



An agency of the Government of Ontario

2024-25 Business Plan

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Executive Summary

Science North plays a vital role as an economic, tourism and cultural engine for Northern Ontario. Science North and Dynamic Earth are the second and eighth largest science centres in Canada, located in the country's 28th largest city. They are significant and successful attractions—Science North and its various attractions receive nearly 300,000 annual admissions in a relatively small market of 162,000 people. Moreover, Science North delivers science educational programming, exhibit experiences and events to more than 100 communities across the 800,000 square km territory of Northern Ontario, serving a diversity of audiences including 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 2024-25 Business Plan sets out a path for the organization to achieve the priorities and goals of its 2022-25 Revitalized Strategic Plan and aligns with both its annual Letter of Direction from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport and its Mandate. To maintain its vital role as an anchor for economic growth, tourism, job creation and culture in Northern Ontario, Science North will capitalize on its strengths and opportunities and overcome challenges. The organization's resources will be focused to benefit its audiences and clients, partners, stakeholders, and funders, with a lens on providing value and meeting the expectations of the Government of Ontario.

Key achievements projected by the end of 2023-24 include:

- 240,000 in attendance at Science North and Dynamic Earth, generating an anticipated \$2.2 million in revenue.
- 89,800 participants engaged across Northern Ontario through science centre programming, summer science camps, public and school outreach, travelling exhibition tours in Northern Ontario, and Science Festivals in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay and Kenora. 17,500 of these participants will be reached through Indigenous programming, including travelling exhibits, school, and public outreach programs, as well as 9,000 visitors accessing Science North and Dynamic Earth through the Free Indigenous Access program.
- Securing substantial funding to support capital projects that will be executed in the upcoming fiscal, such as Go Deeper, capital repair and renewal projects, and travelling exhibitions from public and private sector sources.
- Engaging over 250,000 visitors in climate action through the pan-Canadian tour of the 100m² and 600m² *Our Climate Quest – Small Steps to Big Change* travelling exhibitions.
- Completion of several milestones of the Go Deeper project, including excavation of the modern mining drift completed in February 2023; opening the Desjardins Chasm Elevator show in June 2023, and launching the Mine Evolution digital mining game for school and public audiences across Canada in November 2023.

For 2024-25, 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 seize the opportunities presented in the 2023 Auditor General of Ontario Value for Money Audit of the organization and will seek to implement the recommendations as resources allow, through specific and targeted actions as described in this 2024-25 Business Plan.

Key priorities in 2024-25 are to:

- Reach 163,000 in attendance at the Bell Grove site in 2024-25, anchored by its newest travelling exhibition *Skeletons: The Wonders Within*.
- Reach 91,000 in attendance at Dynamic Earth in 2024-25, 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.
- 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.
- Launch onboarding and orientation strategies and processes to ensure new employees feel welcomed and well-informed as they embark on careers at Science North, including the development of new information portals and a virtual tour of the science centre.
- Develop a Bluecoat Service Model that will strengthen the Science North brand and provide consistent customer service across all areas of the organization.
- Develop a partnership strategy clearly defining the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of partners, as well as the reciprocal relationships between Science North and its partners.
- Secure funding to activate the Pre-Construction phase of the Northwest Expansion project, with a focus on reducing construction risks and validating cost estimates, advancing architectural design development and visitor experience design, developing a sound business plan and operational model, and continuing engagement with Indigenous communities and across Northwestern Ontario.
- Enhance asset management systems to improve efficiency and resource sharing across the centres and outreach.
- Reduce cybersecurity risks by deploying technologies such as Multifactor Authentication and Single Sign-On and improving staff education on topics such as phishing, password management and cybersecurity best practices.
- Launch its Net Zero Strategy that will guide the actions needed to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across all operations – in 2024-25, Science North will vision and implement sustainable environmental practices across all science centre operations through 4 key priorities: stewarding our surroundings, inspiring meaning through an organizational culture of innovative thinking for connection with the environment and initiatives that inspire the community to protect, preserve and restore nature, cultivating circularity through sustainable resource management, and achieving carbon neutrality.

Our Mandate & Vision

Mandate

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

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

Our Vision

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

Our Purpose

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

Our Professional Values

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

Governance

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

Link with Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Mandate

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

Strategic Direction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had major impacts on Science North's workforce, attractions, programs and business model. As we continue to move towards recovery our staff remain innovative and creative, our organization forges forward with resiliency and adaptability. The Science North team will continue to exceed expectations to achieve the Centre's mandate in new and innovative ways.

