of Labour exposure, lack of supervision, insurance, and WSIB for projects that rely on outside contractors to deliver services that fall beyond the scope of Science North staff. Science North has implemented a new contractor sign-in process to confirm safety protocols and is in the process of planning contractor supervisor training to mitigate risk.
- Exhibit Sales – remain a Medium-High risk due to booking cancellations, fabrication delays, and aging exhibits. Science North has secured export funding and hired new International Sales staff to generate sales leads and diversify this revenue stream with travelling & permanent exhibits, as well as consulting.

Medium risks and mitigation strategies include:

- Recruitment & Retention – Medium risk as current labour market issues in Northern Ontario continue to create recruitment challenges, including the quantity of francophone and diverse (BIPOC) applicants. Science North has filled several key vacancies and will conduct ongoing review of compensation and benefits. Staff Retention is not currently an issue.
- Northwest Expansion Project – Medium risk tied to complications with off-site controls, land agreements and land due diligence. The schematic design phase is complete, and the project is currently in the development phase that will build relationships and project documents to mitigate potential risks.
- Dynamic Earth Expansion Project – moved to Medium risk, as both risk likelihood and impact have been reduced over 2024-25. These changes are due to the project being 95% funded, with all open permits and land purchasing now complete. Science North's Director of Development is in positive negotiations to secure the remaining 5% funding.
- Societal Expectations – remain a Medium risk, due to targeted efforts around reconciliation and diversity with staff and vendors and greater social

expectations. Science North has implemented both internal staff-led and external Advisory Committees to inform the content of its programming and staff training.

- Infrastructure – moved to Medium risk, as Capital Repair and Rehabilitation funding in 2024-25 and anticipated award for 2025-26 have allowed significant infrastructure renewals. A site building assessment condition was completed to ensure proper internal prioritization of projects.
- Emergency Procedures – remain a Medium risk, as the public nature of operations including a large youth demographic require lost child and emergency procedures. Science North continues to engage in Crisis Management Planning and completes fire drills and lost child protocol simulations at both sites annually to minimize risk.
- Site Security – moved to Medium risk, with likelihood reduced with updated health and safety protocols that adhere to public safety standards and quarterly site assessment. Impact of vulnerable people accessing the building and grounds at both sites has increased, the likelihood of a critical encounter is low, estimated only between a 5-20% chance.

Low risks and mitigation strategies include:

- FIPPA – there is a Low risk of unauthorized access or loss of confidential information, mitigated by strong internal controls in place to manage the protection, storage and disposal of all third-party information, including SharePoint and archival records in compliance with legal requirements.
- Legal Action – continues to be a Low risk, with Science North maintaining an insurance policy with a 10m aggregate to cover any damages from third parties, updated regularly upon any critical injury or occurrence reporting.

Human Resources Strategy

As is common for many organizations across the province, Science North faces a multitude of complex economic and legislative challenges that will impact its competitiveness and success over the next three years. These critical focus areas present opportunities for the Organizational Development unit to address in 2025-26 and beyond, including:

Recruitment: Although vacancies at Science North have stabilized post-pandemic and are manageable, recruitment pressures persist due to longer hiring times caused by labour market shortages. Sudbury's smaller labour pool often necessitates recruiting from across the province and directly impacts the centre's goals to hire a more diverse workforce. While survey data indicates a decrease in equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) efforts across Ontario (60% in 2023 to 54% in 2024), Science North will continue to implement new EDIA strategies and employ best practices, remaining committed to its objective of recruiting a more diverse workforce.

Compensation: Science North's primary objective for 2025-26 is to address the challenges posed by escalating living costs and inflation on recruitment and staff retention. This issue impacts all pay bands, with the most significant effect being felt at our hourly staff levels. Although Ontario's minimum wage has increased to \$17.20, it still falls short of the actual living wage in Northern Ontario, which stands at \$20.30. Science North is currently reviewing its compensation framework to elevate average wages to match the living wage; however, this endeavor is financially demanding for the organization due to concerns regarding compression across pay bands and equity. Given Science North's funding model and revenue streams, accommodating these heightened staffing costs presents a challenge, but it is crucial for attracting and retaining staff while maintaining cost management.

Benefits and Wellness: Science North will continue to assess its current benefit and wellness offerings, aiming to expand eligibility and access to these programs for a greater number of staff members, ensuring that all employees have the support they need to maintain their health and well-being. This includes a full spectrum of resources including comprehensive Group Benefit packages, 24/7 telemedicine access, EFAP program, employee wellness spending, Tech'nable and Green'nable financial assistance programs, financial planning and staff workshops. Science North will implement improved communications to ensure all staff are aware of these benefits.

Gen AI: In 2025-26, embracing AI and setting organizational guidelines will be crucial. A national survey shows that 51% of hiring managers seek AI and automation skills, while 30% of workers say generative AI boosts their efficiency and work quality. Younger workers report even higher benefits, with 47% of Gen Z and 32% of millennials experiencing improvements. Science North will implement new AI policies to harness this technology, set standards, and mitigate risks.

Organizational Structure: Science North's Fully Realized Organizational Systems Transformation (FROST) will continue to be a priority in 2025-26, aligning the structure of key units in the science centre to support long-term strategic goals. Support for

change management, communication, and process realignment will continue as needed.

In light of these challenges, particularly those related to the current economic climate and labour market shortages, Science North recognizes that the most effective strategy to address these issues is to concentrate on enhancing the employee experience. This approach aims to reduce staff turnover and improve employee retention. Key initiatives for 2025-26 include:

- Continuing succession planning strategies to develop a talented staff pool for current and future needs.
- Cultivating new leaders at the Manager and Senior Manager level through the 'Leading Blue' program, a 6-month management development program.
- Engaging staff through Leadership Series sessions on business acumen, and Catalyst Series workshops covering value-based topics for all staff.
- Engaging an average of 40+ participants in a cross-functional Mentorship Program.
- Reviewing total compensation strategies for hourly staff to address inflation and living costs, including benefit and pension waiting periods.
- Expanding the HR ticketing systems to improve unit effectiveness.
- Ongoing support for the FROST project implementation.
- Implementing new AI policies across the organization.

An estimate of full-time equivalent positions in previous and current years, as well as positions needed to meet the strategic long-term needs of Science North is outlined below:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Full Time Equivalents (FTE)	127	119	118	123	126	128
Part Time & Temporary	90	106	134	90	95	100

Executive Team	6	6	7	7	7	7
Senior Leadership Team	15	17	15	15	16	17
Management Staff	18	21	21	27	27	28
Contract Staff	21	20	14	10	12	14
Consultants	n/a	n/a	13	12	12	12

Performance Measures

Science North measures its overall performance using its Balanced Scorecard. This tool allows Science North to track its progress on several performance metrics, balanced based on its Strategic Priorities. They include both leading and lagging measures, as well as measures that focus on internal processes, 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 2025-26 Balanced Scorecard will be informed by its 2025-26 Business Plan and 2025-2028 Strategic Plan, and measures will consider likely outcomes based on key assumptions and worse-case, medium-case and best-case scenarios.

