



## **Business Link 2020-21 Annual Report: Message from the CEO:**

Another incredible year at Business Link! After starting with Business Link in 2019, never did I think we would experience what the last year has had in store for all of us. The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the world, our clients, and our team in ways we've never seen, and I am proud to have been witness to the resiliency that's been shown time and time again.

I am so proud of our entire Business Link team for the way they have shown up for our clients and have navigated through the uncertainty that this pandemic has brought forward. At times it has not been easy, but they have continued to show up every day for their peers and their clients and it has been incredible to witness. This year we're celebrating 25 years at Business Link, and it goes without saying that our success is not without the dedication of our amazing team. We've grown a lot in the last year, bringing in new team members to various business units across the organization, and it has allowed us to elevate the level of service we offer and ensure that our clients are getting what they need from us.

What did we accomplish in 2020-21? We launched various new programs designed to support entrepreneurs through COVID-19, launched new digital tools for business planning, and created new guides and resources that clients can access on demand and for free to solve their business needs. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Our team was hard at work all year long looking for new and innovative ways to support our clients through their challenges and also their successes. We also hosted our first ever Pitch Competition this year, and opportunity to showcase and celebrate some of our incredible immigrant and Indigenous entrepreneurs and continued to offer educational webinars and events virtually to reach our clients all across the province.

Thank you to our funders, without whom we would not be able to do what we do. Thank you to the Government of Canada, Western Economic Diversification, and the Government of Alberta, Jobs, Economy, and Innovation for your support. Their ongoing funding for the last 25 years has helped us to innovate and continue to serve Alberta entrepreneurs and small business owners in significant and impactful ways.

Finally, thank you to our board members for their ongoing support and dedication to Business Link. Their guidance and continued dedication to the small business community in Alberta is so valuable to our organization.

Sincerely,

Barbara McKenzie - CEO, Business Link