In 2022 Science North launched its revitalized 2022-2025 strategic plan, which incorporates lessons learned during the pandemic and capitalizes on the opportunities brought about by the new landscape the pandemic created. This 3-year strategic plan began in the 2022-23 fiscal year and will continue through to 2024-25.

Over the course of this strategic plan, Science North will:

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

Our focus will be to:

- Achieve competitive, sustainable financial performance through self-generated revenue streams and expenditure management.
- Improve transparency and accountability with key stakeholders, both internal and external to the organization.
- Leverage technology to enhance the visitor experience providing an opportunity for visitors to access deeper content and to remove barriers.
- Develop engaging virtual science experiences to attract and reach new audiences.
- Develop programs, services and sales opportunities linked to Northern Ontario communities ensuring reciprocal based relationships.
- Promote equity, diversity and inclusion within the workplace and develop a culturally competent workforce.
- Deepen our awesome culture through expanded learning opportunities.
- Develop a long-term strategy to intentionally braid Indigenous knowledge throughout all programs and exhibits.
- Deepen and diversify education audience and relationships through significant growth with teachers and students involved with science.
- Improve our data collection and evaluation processes to better understand and reflect upon our performance as an organization.
- Identify risk at all levels of the organization and increase monitoring and mitigation strategies to proactively manage risk.

Environmental Scan

Science North Strengths and Opportunities

- Category leading brand awareness and strong positive overall image.
- Dedicated, passionate, knowledgeable and experienced staff and volunteers.
- Strong connection with the local community, and across Northern Ontario.
- World-class exhibit development team creating a slate of new and changing experiences appealing to a variety of audiences across Ontario, and beyond.
- Build on strong relationships with school boards and teachers to engage students in in-person, online and hybrid classroom learning to support learning loss recovery resulting from the pandemic.
- Develop new curriculum-linked school and outreach programming aligned with elementary and secondary science and math curriculums, including coding, financial literacy, and Indigenous ways of knowing.
- Strong social media following with a 4% engagement rate, 3% above the industry average.
- Dedicated grants unit to build relationships and pursue public sector funding.
- Clear understanding of strategic priorities of private sector funders to align our projects with their needs.
- Changes in the tourism industry post pandemic with staycation mentalities.

Science North Weaknesses and Threats

- Updates to IT and digital infrastructure requiring significant capital investment.
- Improvements to base building infrastructure, as well as aging equipment and accessibility infrastructure requiring significant capital investment.
- Inflationary pressures increasing Science North's costs for training, general supplies and equipment, insurance and fuel prices.
- A frozen operating grant, with increasing expenses placing pressure on Science North to generate additional self-generated revenue.
- Locally, unemployment rates are at a historical low making recruitment challenging.
- The current labour market is causing positions requiring bilingualism increasingly different to fill.
- Increasing minimum wage and pay band compression causing financial pressures.
- Changing tourism demographics post pandemic.

Economic Forecasts

- Lending rate as of August 2023 was 7.2% with expectations to trend around 5.7% in 2024 and improve to 5.2% in 2025.
- The Consumer Price Index will continue to increase at a moderate rate through 2025 based on the higher costs of gasoline & housing.
- Inflation is expected to slow through 2025 sitting at approximately 2%.
- Percentage of disposable income expected to sit at 4.8%, making discretionary spending challenging for most households.

- Households will need to spend a greater share of their budgets on consumer goods, leaving fewer dollars available for services or discretionary goods.

Source: Conference Board of Canada, TD Securities, RBC

Tourism Landscape

- Staycation mindset continues to be popular across Canada, with many Ontarians taking overnight trips to enjoy new destinations.
- Ontario tourism industry continues to see growth and expected to return to pre-pandemic levels in 2025, with Northern Ontario recovering slightly slower.
- 1 in 3 visitors to Canada expressing an interest in Indigenous tourism experiences.
- Sustainable tourism gaining popularity, with nature-based attractions seeing a rise in attendance.
- Inflation-adjusted tourism expenditures are unlikely to surpass pre-pandemic levels until 2025.
- Due to relationships with Canada and China, there are significantly (80% less than 2019) Chinese tourists visiting Canada.
- By 2025, employment in the tourism sector is projected to surpass pre-pandemic levels—growing by 2.5% over 2019’s employment level.
- While domestic tourism is leading the sector’s recovery, international demand has increased since easing of restrictions.

