

Business Link Annual Report 2019-20: Message from the Chair

2019-20 has been a series of exciting, new and disruptive events for Business Link. Early in 2019, we began the search for a new CEO, and in June 2019 we brought in Barbara Engelbart McKenzie to guide Business Link into a new phase of its evolution.

Our board has been working diligently to ensure that Business Link maintains its reputation for service delivery, excellent partnerships and strong relationships with funders. We have focused our governance efforts on ensuring that Business Link is financially sound and continues to provide strong value to its funders and clients.

We know that the future will be different, and that we must continually evolve, now more than ever, but Business Link will continue to grow its brand as the number one resource for start-ups, entrepreneurs and small businesses across Alberta. Indeed, we are proud to be the only Alberta-wide provider to serve so many diverse communities. Our Indigenous programming has been strong for 10 years and has experienced tremendous growth and success in 2019-20. Our first formal Immigrant Entrepreneur program was started in 2018 with support from the Government of Alberta and has exceeded almost all targets in its first year. We look forward to continuing this program while supporting the Government of Alberta's new immigration strategy.

We could not do the work we do without our funders, Western Economic Diversification, Government of Canada and Jobs, Economy and Innovation, Government of Alberta. They ensure that we have the support and insight we need to serve entrepreneurs, provide them with excellent resources and build a supportive team.

I would like to thank the hard-working staff at Business Link on behalf of the board. Your willingness to go above and beyond is what helps Business Link achieve its goals again and again.

I would also like to thank the dedication of our board. We are all volunteers with a wide range of interests and backgrounds as entrepreneurs, educators, financiers, and represent a group as diverse as the community the Business Link serves. We recently completed a recruiting campaign for the board and the breadth and caliber of the applicants that applied is a testament to Business Link's reputation and unique position in Alberta. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to Business Link and its mission.





Finally, I want to comment on the strange times we live in today. We have all had to get used to Zoom meetings, social distancing, no handshaking, no networking events, face masks, and new ways of doing business. However, these inconveniences pale by comparison to the hard times experienced for many in our province and we know that there is a lot more work to come. At Business Link, we have been here to support you for nearly 25 years, and we will continue to help Alberta businesses grow, prosper and build into the future. We were able to remain operational during COVID 19, with our team working from home, and we continue to be here to help you in any way we can.



Here's to new challenges, new opportunities and the next year.

Chad Saunders
Board Chair, Business Link

