



2024 Statement - *Fighting Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chains*

Our commitment to preventing and reducing the risks of forced labour and child labour

This statement has been prepared by the British Columbia Institute of Technology (**BCIT** or the **Institute**) as part of our commitment to sustainable supply chain practices, including preventing and reducing risks of forced labour and child labour in our supply chains practices.

BCIT recognizes the importance of improving transparency over the risks of forced labour and child labour in Canada's supply chains. In 2022, we became a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Accord (**UNSDG**), which includes taking immediate and effective measures to eliminate forced labour and child labour. We are committed to building awareness, taking action and continuously improving ethical procurement practices in our activities and supply chain.

This year, BCIT's approach to preventing and reducing the risks of forced labour and child labour in our activities and supply chains focused on applying our *Supplier Code of Conduct*, *Supplier Performance Evaluation* and *Purchasing Policy*, which are described in more detail below.

About BCIT

Established in 1964, BCIT is a polytechnic institution organized under the *College and Institute Act* to offer technological and vocational instruction. We are a not-for-profit entity and a registered charity. We are governed by a Board of Governors, the majority of whom are appointed by the province of British Columbia.

With campuses in Burnaby, Vancouver, Richmond, North Vancouver and Delta, BCIT is one of British Columbia's largest post-secondary institutions. Over 50,000 students enroll each year at BCIT. We are one of the largest employers among post-secondary institutions in British Columbia, employing approximately 3,000 faculty and staff.

We control the BCIT Foundation, a wholly owned not-for-profit organization, and TTA Technology Training Associates Ltd., a wholly owned corporation. BCIT is also part of the Great Northern Way Campus Trust, and PanGlobal Training Systems Ltd, each of which is an equal share joint venture between BCIT and other post secondary institutions in BC and Alberta.

As a member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), BCIT is committed to working with organizations that share our commitment to sustainability as well as adhering to the fundamental International Labor Organization conventions when making purchasing decisions.

Since 2018, BCIT has partnered with other post-secondary institutions under the British Columbia Collaborative for Social Infrastructure (BCCSI) to develop a guide, *Social Procurement: Amplify Your Purchasing Dollars for a Better World* that shares approaches, tactics, and strategies for post-secondary institutions to incorporate social values into procurement practices.

Our supply chain

BCIT procures a variety of goods and materials to support our operations and programs, such as printing supplies, office equipment, custodial supplies, mechanical equipment, and goods required to deliver our

academic and training programs, including lab equipment, life science supplies, computer hardware and software, and shop supplies.

Through our Burnaby Campus Bookstore and BCIT Bookstore Online, we sell textbooks, school supplies, small electronics goods, lab coats, nursing supplies and scrubs and school bags to our students. On our campuses, we have vending machines and food services that are operated by third parties. Our on-campus food is locally sourced through BC-based food distribution companies.

BCIT purchases these goods from Canadian suppliers whenever possible. In the financial year ended March 31, 2024, over 95% of our goods were procured from Canadian vendors. We import approximately 3% of our goods from the United States, and the remaining 2% are imported from various countries, including China, Germany, South Korea, Singapore, Japan, the U.K. and Vietnam. Our imports are largely lab equipment and reagents.

Steps taken to prevent and reduce risks of forced labour and child labour

In our financial year ending March 31, 2024, BCIT's approach to preventing and reducing the risks of forced labour and child labour in our operations and supply chain included:

- Continuing to affirm our commitment to ethical conduct as set out in our *Code of Conduct*
- Applying our enterprise risk management policies and standards to identify and mitigate risks in our operations and activities
- Continuing to advance our sustainability goals, including accountability for the wellbeing, health and safety of workers impacted by our operations
- Applying our Supplier Code of Conduct and Purchasing Policy and evaluating suppliers through our Supplier Performance Evaluation

Supply chain policies and due diligence

BCIT's approach to evaluating and advancing ethical procurement practices involves incorporating sustainable business practices in our governance structures, policies and procurement practices.

- Our **Code of Conduct** sets out our core values and commitment to providing a learning and working environment characterized by respect for others, honesty and professionalism. Our employees are expected to exhibit the highest standards of ethical conduct.
- BCIT has an **Enterprise Risk Management Policy** and Enterprise Risk Management Standard that enables a consistent, efficient and effective approach to risk identification, assessment and response, including identification of risks relating to procurement and ethical conduct.
- BCIT has established and is advancing sustainability goals in accordance with **Policy 1010 (Economic, Social and Environmental Sustainability)**. All members of the BCIT community are responsible for advancing our sustainability aspirations. This policy establishes accountability for improving, monitoring and reporting on our sustainability performance, including in the procurement of goods and services and the enhancement of human well-being, health, safety and productivity.
- BCIT expects our suppliers to comply with our **Supplier Code of Conduct**, which includes compliance with all applicable domestic and international laws and adherence to ethical business practices.
- BCIT evaluates the workplace practices of our direct suppliers through our **Supplier Performance Evaluation**. Under this protocol, BCIT may ask suppliers to provide information about their business operations and compliance with applicable laws, including safety and labour laws. Suppliers who do

not have safe work practices and who fail to take necessary corrective action are suspended or excluded from participating in future procurement until remediation actions are taken.

- BCIT has adopted a **Purchasing Policy** that applies to the procurement of goods, equipment, services or construction for our operations and programs. This Policy requires all BCIT officers, employees and members of the Board of Governors to conduct our procurement operations in accordance with legislation and trade treaty obligations applicable to Canadian public post-secondary procurement, and adherence to the highest standard of ethical conduct.

Assessing risks of forced labour and child labour

BCIT has not identified risks of forced labour or child labour in our own activities. Our employees are governed by a collective agreement or management terms and conditions that are overseen by the Post-Secondary Employers' Association.

We also have not identified risks of forced labour and child labour in our direct supply chain. We support the growth of small, local, diverse businesses and social enterprises, and contributing to the health and wellbeing of local community members and institutions through our procurement activities. We procure goods from reputable Canadian suppliers and import a limited number of goods into Canada.

Based on publicly available information, we are aware that risks of forced labour and child labour exist in Canada's extended supply chain. To date, we have not assessed the risks of forced labour and child labour in our indirect supply chains. We will continue to engage with our suppliers to identify heightened risks in our supply chain and improve processes. We are committed to continue to work with reputable companies that have a track record of engaging in socially responsible and sustainable business practices.

Remediation measures and remediation of loss of income

BCIT has established remediation processes that enable our employees to report conduct that is in contravention of applicable laws, our *Code of Conduct* or other policies. Our *Public Interest Disclosure and Protection Policy* protects and encourages reporting by employees who have reason to believe that there has been a contravention of any law or that any wrongdoing has been (or is about to be) committed. Employees can report confidentially and without fear of reprisal.

BCIT is not aware of any incidents or reports of forced labour or child labour in respect to our operations or supply chain, and as such, has not taken any remediation measures or remediation of loss of income to families as a result of forced labour or child labour.

Employee training

BCIT provides training to our employees relating to health and safety and human rights on our campuses. To date, we have not developed training specifically related to forced labour and child labour in our supply chains.

Assessing the effectiveness of our approach

BCIT assesses progress on our sustainability goals through participation in the Sustainability Tracking and Rating System (STARS), a program of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), and assesses risk in our operations through our *Enterprise Risk Management Policy*. In addition, the Social Procurement Guide, developed by the BCCSI initiative, provides tools for BCIT to assess our procurement practices in comparison with social procurement practices in other post-secondary institutions in Canada and abroad.