Performance Measure	Performance Indicator
Government Priority: Innovation	
Implement collaborative innovation cycles across operations with a goal to identify opportunities for new revenues and/or increase efficiencies and drive cost savings.	Number of ideas generated during collaborative innovation cycles. Percentage of ideas developed to the prototype or implementation stage.
Reduce carbon emissions through environmental sustainability measures produced by Science North and Dynamic Earth operations and businesses.	At the time of this plan, Science North is developing a Net-Zero Strategy, to be completed March 2025, which will inform key performance indicators under this measure.
Develop and implement digital science content on all social media channels.	Achieve +5 engagement over industry standard with digital analytics across all social platforms, when measured against comparable in the tourism industry.
Improve how we use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting by using standardized decision frameworks to inform operational initiatives.	Number of operational initiatives for which a standardized business case / decision framework has been used to inform decision making.
Achieve high levels of visitor satisfaction and/or meet visitor expectations.	80% of audiences will indicate that Science North experiences met and/or exceeded their expectations.
Government Priority: Sustainability	
Improve financial performance to achieve organization wide budget targets.	Achieve a balanced budget (\$0.00) in 2025-26.
Secure budgeted revenue, where lead time exists, for the 2026/27 fiscal year through travelling exhibit lease, facility rentals, summer camps and membership sales.	Secure 60% of leading revenue for the 2026-27 fiscal year by March 31, 2025, through initiatives such as international sales leases and contracts, summer camp pre-sales, membership sales, and facility rentals.
Secure private and public funding from new and returning funders.	Achieve 65% success rate on private and public funding proposals from new and returning funders; weighted according to value of funds secured and resource investment in securing funds.
Drive new and returning visitation with strong marketing success and return on investment on marketing campaign dollars.	Achieve strong return on investment (ROI) and cost per acquisition (COA) in Marketing for major campaigns in 2024-25 - achieve "excellence" based on industry standard (700% ROI and \$0.90 COA).
Drive attendance to Science North, Dynamic Earth, and outreach programming and events across all of Northern Ontario	Achieve 360,000 in attendance across all operations, including science centre admissions and all school and outreach programming across Northern Ontario

Government Priority: Accountability	
Improve project performance targets based on annual set milestones and deliverables (schedule, budget, scope).	85% of projects and/or deliverable delivered on schedule and within parameters of budget and scope.
Increase direct engagement with diverse audiences and underrepresented groups.	Achieve 7.5% of participants across all operations from diverse audiences and underrepresented groups (Indigenous, 2SLGBTQ+, newcomers, minority groups, at-risk youth, persons with disabilities, low-income, etc.)
Engage staff in internally led employee learning and professional development.	90% of staff who participate in training self-report that the training provided aligns with their development goals and will benefit them at work.
Promote an inclusive environment and provide opportunities for dialogue and conversation around sensitive topics at Science North.	95% of all staff participate in training specifically centred on anti-racism, reconciliation and cultural competency.
Advance staff understanding of and commitment to EDIA and Reconciliation,	80% of staff that feel that Science North values diversity (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, language, education qualifications, ideas, and perspectives) and that the organization is committed to EDIA.

Industry Benchmarking

Science North fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation and regularly seeks ways to improve performance management systems. Science North benchmarks its performance measures against other leading science centres and comparable organizations, as applicable to the centre's mandated service area. This practice involves a thorough analysis of performance standards and metrics used within the science centre industry, as well as those employed by similar institutions in related fields. Through this practice, Science North ensures that its performance management systems are not only competitive but also reflect best practices and emerging trends. This commitment to benchmarking also facilitates knowledge sharing and collaboration with other science centres, fostering a network of excellence and driving the collective advancement of the field.

Financial Plan

Science North's financial plan incorporates its recovery plan at a moderate level with a forecast of sustainability and growth beginning in 2025-26. Growing self-generated revenues will be critical in order to continue to achieve and grow our impact across all of Northern Ontario. Science North's strategic plan includes a robust digital strategy and investment in innovation which will be leading factors in the required revenue growth.

	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
(in millions)	Projection	Budget	Draft Budget	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Total Revenues	\$17.187	\$19.201	\$20.020	\$20.566	\$20.961	\$21.305
Total Expenditures	\$17.448	\$19.200	\$20.018	\$20.564	\$20.950	\$21.303
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$0.261)	\$0.001	\$0.002	\$0.004	\$0.011	\$0.002

Operating Budget

Science North presented a balanced budget for fiscal year 2024-25; however, results to date project a \$261,000 deficit. This deficit can be attributed a few key areas, including reduced admissions and membership sales during the first seven months of operations, with projections to the end of the year showing a deficit over budget of \$241,000. This compounded with a detailed review of Science North's international sales and traveling exhibits showing a projected decrease of \$1.7 million over budget. Science North offset this deficit in 2024-25 by aggressively seeking grant funding to support current operational initiatives, rather than seeking funding for greenfield initiatives.

Project expenditures are expected to be below budget for Science North's various program areas due to the variable nature of these expenses related to revenues. In addition, the centre will continue to implement cost-saving measures identified through the Bold Optimization and Operational Savings through Thoughtful Transformation (BOOST) cost-saving innovation wave to further improve the organization's financial position and find ongoing savings. This includes cost saving measures surrounding energy efficiency, digital subscription reductions, translations, and the implementation of Science North's new financial software, Sparkrock, that has also allowed the centre to produce more timely and accurate reporting and find efficiencies by shifting to a fully digital environment. These measures, first implemented in 2023-24, have allowed Science North to remain closer to its budgeted surplus than would be expected due to revenue shortfalls, and will be maintained in future years to continue to improve the organizations financial position.

Science North's strategic outlook for 2025-26 and beyond aims to achieve a balanced budget, as presented to its board and ministry. Reviewing the centre's revenue structure has identified areas that require adjustments to lower revenue targets, but ultimately will lead to enhanced efficiencies and net surpluses. Science North has realigned its program areas to minimize expenditure duplication and enhance program delivery. Key revenue differences between 2024-25 and 2025-26 are illustrated in the chart below, along with forecast assumptions by program area for the upcoming 3 fiscal years. Additional details on expenses and revenues can be found in the Appendices.

Program Area	2024-25	2025-26	Variance	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operating Grant	\$6.829	\$6.829	\$0.000	\$6.829	\$6.829	\$6.829
Admission & Memberships	\$3.350	\$3.411	-\$0.061	\$3.191	\$3.237	\$3.283
Exhibit Sales & Consulting	\$3.171	\$2.718	\$0.453	\$3.031	\$3.366	\$2.761
Onsite Businesses	\$2.410	\$2.292	\$0.118	\$2.363	\$2.426	\$2.492
STEM Program	\$2.072	\$2.044	\$0.028	\$2.248	\$2.526	\$2.632
Grants	\$0.509	\$1.207	-\$0.698	\$1.250	\$0.773	\$1.221
Sponsorship & Fundraising	\$0.530	\$0.905	-\$0.375	\$1.085	\$1.301	\$1.560
Interest & Other	\$0.329	\$0.614	-\$0.285	\$0.569	\$0.503	\$0.528
	\$19.200	\$20.020		\$20.566	\$20.961	\$21.305

In 2025-26, Science North projects that its Exhibit Sales and Consulting program will generate \$454,000 in profits, directly enhancing the centre's financial stability as it manages a total of seven revenue-generating travelling exhibits, five of which are owned by the centre. Sales targets have been adjusted downward from 2024-25, as Science North has conducted a detailed review of its exhibits and consulting offerings to project more realistic targets. An International Sales Strategy will be launched in 2025-26, as detailed in the Overview of Current and Future Activities, and Science North anticipates that both targets and net profit will increase in the forthcoming years.