Source: Tourism HR Canada, TD, Destination Canada, Conference Board of Canada

Audience Demographics

- Northeastern Ontario showed growth in the last 5 years, including Sudbury showing the biggest increase at 2.8% increase from 2016.
- Growth predictions show that the northeast will experience 16.7% growth by 2046, and the northwest will experience 9.7% growth.
- The population is aging faster in the North than in the rest of the province.
- The proportion of children in the region’s population is projected to decline from 14.4 to 13.4 per cent and from 16.9 to 15.6 per cent for the Northeast and Northwest, respectively.
- For the core working-age population, the proportion is projected to decline from 65.7 to 55.3 per cent for the Northeast and from 66.2 to 56.6 per cent for the Northwest.
- The proportion of seniors in the Northwest population is projected to rise from 16.9 to 27.8 per cent. The Northeast had the highest proportion of seniors in the province in 2015, at 19.9 per cent, and the region will continue to have the oldest age structure to 2040, with its share of seniors reaching 31.3 per cent.
- Kenora has the highest share of children, aged 0-14, out of the largest population centres in Northwestern Ontario, but overall will see a slow growth in the number of children.
- Thunder Bay and Kenora are showing as the most populous communities across northern Ontario, with 14.1% of people in Thunder Bay claiming Indigeneity and 24.6% in Kenora.

- Ontario had the largest Indigenous population of all provinces/territories when compared across Canada – 406,590 people.

Source: Ministry of Finance, Census

Digital Trends

- 93.8% of Canadians are internet users, more than 36 million.
- 33.1 million Canadians are social media users.
- Facebook remains the most popular social media platform in Canada. There are 26.59 million Facebook users in Canada, which is 73.4% of the population.
- TikTok is the fastest-growing social media platform in Canada.
- 24-35-year olds are the largest age group on social media in Canada and women are more likely to use social media than men.
- In Canada, the most important reason at 47.6% for using social media is to keep in touch with family and friends. Many are also turning to social media when they have spare time (36.3%), to read the news (35.1%), to find content (31.6%), and to see what others are talking about (29.5%). 21.3% of users regularly check social media for fear of missing out.
- Science centres and museums have shifted their engagement strategies to reach audiences digitally, online learning platforms, virtual tours, unique social campaigns, live streams, video content, virtual experiences, AR and member hubs.
- Virtual offerings increase science centre reach and engagement and creates new opportunities to monetize visitor experiences.
- Users want an online experience where they trust the brand, where they feel heard, where there is a relationship and there is meaning behind the communication.
- Social media will continue to grow with new features on current apps and the introduction of new ones.

Source: Wear Social, MADEINCA, Sprout Social

HR Trends

- By 2025, employment in the tourism sector is projected to surpass pre-pandemic levels—growing by 2.5% over 2019’s employment level.
- The unemployment rate in Greater Sudbury was 4.3% as of June 2023, up 0.3% from the previous month. The unemployment rate stood 6.4% below the peak from December 2009 and is still well below the long-run average. Comparatively, Ontario’s unemployment rate was 5.7% through June 2023, while the Canadian rate as of June 2023 was 5.4%. Unemployment rates continue to be historically low.
- Labour shortages are directly impacting most employers and 87% of large businesses. Shortages are especially acute in Education, construction and accommodation and services.
- The need for greater employee wellness and mental health support has been bolstered by recent legislation, with the Canadian government recently announcing that Employment Insurance sickness benefits will be increasing from

15 weeks to 26 weeks, and with new Ontario legislated pieces around “Right to Disconnect” for workers. This emphasis on employee wellness and mental health, and the need for a work-life balance will continue into the future.

- Hybrid work is still considered to be one of the most desired benefits by employees.

Source: Tourism HR Canada, Statistics Canada, Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Ontario Business Confidence Survey

Overview of Current and Future Activities

Science North's 2024-25 Business Plan is based on the Centre's revised Strategic Priorities and Catalysts, which are well aligned with its Vision, Purpose, and annual Letter of Direction. The Business Plan focuses on the continued road to recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on financial sustainability to accomplish changes and renewal that will increase attendance and self-generated revenues, attract visitors, and increase their length of stay.