Science North's development team is targeting sponsorship and donation revenue of \$900,000 in fiscal year 2025-26. With the addition of two staff members and a Director of Development, the team is expected to increase sponsorship revenues to over \$1.6 million by 2028-29. The grant team is prioritizing funding opportunities that directly affect Science North's financial performance by seeking grants for existing programs and has an objective to secure \$1.2 million in grant revenue in 2025-26. Commitments amounting to \$409,000 have already been confirmed for the 2025-26 fiscal year, including funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Francophone Affairs. Pending approvals from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development will result in an additional \$652,000 in grant revenues for 2025-26, with the remainder to be secured through funding for projects such as the renewal of the 3rd floor of the science centre. Science North is also projecting to secure \$150,000 in employment grants for the 2025-26 fiscal year, with expected moderate growth over the three-year forecast period as the centre continues to expand its operations throughout Northern Ontario.

In 2025-26 fiscal year, Science North will operationalize the amalgamation of its Education and Northern Programs with its Science Program. To ensure sustained service delivery and operational stability, several key roles will transition to permanent positions in a strategic shift which demonstrates Science North's commitment to the North and its investment in fulfilling the organizational mandate. The combination of the two programs, along with the transition from contract to permanent staff and expanded reach in Northern Ontario, will result in a net increase in costs of approximately \$800,000 over the previous two programs. This change will impact grant revenue, as the grants secured now will be applied to the centres bottom line and more existing operational initiatives and programming.

As of March 31, 2024, Science North holds \$12.7 million in restricted operating and capital reserve accounts and endowment funds, established at various points in the centre's history with the intent to support the organization's long-term financial stability and finance specific initiatives such as educational programs, exhibits, and community outreach. Funds are managed with a focus on preserving the principal amount while generating sufficient interest income to meet organizational needs. In 2025-26, Science North will develop a Reserve Funds Strategy to provide a singular history for how each fund was established, its terms of reference, and guidelines for how funds are to be used, including how much they are expected to generate in interest income.

Funding Requirements for 2025-26

Science North receives a core operating grant of \$6,828,900 from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Gaming, with payment expected to flow over the first two quarters of the fiscal year.

Science North will build on established and diverse government relationships to seek grant opportunities to support its operating and capital needs, continuing to leverage smart business practices and strong relationships to maximize grant growth and support internal coordination of projects and deliverables to achieve grants targets. Science North will support its operating, capital renewal and infrastructure needs, achieving government funder commitments through grant revenue from municipal, provincial, and federal sources (outside of the MTCG operating grant).

In 2025-26, Science North expects to secure \$1.2 million in government grant funding from various federal, provincial and municipal funding programs to support Science North's programming and activities in Greater Sudbury and across Northern Ontario. Examples include funding to deliver core programming for educators across the province to engage their classrooms in STEM and the skilled trades, as well as funding to continue Science North's engagement with students and teachers across the province in coding and digital skills, and to continue the centre's engagement with underrepresented groups on the topic of vaccine science and misinformation.

Capital Projects

Science North's approach to capital infrastructure is aligned with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming "Capital Repair and Rehabilitation Program", addressing needs related to Health and Safety, Asset Integrity, Code Compliance, Legislation, and Critical to Business. This approach allows prioritization at the agency level and provides the information necessary for the Ministry to prioritize capital funding allocations. Science North considers core criteria and risk assessment related to likelihood, impact, and timeline. These renewal requirements are critical to ensure the organization's facilities operate efficiently while in compliance with regulatory requirements, avoid obsolescence, and ensure a safe environment for visitors and workforce.

In 2023, Science North through Infrastructure Ontario completed a Building Condition Assessment which provided key data points regarding facilities and their capital renewal needs. Science North's 2023-27 Capital Plan was developed leveraging this 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.

Science North's inventory of facility assets is as follows:

Asset Name	Description	Gross Area	Construction Year	Current Age	Replacement Value
Entrance Building and IMAX	Existing arena building renovated and expanded in the 1990s to become the Science North main entrance, in addition to the IMAX, Planetarium, and Exhibition Hall facilities.	72,000	1967	57	\$ 35,063,332
Education Building	Office, meeting, and teaching space for the education programs.	10,000	2002	22	\$ 3,424,731
Education Building Storage Addition	Small expansion to the Education Building for additional storage.	1,280	2005	19	\$ 432,908
Dynamic Earth Underground	Underground facilities and visitor experience as part of Dynamic Earth.	11,000	1962	62	\$ 3,925,458
Science North Link	The physical link between the entrance building and small snowflake.	3,400	1994	30	\$ 414,323
Science North Tunnel	The underground tunnel between the Small and large Snowflake.	2,900	1983	41	\$ 686,735
Large Snowflake	The 4-storey main science centre facility which includes visitor experiences and live animals.	78,800	1983	41	\$ 26,807,575
Butterfly Gallery	Addition to the Large Snowflake for the purposes of a Butterfly Glass House.	3,000	1999	25	\$ 844,543
Small Snowflake Food Services Addition	Addition to the Small Snowflake for the purposes of additional back of house kitchen operations.	2,700	2005	19	\$ 745,783
Dynamic Earth	The 2-storey main earth sciences centre.	38,685	2000	24	\$ 19,785,773
Small Snowflake	2-storey facility for daycare and camp programming, large rental space, and administrative offices.	20,500	1983	41	\$ 7,123,062
Education Building Expansion	Small expansion on the second floor of the Education Building.	858	2010	14	\$ 218,381
Entrance Building Workshop Addition	Addition to the original arena building to include for an exhibit workshop.	7,500	1990	34	\$ 3,180,881
TOTAL		252,623			\$ 102,653,485

In addition to the inventory of facility assets, Infrastructure Ontario's building condition assessment also provided key renewal requirements over a 10-year horizon. Science North regularly completes detailed assessments of critical systems (ie: 2020 HVAC assessment, 2020 Roofing assessment, 2024 Building Envelope Assessment, 2024/25 Butterfly Gallery Assessment). Using information from these studies along with the updated building condition assessment, Science North will create a detailed 5-year capital plan in 2025-26 to inform future projects.

In 2025-26, Science North will plan to implement two major infrastructure renewals as nationally approved under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming's Capital Repair and Rehabilitation Program:

- **Science Centre Window Reglazing, Caulking & Replacement:** Started in 2023-24, this \$4.6 million project (\$200,000 awarded in 2023-24, \$800,000 in 2024-25, and \$3.6 million notionally approved for 2025-26) will replace all old double pane aluminum frame windows in the Small and Large Snowflake buildings, replacing failing or damaged windows and ensuring that the infrastructure meets modern day energy efficiency standards. This includes the

large curtain wall of windows up the science centre ramp and 3rd floor Northern Garden windows (installed 1983) and Ramsey Room windows (installed 1989).