Financial Resilience

Science North will diversify its revenues through philanthropy, government grants, external sales of exhibits and experiences, and strategic development of new visitor experiences to enhance value for science centre audiences and drive ticket sales.

- Science North will launch its new Financial Management system and will train all staff on the new system in 2024-25. The new system, Sparkrock, is a customized version of Microsoft Business Dynamics 365 that will improve organizational efficiencies by facilitating online approvals, bank reconciliations, and increased reporting functionality.
- Science North will fully staff its Development Unit, including recruitment for a Director of Development, and develop and implement a new Development Strategy. This unit has significant potential to increase the centres' self-generated revenue through private sector giving.
- Science North will develop and implement a new International Sales Strategy, supported by market research conducted in 2023-24.
- Science North will work with its international film distribution partner to showcase its 7th IMAX film, Jane Goodall's Reasons for Hope, in an additional 15 attractions worldwide in 2024-25, generating \$250,000 in profits.
- Science North will secure \$1,000,000 in revenue from the sale of its exhibits, including turn-key visitor experiences such as the Nature Exchange.
- Science North will develop and implement a new Grants Strategy, providing clear, strategic direction for seeking out and applying for grant funding that aligns with the centre's strategic catalysts and Business Plan initiatives while maximizing grant revenue for direct, organizational impact.
- Science North will conduct a survey of its membership to assess strategies for membership acquisition and retention, including surveying members who do not renew to determine the reasons for their nonrenewal, as resourcing allows.
- Science North will continue to offer project management training focusing on project charter development, project financials, and risk management. This will be offered as a cross-training and professional development opportunity for staff across the organization. A method of assessing projects including impact, risk, resources will be developed to support prioritization and project approvals.
- Science North will increase its admissions and program revenue by continuing to improve its ticketing options, building off the successes of strategies to date.
- In 2024-25, Science North will focus on increasing food service offerings using the newly installed exterior take-out window. The feature will allow the restaurant

to capture the natural foot traffic along the Ramsey Lake board walk and will create opportunities to extend food service offerings after the science centre has closed. The takeout window, as well as enhanced menu offerings, are expected to result in an additional 10% in generated revenue.

Science North recently onboarded new members of its executive team to support its Sales and Marketing strategies, Operational efficiencies, and Development goals – this change in management will come with risks as these individuals must quickly become familiar with the organization and will also mitigate challenges that the organization faces to driving self-generated revenue through strategic leadership and idea generation. Other risks to self-generated revenues include staff retention and hiring for food services – Science North will continue to offer higher rates of pay for staff working in food services to help mitigate this risk. Science North will renew its focus on driving self-generated revenues to support the centres' operations and capital projects and will be undertaking a transformation of its Project and Exhibit Services Unit and International Sales Unit to create a long-term project and sales strategy.

Reconciliation and Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA)

Science North aims to build a foundation of mutual respect, trust and dialogue with Indigenous Peoples, clients, and communities, recognizing and braiding Indigenous perspectives into all aspects of the centres' work. Through this strategic catalyst, Science North will grow and sustain a work culture that intentionally and proactively promotes equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility for all.

- In 2024-25, Science North will continue to braid knowledges through its operations and programs, developing a Language Policy to inform the use of Indigenous languages throughout its visitor experiences.
- Science North will identify opportunities for a physical Cultural Space within its buildings to provide its Indigenous staff and visitors with a safe and accessible venue for cultural practice and communal gathering.
- Science North will identify and implement mandatory cultural competency training for its staff, updating its onboarding training and ensuring existing staff have a consistent framework and level of competency with inclusive cultural practices.
- Science North's Northwest and Northeast Indigenous Advisory Committees (IAC) will continue their work advising Science North on how to Indigenize its operations, visitor experiences and programming.
- Science North's newly established staff-led Indigenous Initiatives Steering Committee will develop and support the delivery of cultural competency training opportunities for staff, as well as research best practices to inform a new language policy and organize special days of recognition throughout the year, including National Indigenous People's Day on June 21 and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30.
- Following the implementation of the Indigenous Access Admission Policy at the science centres in 2023-24, Science North will continue to track attendance and improved accessibility for this audience, with a goal of 5,000 admissions for Indigenous people and their families in 2024-25.

- Science North will engage more than 11,000 Indigenous participants in 2024-25 through in-person school outreach, e-workshops, and summer camps. Culturally competent delivery methods suited to First Nations audiences, including relatable language for youth in isolated communities and the inclusion of First Nations' worldview, will be used throughout.
- Science North will continue its collaboration with Indigenous Tourism Ontario (ITO) to tour the customized *Indigenous Ingenuity* travelling exhibition to a minimum of 20 communities across Northern Ontario from June 2022 to June 2024. Science North and ITO will partner with regional attractions and Indigenous tourism operators to augment the exhibit with Northern Ontario content and authentic cultural experiences. An estimated 7,000 visitors will explore Indigenous culture through the lens of science and innovation in 2024-25.
- Science North will develop a training strategy to ensure staff are engaged in topics in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and will identify core competency topics such as allyship, anti-racism, and accessibility to train staff on.
- Science North's staff-led EDIA committee will lead 10 Coffee Club learning sessions, leveraging a combination of in-house delivery and invited community experts to speak on topics in anti-racism, reconciliation, equity, and inclusion.
- In 2024-25, Science North will activate an Accessibility Committee with a goal to move beyond AODA compliance, identifying accreditations and opportunities to move its physical spaces and operations to universal design. Science North has developed a best practices document for accessible exhibit design and will implement staff training and new processes for current and future projects.
- Science North's staff-led EDIA Committee will continue to conduct an annual survey on self-reported diversity and feelings of inclusion and belonging at Science North, with a goal to meet or exceed prior year results.

Science North has identified several key risks and mitigation strategies to support its goals around Reconciliation and EDIA. Best practices for accessible exhibit design and staff training will be developed through feedback and collaboration with groups with accessibility needs – this will require significant investment and time from Science North but is essential to ensure quality service and accommodations moving forward. Reach to First Nation communities may be impacted by public and private sector funding, as these programs are heavily dependent on staffing and travel resources. Science North will prepare to offer these programs regardless of funding, developing marketing materials to sell these programs and services to ensure that the centre reaches its engagement targets.

Science North in and for all of Northern Ontario

Science North will continue to expand its presence as Northern Ontario's science centre. In delivering on this catalyst, Science North will become integral to the fabric of all communities in Northern Ontario, ensuring all people across the North have access to, and are represented in, science experiences.

- In 2024-25, Science North will develop a partnership strategy which clearly defines the reciprocal relationships between Science North and its partners, along with the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of partners.

- Science North will implement best practices and standards for hybrid work, aligned with the model being followed in the OPS. The centre will further establish best practices for IT support and meeting standards for hybrid work to ensure consistency across Northern Ontario – best practices to be implemented will include establishing policies that describe standards for the scheduling, facilitation, moderation, and technology use in all types of meetings, including hybrid meetings, and; developing policies which set out the principles and process by which employees of Science North may safely, securely and effectively perform the duties of their position from a remote work location.
- Science North will reach an estimated 4,200 youth in 35 communities across Northern Ontario through its camp programs.
- In 2024-25, Science North will reach 22,000 students at Science North and 7,000 at Dynamic Earth through field trips and school programs. 5,000 students will experience IMAX shows, 1,000 will participate in Planetarium programs, and another 700 will be engaged through overnight camp-ins.
- In-school outreach programming across Northern Ontario will reach 20,000 students, and First Nation school programming will reach 4,000 students.
- Science North will reach a combined 43,000 participants through public outreach, science festivals and partner location experiences across Northern Ontario. Public outreach will reach 28,000 participants through outreach set up at festivals & fairs, libraries, and other community events, while Science Festivals led by Science North and its community partners in Kenora, Thunder Bay, and Sault Ste Marie will reach 11,000 participants through week-long series of events and activities. Visitor experiences at partner attractions, including THINK Hubs and Northern Nature Traders will reach 4,000 visitors.
- Science North will reach 163,000 in attendance at its Bell Grove site in 2024-25, anchored by its newest travelling exhibition Skeletons: The Wonders Within – developed by Science North in partnership with the Arizona Science Centre, Skulls Unlimited, and Museum of Osteology.
- Science North will reach 91,000 in attendance at the Dynamic Earth site in 2024-25, anchored by a transformation of the MacLean Engineering Gallery that will include the relocation of the Lapidary Lab from the 2nd floor at Science North and the creation of a maker-style area exploring mineral, rock, and fossil preparation, allowing for new visitor and school programming spaces. In 2024-25, Dynamic Earth will pilot a new operational model. Increasing operation days on site from 271 to 292 days to capture more school visits, local visitors, and increased tourism from bus tours.
- Science North will strengthen engagement with communities across all of Northern Ontario more equitably through representation on its Board of Trustees and ad-hoc committees.
- Science North will ensure its exhibits align with visitor needs through surveying and incorporating feedback in the selection of all major exhibits and renewals, as resourcing allows.
- Science North's Northwest Expansion project has outlined the potential for new expansions in Thunder Bay and Kenora, including a 4,000m² science centre facility in Thunder Bay and a 400m² expansion to the Lake of the Woods