- **HVAC Replacement for the Large Snowflake:** Started in 2024-25, this \$1.8 million project (\$500,000 awarded in 2024-25, \$1.3 million notionally approved for 2025-26) will include the full replacement of the primary air handling units for the Large Snowflake building, units which are original to the building and are beyond their useful life.

Science North's current 2023-27 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. In 2025-26, this will include major projects such as:

- **Dynamic Earth Expansion Project:** Started in 2019 with an in-depth prototyping and visitor feedback process, this \$14.9 million project has been delivered in multiple phases, with \$14.43 million in funding from public and private sector partners secured to date. The next phase of the project will create a new 240m² Underground Multi-Purpose Theatre & Programming Space at its Dynamic Earth site, increasing the centre's capacity to train and engage youth in the mining industry and skilled trades. This space will be a unique one-of-a-kind venue for shows, programming, special events and functions at Dynamic Earth, and will feature a new immersive Big Impact multimedia experience.
- **Science Centre 3rd Floor Renewal:** New and changing visitor experiences are essential to remain relevant to audiences, and Science North will advance its plans to renew the third floor of its Bell Grove site in 2025-26, developing a visitor experience concept plan and detailed budget to secure funds for renewal.
- **Northwest Expansion Project:** In 2019, driven by Science North's mandate to offer a program of science learning across all Northern Ontario and guided by a robust Feasibility Study, Science North identified the need and opportunity for a permanent science centre presence in Thunder Bay. Science North will continue work in 2025-26 to secure funding and advance the Pre-Construction Phase of the project, as outlined in the Overview of Current and Future Activities.

Realty

Science North's latest strategic plan aims to enhance its facilities to better serve Northern Ontario audiences by establishing permanent satellite locations in Thunder Bay and Kenora. In Kenora, ongoing discussions with the municipality will focus on expanding the partnership to utilize existing municipal facilities, thereby improving outreach and offerings to the community. In Thunder Bay, planning is underway for the construction of a new facility. In 2025-26, Science North intends to establish a partnership framework and assess realty implications. While no realty acquisitions are anticipated for 2025-26, Science North may seek provincial approval for acquiring real property for the new Thunder Bay Science Centre through transfer, sale, or long-term lease of municipal property over the next three years as part of the Northwest Expansion project. This would be subject to approval from the Science North Board of Trustees, Science North's oversight Ministry and the Lieutenant Governor in Council per the Science North Act.

Information Technology Plan

As Science North continues to advance its mission of inspiring and engaging audiences through science education and innovation, a key focus is placed on leveraging Information Technology (IT) and Electronic Service Delivery to enhance operational efficiency and audience engagement. The organization's IT plan for 2025-26 outlines strategic projects aimed at modernizing its digital infrastructure, with initiatives designed to ensure that Science North remains at the forefront of technological advancements and provides robust support for its diverse array of programs and services.

IT & Electronic Service Delivery

In 2025-26, Science North will conduct a comprehensive review of its IT policies and will make improvements as needed to ensure that all policies are current, comprehensive, and aligned with industry best practices to enhance security, compliance, and operational efficiency. Science North will review and update its cybersecurity incident response plan, refining the plan to ensure rapid and effective handling of cybersecurity incidents to minimize damage and recovery time.

Wherever possible, Science North will implement Single Sign-On (SSO) technology to streamline user access across multiple systems, enhancing security and user convenience by reducing the need for multiple passwords.

In 2025-26, Science North will research, purchase, and implement two new IT Infrastructure systems: a digital asset management system to efficiently organize, store, and retrieve digital assets, improving workflow and asset utilization; and a unified digital signage system to enhance communication and engagement across the organization through centralized management and dynamic content delivery.

Science North uses several electronic service delivery systems to streamline operations, improve communication, and provide services to visitors and stakeholders. These systems will be maintained in the current business plan, with continuous evaluation and adjustments as needed:

- Direct Routing as a Service (DRaaS): This platform is used for the deployment and integration of Microsoft Teams Phone, allowing for efficient communication and collaboration between staff and with the public.
- Cloud Computing and Software as a Service (SaaS): Science North leverages cloud technology to improve service delivery, enabling flexibility, agility, and better collaboration across the organization.
- Board Portal: An online portal for board-related materials and information, providing secure and authenticated access for board members.
- SharePoint and One Drive: Staff use these to securely store and share files with authorized individuals both internal and external to the organization.
- Social Media Platforms: Science North engages with the public on various social media platforms to help grow our community, increase awareness, keep visitors up to date, and drive brand reputation.

- Website: Science North maintains a website to enhance our digital presence, communication, visitor information, educational resources, and fundraising efforts.
- Tessitura Network: This platform is used for ticketing, e-ticketing, fundraising, and customer relationship management, providing a comprehensive solution for managing visitor interactions.
- Eventbrite: Science North uses Eventbrite to organize and manage events, making it easy for visitors to purchase tickets online
- Science North e-Store: This platform is used for selling a variety of science-based and educational gift items, making it easy for customers to purchase products online.
- Shopify: Science North uses Shopify to manage its online store, providing a seamless and secure shopping experience for customers.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In 2025-26, Science North will leverage AI to enhance operational efficiency and improve visitor experiences. The organization recognizes the high demand for AI and automation skills, particularly among younger workers, and aims to address training gaps in emerging technologies through the development of a comprehensive AI Policy, aligned with Section 6.3 of the Responsible Use of AI Directive for agencies and following best practices as described in the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement's 'Guidance and Best Practices for using Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) Version 2 (July 2024)'.

Currently, Science North has developed a Task Force to explore the use of Microsoft Co-Pilot as a tool to enhance operational efficiency, including as a support to develop social media posts, compose emails, generate internally and externally facing documents, conduct research, and draft strategies and policies. Science North's new AI Policy, developed in 2025-26, will further lay out potential use cases and guidelines, outlining how AI may be used for:

- Visitor Experience Enhancement, by analyzing visitor data and preferences to create tailored exhibits and programs that cater to the interests of different audience segments.
- Operational Efficiency, to streamline various operational processes, such as ticketing, scheduling, and resource management.
- Educational Programs, to provide interactive and engaging learning experiences using AI-driven simulations and virtual reality (VR) experiences to enhance science education.
- Data Analysis, to analyze large datasets collected from various sources, including visitor feedback, social media, and operational data, providing valuable insights for decision-making and strategic planning.

Science North's AI policy development will align with best practices to ensure the ethical and effective use of AI technologies, focused on creating a comprehensive framework that addresses key areas such as:

- Data Privacy: Ensuring that all AI applications comply with data protection regulations and safeguard user information.
- Transparency: Making AI processes and decisions understandable and accessible to stakeholders.
- Accountability: Establishing clear responsibilities and oversight mechanisms for AI initiatives.
- Inclusivity: Ensuring that AI solutions are designed and implemented in a way that benefits all users and avoids biases.

By focusing on these areas, Science North aims to leverage AI to enhance operational efficiency and improve visitor experiences while maintaining high ethical standards. The policy will include several key measures to establish clear responsibilities and oversight mechanisms for AI initiatives and will include practices to conduct regular audits of its AI systems and processes to ensure they adhere to the policy and best practices. These audits will help identify any areas for improvement and ensure continuous compliance.

Initiatives Involving Third Parties

In addition to the relationship with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, 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. Science North holds itself and partners accountable through MOUs, contracts and agreements, and will begin work in 2025-26 to implement a more robust reciprocal partnership strategy to achieve the centre's mandate.

For fiscal 2025-26, Science North has the following confirmed third-party relationships:

Name / Type	Nature of Relationship
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)	Funding – Special Projects Northwest Expansion
FedNor	Funding – Special Projects Northwest Expansion
Canadian Heritage	Funding – Special Projects Canada Day
Natural Sciences & Engineering Research Council of Canada	Funding – Special Projects Promoscience
City of Sudbury & Greater Sudbury Development Corporation	Funding – Special Projects Dynamic Earth Expansion Project, Canada Day
Environment & Climate Change Canada	Funding– Special Projects Climate Action Experiences across Canada
Ministry of Education	Funding – Special Projects STEM Experiences for Students and Teachers
Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund	Funding– Special Projects Sean Kenny's Brick Masters Studio
City of Thunder Bay	Funding – Special Projects Northwest Expansion
City of Kenora	Funding – Special Projects Northwest Expansion
Ontario Science Centre	Exhibition design, development, and tour Wild Weather, Beyond Human Limits
Arizona Science Center	Exhibition design, development, and tour Skeletons: The Wonders Within
Skulls Unlimited International	Exhibition design, development, and tour Skeletons: The Wonders Within
Jane Goodall Institute of Canada	Special Projects – IMAX Films
Canadian Association of Science Centres (CASC)	Program development, delivery, and evaluation
Laurentian University	Delivery of post-graduate program in Science Communication
Canadian Bushplane Heritage Museum	Northern Ontario – Special Projects THINK Hubs, Northern Nature Exchange, Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope custom film and exhibit, customized exhibits

Fort Frances Public Library Technology Centre	Northern Ontario – Special Projects THINK Hubs, customized exhibits
Lake of the Woods Discovery Centre	Northern Ontario – Special Projects THINK Hubs, Northern Nature Exchange, Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope custom film and exhibit, customized exhibits, Northwest Expansion
Cochrane Public Library	Northern Ontario – Special Projects Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope custom film and exhibit,
North Bay Discovery Museum	Northern Ontario – Special Projects THINK Hubs, Northern Nature Exchange, Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope custom film and exhibit, customized exhibits
Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre	Northern Ontario – Special Projects Northern Nature Exchange, customized exhibits
Science Timmins	Northern Ontario – Special Projects THINK Hubs, Northern Nature Exchange, customized exhibits
Sioux Narrows Sportfishing Centre	Northern Ontario – Special Projects Northern Nature Exchange, customized exhibits
Sault Ste Marie Public Library	Northern Ontario – Special Projects THINK Hubs, customized exhibits
Thunder Bay Public Library	Northern Ontario – Special Projects THINK Hubs
Thunder Bay Museum	Northern Ontario – Special Projects Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope custom film and exhibit, customized exhibits
Boreal Museum	Northern Ontario – Special Projects Northern Nature Exchange, customized exhibits
West Parry Sound Museum	Northern Ontario – Special Projects Northern Nature Exchange, customized exhibits

Marketing and Communications Plan

Science North develops strategic, comprehensive and detailed marketing plans for each of its new, featured programs to attract tourists and reach new audiences across the province and beyond. With every strategic execution, Science North aims to push boundaries, provoke curiosity, experiment with innovative approaches, and consistently deliver value. By employing creative strategies and fostering meaningful connections both online and in person, the goal is to generate widespread interest across Ontario and internationally, ultimately driving a significant increase in visitor attendance for the featured exhibits and their accompanying events.

In 2025-26, Science North will focus on optimized targeting, compelling ad campaigns, authentic organic marketing, and meaningful partnerships. Storytelling will play a central role in marketing efforts, using authentic narratives and visitor experiences to showcase the unique value of Science North's offerings to forge deeper emotional connections with audiences. Through these marketing strategies, Science North will connect with audiences, amplify brand visibility, enhance brand equity, further solidify brand identity, instill trust in the brand, and drive visitors to Science North and Greater Sudbury.

Target Audiences

Generally, Science North's target audience is families across Ontario (mostly coming from the North), with individuals aged 25 to 44 being its primary online marketing audience, which is informed by comprehensive analytics. While Science North will continue to focus on this audience in 2025-26, the science centre will strategically extend our target to a broader, more diverse pool where applicable, engaging new audiences in tailored science content and programming that meets their needs.

Science North will focus and enhance efforts to draw new and returning visitors to the science centre and the Greater Sudbury community. The focus will be on attracting the above target markets from Northeastern Ontario (with a heavy focus on North Bay, Sault Ste Marie and Timmins), Western Quebec, Central Ontario (Barrie, Collingwood, Huntsville and Parry Sound), Eastern Ontario (Ottawa) and Southern Ontario (GTA).

By targeting Ontarians outside of Greater Sudbury with strategic marketing initiatives, Science North will not only encourage travel within Ontario but also position Northern Ontario and the science centre as premier travel destinations. The heightened visibility and compelling narratives planned in this marketing campaign will invigorate the industry and position Science North and Greater Sudbury as an irresistible choice for travellers seeking enriching and memorable experiences. Science North's role in revitalizing the tourism landscape underscores the influential role that strategic marketing can play in fostering economic growth and cultural exchange.

Diversity and inclusion are key to Science North's audience engagement strategy. By tailoring programs to be inclusive and accessible, Science North will reach marginalized communities, newcomers, and people with disabilities, ensuring that everyone feels welcome and represented in the organization's offerings. Marketing initiatives will also include culturally diverse programming and content to celebrate the rich diversity of Ontario's communities.

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is an important aspect of the overall communications strategy. It allows for precise audience targeting, which can be very impactful. The analytics collected and reviewed are crucial tools to inform future strategies and maximize ROI.

Website:

Science North's website will serve as a central hub for all user needs, functioning as both an informational and transactional platform to drive engagement, ticket sales, and awareness of Science North's programs and events. The website will play a pivotal role in executing the marketing strategy. The website will be used to promote campaigns and events, enable transactions, drive engagement, and act as an educational resource.

By leveraging its website as a multifaceted marketing tool, Science North will boost its digital presence, connect with target audiences, and increase attendance, revenue, and brand loyalty. The website will serve as both a marketing platform and a vital part of Science North's mission to inspire visitors across Ontario and beyond. As Science North grows, the website will be robust enough to grow with it.

Digital Advertising:

Digital advertising will be a cornerstone of Science North's marketing campaigns, leveraging a diverse range of platforms and tools to reach, engage, and convert target audiences. The strategic use of digital advertising will amplify brand visibility, drive traffic to customized landing pages, and ensure that Science North remains top of mind for audiences across Ontario and beyond. Science North will use digital advertising to drive traffic to their website, increase sales, strategically target audiences across various platforms, stay relevant and increase brand awareness.