Discovery Centre in Kenora. In 2024-25, Science North will secure funding to activate the pre-construction phase, which will focus on reducing construction risks and finalizing a business plan. Specific tasks include advancing architectural design development with the support of a construction manager; advancing the visitor experience design with community input; strengthening the capital campaign; refining the operating model including staffing costs; further assessing risk and mitigation strategies; enhancing community engagement with Indigenous communities and across Northwestern Ontario.

Risks to Science North's presence in and for all of Northern Ontario include attendance, which may continue to be impacted by the post-COVID-19 tourism landscape, as well as the Northwest expansion project, which may be impacted by funding and capital giving, as well as ongoing uncertainty in the construction industry leading to rising costs of labour and supplies. There are risks associated with Science North moving to a paid in-school outreach programming model, as these programs have historically been government funded and school boards may expect a continuation of these free programs. Science North continues to seek funding to provide these programs at no cost and is creating new school programs that go above and beyond what has been historically offered to increase value proposition and sales of school programs, creating revenue-generating opportunities in Northern Ontario.

People-Centered Culture

Through this strategic catalyst, Science North will enable a culture of learning across the organization with the goal of facilitating and motivating staff to strive to reach their full potential and optimum performance. As part of its HR Strategy, strengthening the 'employee experience' through providing inclusive learning and development opportunities will continue into 2024/25 and include a number of key initiatives:

- Science North will enter phase 2 of its Succession Plan Strategy in 2024-25, with a focus on recruiting and developing a talented pool of staff across the organization with the skills and professional development potential to meet current and future workforce needs.
- New onboarding and orientation strategies and processes will be launched in 2024-25 to ensure new employees feel welcomed and well-informed as they embark on careers at Science North. This work includes the development of information portals and a virtual tour of the science centre.
- New Leadership certificate programs will be developed and launched to help develop 18 new leaders across the organization.
- Science North will expand its Leadership Series, offering training sessions on business acumen topics and a new Catalyst Series covering value-based topics, available to all staff to build their skills and develop new leaders across the organization. Science North will relaunch its Mentorship program in 2024-25, with a goal to engage 30 staff mentors and mentees cross-functionally to support peer-led learning and development.
- Science North will review recruitment strategies in 2024-25 to assess skills and experience requirements of positions, adopting as much flexibility as possible to

open up labour market options for difficult to fill positions. Recruitment will focus on increased diversity and bilingualism among new staff.

- Science North will adopt new performance management policies, systems and processes, moving from an Annual review to Continuous review approach.
- In 2024-25, Science North will establish a cross-organizational committee to help establish a staff events and engagement strategy that is more financially and geographically inclusive.
- Science North will develop a new Bluecoat Service Model that will strengthen the Science North brand and provide consistent internal and external customer service across all areas of the organization.
- Science North will launch its bi-annual Engagement Survey across all staff to measure key engagement factors across its staff complement, with a goal to substantially exceed prior results.
- Science North will continue to support current Innovation Blue Belt certified staff to engage with the tools and training they have received to integrate Innovation thinking into new projects and processes throughout the organization. Science North will continue to measure the impact of Innovation on its workforce and overall operations, and will implement iterative changes to its training, committees, and processes as needed.

The greatest risk to Science North's catalyst for a people-centred culture is the significant labour market challenges to recruitment that are currently being faced by organizations across Northern Ontario. Science North will support employee recruitment and retention by focusing on the health and well-being of staff, providing a full spectrum of resources including comprehensive Group Benefit packages, 24/7 telemedicine access, EFAP program, onsite physio/chiro services, onsite exercise room; employee wellness spending, Tech'nable and Green'nable financial assistance programs, financial planning and staff workshops and training targeted toward resiliency, wellness and business skills focused. Science North will implement improved internal communications to ensure that all staff are aware of these benefits.