By integrating digital advertising into its marketing strategy, Science North will effectively reach a wide audience, engage them with compelling and tailored messaging, and drive conversions that contribute to its overall goals of increased visitation, revenue generation, and brand loyalty. Digital advertising ensures that Science North's programs and exhibits remain accessible, relevant, and exciting to audiences in an increasingly competitive digital world.

Social Media:

Science North drives awareness, engagement, and visitation through a dynamic and targeted social media strategy. Regular updates promote events, activities, and curated content to inspire curiosity and connect with new and existing audiences. The goal of Science North's social media efforts is to foster meaningful online engagement, drive website traffic, encourage ticket sales, and grow social media presence.

Science North maintains an active and well-planned social media calendar that strategically leverages its diverse audience base across platforms including Facebook (75,412 followers/likes), Instagram (15,835 followers), X (formerly Twitter, 9,683 followers), YouTube (45,879 subscribers), TikTok (43,335 followers), and LinkedIn (4,720 followers). By tailoring content to suit the unique characteristics of each platform, Science North ensures maximum impact and relevance for each audience segment.

E-mail Campaigns:

Science North engages directly with approximately 23,500 subscribers through monthly e-newsletters, delivering compelling and tailored messaging that appeal to an audience with demonstrated interest in the science centre and its exhibits. Email campaigns provide a highly effective channel for promoting events, exhibits, and programs, ensuring communication reaches those most likely to attend or engage further.

With an impressive 51% open rate (compared to the industry average of 35%), an 18% click rate (well above the 2.6% industry average), and a 28% engagement rate, Science North's e-newsletters significantly outperform industry benchmarks. These campaigns are not only a powerful driver of attendance but also an invaluable source of insights. By analyzing engagement metrics, Science North refines its approach, making data-informed adjustments to optimize content, timing, and messaging for maximum impact.

Tourism Partnerships

A key component of Science North's marketing strategy is leveraging its strong partnership with Sudbury Tourism, where Science North plays a pivotal role as a major driver of regional tourism. This collaboration maximizes resources and aligns efforts to deliver a unified message and cohesive tourism theme, effectively attracting out-of-town visitors to Northern Ontario. As the leading attractions in the region, Science North and Dynamic Earth are pivotal in promoting Northern Ontario as a premier travel destination.

Sudbury Tourism's robust marketing program spans diverse channels, including tourism publications, print and online advertising, social media campaigns, and participation in group and trade tourism shows. Science North's featured programs are integral to this partnership, ensuring consistent visibility and representation in these efforts.

Additionally, Science North actively collaborates with Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs) across Northern Ontario, exploring opportunities for joint packaging initiatives. These packages not only enhance the value of visiting Science North but also create upselling opportunities for partner attractions, enriching the overall visitor experience and further boosting regional tourism activity.

Media Events & Relations

Science North develops a proactive and comprehensive media relations strategy to generate awareness, drive tourism, and enhance the visibility of its featured exhibits and programming. By building strong relationships with media outlets and leveraging a variety of communication channels, Science North ensures its programs are consistently highlighted in editorial coverage, reaching audiences across Ontario and beyond. Science North's media relations efforts include strategic press releases, direct media outreach, interviews and media events, partnerships with content creators, seasonal campaigns, localized and regional outreach, and media monitoring. By combining traditional and digital media relations tactics, Science North amplifies its reach, builds credibility, and drives awareness of its programs and exhibits. This strategic approach ensures sustained visibility, supports marketing campaigns, and reinforces Science North's role as a leader in tourism and science education.

Promotional Materials:

Science North maximizes marketing efforts through local and provincial activations with special online coupons, offers and contests for various products as added incentive to visit the Centre. Media contesting in select markets (social media and radio contests) are offered to tourists to warrant added value and “editorial” style promotion.

Local promotional platforms include out of home advertising, bus wraps, digital billboards and cross promotion with local sport and recreation facilities. Onsite promotion includes an electronic billboard, posters and electronic interior screens.

Science North, in cooperation with the City of Greater Sudbury, participates annually at tourism trade shows in Toronto. These annual shows are geared to the tourist market in key Central and Southern Ontario areas from which we will focus on capturing attendance. Science North provides marketing collateral featuring the 2025-26 program for display at select booths.

Membership Marketing

Science North has a large and active membership database to which it communicates and incentivizes on an annual and monthly basis to engage and promote announcements, special events, VIP invitations and more. In 2025-26, Science North will continue to focus on its Northern Memberships available to families outside of Sudbury whose postal code starts with “P”. This includes a number of larger communities such as North Bay, Sault Ste Marie and Timmins, as well as dozens of other smaller communities who could easily make day trips or weekend visits as tourists.

Marketing to Educators

School programming is promoted to Northern Ontario school boards via e-newsletters, at schools.sciencenorth.ca, at the annual Science Teachers Association of Ontario conference, print magazines, and through direct sales. All school programs are developed in conjunction with Ontario science curriculum requirements, further justifying the value of a visit. Schools from outside of the region are invited to visit as part of end-of-year school trips or for Sunset to Sunrise Camp-Ins (overnight stays in the science centre).

Marketing to Group & Bus Tours

Science North will continue to be promoted to Ontario group tour operators in Northeastern Ontario, Central Ontario including the Muskokas, Barrie and Southern Ontario, including the Greater Toronto area, through the Science North website and the partnership with Sudbury Tourism and the City of Greater Sudbury. Science North works closely with the City of Greater Sudbury to target annual and one-time special events to market to regional sporting, arts and cultural events. Science North works in partnership with RTO 13a and cities of North Bay, Timmins, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay to put together itineraries that drive attendance to Northeastern Ontario, as group tour operators often seek multi-city, multi-community packages.

Major Marketing Campaigns

Below is a breakdown of marketing tactics and associated costs to promote Science North's exhibits, events, and programming in 2025-26 to target audiences:

Campaign	Budget	Market	Duration
March Break	\$50,000	Families in Ontario	December - March
Holiday	\$30,000	Greater Sudbury, North Bay, Sault Ste Marie	November - December
Summer	\$80,000	Families in Ontario	May - September
Halloween	\$30,000	Families in Northern Ontario	August - October
Camps & Education	\$75,000	Parents and Educators in Ontario	December - August
Science Programming & Events	\$28,000	Greater Sudbury - age varies depending on event	All year
IMAX and Planetarium	\$20,000	Northern Ontario	All year

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

Appendix A: Risk Register

	Risk Statement <i>Clearly outline the root cause, risk, and potential impact.</i>	Risk Category <i>Select the appropriate risk category.</i>	Existing Controls <i>What controls currently exist to minimize or reduce the risk?</i>	Likelihood <i>Risk Likelihood: Considering existing controls, what is the likelihood of the risk occurring?</i>	Impact <i>Risk Impact: What is the estimated impact that an occurrence of the risk will have towards the objective given the control activities currently in place?</i>	Mitigation/Action Plan <i>What mitigation plans are you going to implement to minimize or reduce the risk?</i>	Risk Owner
1	Financial Pressures: Due to increase competition in the leisure market, pressures on staffing costs, rising inflation and a frozen operating grant the organization needs to balance its budget.	Financial	Hiring qualified staff Assessing current offerings to maximize returns Optimize operations Leverage assets	Almost Certain High	Critical	Continued focus on reducing costs and growing revenues, investing in innovation. Investment in new strategic plans.	Senior Executive Team
2	IT: Rapidly evolving industry, cyber & data security and AI. Procedures need improvement.	Operational	Cloud based platform ITSM software. End point security solution upgraded. Cyber Insurance. Wi-Fi upgrades completed DE & SN.	Possibly Medium- High	Critical	Continual updating of server infrastructure, including network switches, and virtual machines. Robust IT policy including AI in progress.	Director of OD & IT. Senior Manager IT.
3	IMAX: Low attendance due to increased competition, decrease in school funding, economic factors due to region and population	Financial	Ongoing monitoring of results. Industry trends, and feedback through quarterly surveys. Relationship with Movie Distributor with access	Likely Medium - High	Major	We have new documentary offerings. Daily family-friendly films were a success this summer. Planetarium Pink Floyd also a success.	Director of Operations
4	Third Party Contractors: Ministry of Labour Exposure, lack of supervision, insurance, WSIB, missing information.	Operational	We rely on outside assistance for all sizes of projects that fall beyond our scope of talented staff	Likely Medium High	Major	New Contractor Sign in Process implemented at SN/ and DE confirming safety protocols. Contractor supervisor training in planning stage.	Director of Operations
5	International Sales: Booking cancellations, fabrication delays, Skeletons, aging exhibits.	Operational	New sales staff generated new opportunities.	Likely Medium-High	Moderate	Diversify revenue stream, travelling & permanent exhibits, consulting. New strategic 3 year plan in progress.	Director of Sales & Marketing
6	Recruitment & Retention: Due to current labour issues in Northern Ontario we are currently experiencing recruitment challenges, including francophone and diverse (BIPOC) applicants.	Operational / Reputational	A new program employee referral created. Internal employee leadership programs, and French language training available.	Possibly Medium	Moderate	Approximately 10-12 positions are vacant. Key roles have been filled. Ongoing review of compensation and benefits. Staff Retention is not currently an issue.	Director of OD
7	Northwest Expansion: Broaden our reach with expansion; complications with off-site controls, land agreements and land due diligence.	Reputational	Building of relationships within Thunder Bay and Kenora area that allow sharing of crucial information. Expertise in project management.	Possibly Medium	Moderate	The schematic design phase is complete. Currently in the project development phase.	CEO/ Executive team
8	Dynamic Earth Expansion Project: site plan items to be completed December 2024. Volatile construction market increasing the tender risk. Cash Flow.	Financial / Reputational	Project has secured 95% of funding. Capital Campaign for private sector ongoing Enhanced Project Team	Possibly Medium	Moderate	Construction RFP closed, under current review. Cash flow discussions with our Ministry to facilitate changes to the MLTSD payment agreement.	Director of Operations

9	Societal Expectations: Due to targeted efforts around reconciliation and diversity of staff and vendors the social expectations are greater.	Reputational	Strong relationships Advisory committees Internships Social media monitoring	Unlikely	Critical	Continued ongoing efforts Enhanced staff training. Renewed contract with rTraction for website improvements.	CEO/ Executive team
				Medium			
10	Infrastructure: Due to age of the building and financial pressures the infrastructure is at risk.	Operational	Preventative Maintenance Capital renewal	Unlikely	Critical	R&R Capital campaign final \$4.001M grant approved for 2024 fiscal. 2025 R&R Building assessment condition completed for internal prioritization of projects to ensure finances are appropriately directed.	Director of Operations
				Medium			
11	Emergency Procedures: Due to the public nature of operations including a large youth demographic , lost child and emergency procedures are required	Operational / Reputational	Updated plans available in-person and digitally Ongoing staff training Practice runs for key emergencies. Crisis Management Planning Team Fire exits alarmed	Unlikely	Major	Ongoing Crisis Management Planning. Fire Drill completed Fall 2024 for DE and SN. Lost child refresher completed November 2024. Fire Exit drawings in progress.	Director of IT & OD
				Medium			
12	Site Security: Maintain a Healthy and Safe environment for Staff and Visitors. Increased vulnerable persons accessing building and grounds.	Operational	Enhanced staff training Close liaison with Police and City's Client Navigator Security onsite Mental health first aid completed at Sn Mgr. level and above, new program launch 2025. Fire Doors signs posted, locked & alarmed	Unlikely	Major	SN has health and safety protocols that adhere to public safety standards. Ongoing assessments are completed quarterly. Use of Ambulatory Services encouraged by Police. Fire exit maps for visitor spaces in progress.	Director of Operations
				Medium			
13	FIPPA: Unauthorized access or loss of confidential information	Operational	Internal controls in place to manage the protection, storage and disposal of all third party information in compliance with FIPPA and Science North best practises	Rare	Major	SharePoint utilized, maintain archive records in compliance with legal requirements.	CEO/ Executive team
				Low			
14	Legal Action: Any third party damages resulting in law suit	Financial	Science North maintains an insurance policy with a 10m aggregate to cover any damages from third parties. SN's financial responsibility is \$5,000 per claim.	Rare	Minor	Updates on critical injury and occurrence reporting.	Director of Finance/ Risk & Director of OD
				Low			

Appendix B:

Operating Budget

As approved by Science North's Board of Directors in December 2024.

AGENCY: Science North

	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	Budget	Projections	Budget	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
PROVINCE OF ONTARIO						
MTCG Operating (including maintenance)	6,828,900	6,828,900	6,828,900	6,828,900	6,828,900	6,828,900
MTCG Specific	32,000	45,792	55,000	56,500	58,000	58,000
1> TOTAL PROVINCIAL FUNDING	6,860,900	6,874,692	6,883,900	6,885,400	6,886,900	6,886,900
OTHER GOVERNMENT						
Other Government	477,000	932,806	1,152,250	1,193,600	715,000	1,162,500
2> TOTAL OTHER GOV'T FUNDING	477,000	932,806	1,152,250	1,193,600	715,000	1,162,500
SELF GENERATED REVENUES						
Admissions	2,645,474	2,411,385	2,641,963	2,408,714	2,441,130	2,472,801
Sales of Programs/Products/Expertise	2,920,785	1,467,787	2,467,557	2,781,308	3,115,529	2,511,000
Education/Program Fees	2,119,830	1,668,439	2,092,540	2,297,846	2,576,130	2,683,342
Gift Shop/Retail	1,046,912	931,201	1,016,494	1,036,824	1,057,561	1,078,712
Restaurant/Food Service	889,693	884,511	925,111	948,217	971,946	996,317
Corporate Sponsorships	537,000	525,000	900,000	1,080,000	1,296,000	1,555,200
Membership Fees	705,000	698,501	768,881	782,259	795,904	809,822
Investment Income & Other	519,750	321,112	658,363	608,830	539,307	559,793
Facilities Rental	311,637	315,737	350,731	378,054	396,957	416,805
Parking	162,050	150,653	157,000	160,140	163,343	166,610
Individual Donations & Gifts (With Book Valu	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
3> TOTAL SELF GENERATED	11,863,132	9,379,327	11,983,640	12,487,193	13,358,807	13,255,402
4> TOTAL REVENUE:	19,201,032	17,186,825	20,019,790	20,566,193	20,960,707	21,304,802
Salaries & Benefits	10,037,533	9,908,725	10,935,514	11,196,732	11,676,951	12,049,328
Administration	2,097,474	2,239,228	2,436,773	2,575,812	2,656,477	2,616,934
Cost of Programs/Products/Expertise	2,825,787	1,253,212	2,130,058	2,197,093	1,866,512	1,702,692
Program Delivery	1,126,565	1,267,548	1,675,725	1,686,899	1,749,521	1,826,125
Maintenance / Utilities	1,942,451	1,558,556	1,417,881	1,445,501	1,477,346	1,510,005
Gift Shop/Retail COGS	486,729	500,874	519,859	531,697	543,827	556,259
Restaurant/Food Service	370,768	390,086	409,701	419,813	430,237	440,984
Fleet & Security	113,277	139,619	298,000	312,860	324,817	337,874
Marketing & Communications	158,820	150,058	151,292	153,048	179,142	216,800
Fundraising & membership development	40,500	40,500	43,250	44,115	44,997	45,897
5> TOTAL EXPENDITURES	19,199,903	17,448,405	20,018,052	20,563,570	20,949,829	21,302,897
Net Income Surplus/(Deficit): 4-5	1,129	(261,580)	1,738	2,623	10,878	1,905

Appendix C: Capital Plan

Project Name	Project Description	Type (Expansion /Renewal)	Status (Implementation, Planning, Future)	Estimated Budget	Planned SN Contributions	Proposed MTCG Funding Req.	Planned Other Government Funding	Planned Private Contributions	FY2024/25 Forecast Spend	FY2025/26 Forecast Spend	FY2026/27 Forecast Spend	FY2027/28 Forecast Spend
Dynamic Earth Expansion Project	Expansion and visitor experience renewal at Dynamic Earth.	Expansion	Implementation	\$ 14,900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,370,889	\$ 5,529,111	\$ 2,100,000	\$ 5,700,000	\$ 780,000	\$ -
Northwest Expansion Project	New Science Centre facilities in Thunder Bay and Kenora to better serve Northern Ontario audiences.	Expansion	Planning	\$ 79,172,959	\$ 3,022,959	\$ 25,000,000	\$ 45,150,000	\$ 6,000,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 14,161,215	\$ 53,307,685
Floating Dock Replacement	Replacement of the existing floating dock.	Renewal	Implementation	\$ 850,000	\$ -	\$ 771,000	\$ 79,000	\$ -	\$ 200,000	\$ 650,000	\$ -	\$ -
Science Centre Window Reglazing, Caulking and Replacement Phase 1	Replacement of the 2nd floor windows including building envelope repairs/enhancements of the Small Snowflake.	Renewal	Implementation	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
HVAC and Building Systems Upgrades	HVAC unit replacements at Dynamic Earth including a new Building Automation System.	Renewal	Implementation	\$ 664,000	\$ -	\$ 664,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 210,000	\$ 454,000		
HVAC Replacement for the Large Snowflake	HVAC unit replacements in the Large Snowflake Building.	Renewal	Implementation	\$ 1,800,000	\$ -	\$ 1,800,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,300,000		
Science Centre Window Reglazing, Caulking and Replacement Phase 2	Glazing replacement in the Large Snowflake ramp.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 3,600,000	\$ -	\$ 3,600,000	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 3,600,000		
2024-25 Roofing Systems Renewal - VC3, VC4, SS3, SS4	Roofing Replacement of Entrance Building roof sections VC3/VC4 (Zamboni Hallway) and Small Snowflake section SS3 and SS4 (Food Services Addition)	Renewal	Implementation	\$ 634,000	\$ -	\$ 634,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 34,000	\$ 600,000		
Roofing Systems Renewal - LS1,LS2,LS3, SS1IB3, VC6, VC7 Repairs, SSS, VC6, SP4 Replacement	Roofing replacements for tunnel/bunker roof SS5, Small Snowflake canopy roof SS4, and Workshop building section VC6. Repairs to stainless steel roof sections on the Small and Large Snowflakes.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 1,080,000	\$ -	\$ 1,080,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 540,000	\$ 540,000	\$ -
Building Cladding Repairs and Exterior Door Replacements	Targeted block, metal cladding, and sealant repairs. Repair of Structural Steel IMAX sign. Targeted exterior door replacements.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 532,500	\$ -	\$ 532,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 532,500	\$ -
Underground Repairs and Renewal	Renewal and replacement of critical underground services (ie: ground water management, water distribution, electrical distribution, pumping, fire systems)	Renewal	Planning	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 600,000
Workshop Building Window Replacements	Replacement of windows in the workshop building.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ 300,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300,000
Information Management and Information Security Systems Renewal	Upgrades and replacements to critical IT infrastructure.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 250,000	\$ -	\$ 250,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250,000
Parking Lot Refurbishments	Repair and replacement of aging parking lot infrastructure including parking lot asphalt, sidewalks, walkways and curbs.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000
Washroom Upgrades	Renewal of washrooms including new services, finishes and increasing our compliment of gender neutral washrooms.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 750,000	\$ -	\$ 750,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 750,000
Elevator System Renewals	Replacement of Small Snowflake elevator, Large Snowflake elevator and Freight Elevator	Renewal	Planning	\$ 2,720,000	\$ -	\$ 2,720,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,190,000	\$ 1,530,000
Business Operations Upgrades	This initial phase will see a renewal and expansion of the retail and food service offerings at Science North.	Expansion	Future	\$ 12,500,000	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 4,300,000	\$ 4,600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250,000	\$ 1,750,000
Planetarium, Exhibit and AV Upgrades/Renewal	Renewal of the projector system for the Planetarium and targeted exhibit and AV system renewals.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 550,000	\$ -	\$ 550,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 550,000	\$ -	\$ -
Small Snowflake HVAC Upgrades	Replacement of AC1, AC2 and AC3 in the Small Snowflake facility.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ -
Lighting & Electrical Distribution Systems Renewal	Renewal of the low voltage control system.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 700,000	\$ -	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 800,000	\$ -
Interior Finishes Renewal	Target renewal of interior finishes such as flooring, walls, and ceilings.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 1,250,000	\$ -	\$ 1,250,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 650,000	\$ 600,000
Business Operations and Kitchen Equipment Renewal	Replacement of critical business systems (front of house) and restaurant equipment in the Ramsey kitchen.	Renewal	Planning	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 600,000	\$ -
Total				\$ 129,053,459	\$ 4,122,959	\$ 50,001,500	\$ 58,899,889	\$ 16,129,111	\$ 4,044,000	\$ 15,194,000	\$ 21,503,715	\$ 61,087,685



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