Digital and Technology Ecosystems

Science North will enhance its digital and IT environment to operate and deliver reliable, effective programs and services that are optimized for digital platforms and available anytime, anywhere and from any device.

- Science North will finalize a comprehensive needs assessment for a CRM that will define requirements and required guidelines for CRM usage.
- Science North will enhance asset management systems to improve efficiency and resource sharing across the centres and outreach.
- In 2024-25, Science North will complete its migration to cloud-based systems, implementing new IT policies and ensuring all employees are fully trained in Office 365 and cloud-based systems.
- Science North will reduce its cybersecurity risks by deploying technologies such as Multifactor Authentication and Single Sign-On. In 2024-25, the centre will lay the foundation for more secure, password-less account access by ensuring that

new hardware acquisitions include technology that supports biometric identification wherever possible.

- Science North will improve the cybersecurity education of staff on topics such as phishing, password management and other cybersecurity best practices.
- Science North will continue to ensure its networks are secure and its data is securely backed up, using mobile device management to better ensure that servers and workstations are kept up to date with security patches.
- In 2024-25, Science North will launch an enhanced Volunteer Strategy, with a goal to increase community engagement and grow the centre's volunteer base.
- Science North will implement a new phone strategy in 2024-25, including conducting a complete needs assessment to maximize the use and efficiency of new and existing infrastructure.
- Science North will build off its digital success and focus on generating content and stimulating substantial audience growth across all its social platforms; in particular, TikTok and Instagram.
- Science North will continue to introduce new ways of delivering its content virtually. The centre will inspire youth online to take climate action through the Go Deeper digital mining game, with a goal to reach 1 million youth and adults through fun and interactive game play on modern mining, critical minerals, and environmental sustainability in mining over the next 5 years.

Cybersecurity poses a significant risk to Science North's ongoing operations and digital security; the centre will implement multiple mitigation strategies as described above, including multi-factor authentication and single sign-on, and providing staff training to ensure that these approaches are universally adopted throughout the entire organization. Science North will further invest in cataloguing and completing an inventory of its assets – these will require significant employee time but will create efficiencies in purchasing versus leveraging existing digital assets and equipment.

Environmental Sustainability

Science North will continue its work to develop more sustainable environmental practices within the organization and through educational experiences to engage audiences across Northern Ontario and beyond.

- Science North will launch its Net Zero Strategy that will guide the actions needed to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across all operations – in 2024-25, Science North will develop an action plan and guiding policies to inform its progress towards this goal, leveraging the 4 key priorities of: stewarding our surroundings, inspiring meaning through an organizational culture of innovative thinking for connection with the environment and initiatives that inspire the community to protect, preserve and restore nature, cultivating circularity through sustainable resource management, and achieving carbon neutrality.
- Science North is collaborating with Green Economy Canada to develop a tool that will measure the organization's carbon offset, establishing a baseline in 2023-24 that will be measured against in 2024-25 and beyond.
- Science North will leverage learning from its Our Climate Quest: Small Steps to Big Change travelling exhibitions to develop and implement best practices for

sustainability in exhibit design and fabrication, aligning this document with the centre's procurement policy.

- Science North will develop a long-term capital infrastructure plan, informed by the Ministry's condition assessment, and will aim to identify green infrastructure projects and renewals as assets reach end of life that will support the centre in achieving Net-Zero.
- Solar panels installed at both Science North and Dynamic Earth generate green electricity that offset annual electricity usage – in 2024-25, panels at Science North will generate an estimated 8% of electricity usage and Dynamic Earth will generate an estimated 10% of electricity usage.
- In 2024-25, Science North will develop a Landscape Management Plan that will outline best practices to improve and maintain the aesthetics of its grounds through sustainable practices.
- Science North will leverage its green actions to educate audiences in-person and through social media, using its unique brand of science education to create experiences that increase awareness and inspire action to protect our global ecosystems.

In the short term, risks to achieving the centre's Environmental Sustainability goals are tied to resourcing and capacity to implement; while in the longer term, there is a risk around securing the funding required to complete the major infrastructure renewals needed to achieve net-zero. Science North has strong experts internally who are leading this work and is working to mitigate these risks by scanning for new funding opportunities from public and private sector sources, as well as building net-zero infrastructure renewals into its long-term capital and operational plans.

Resources Needed to Meet Goals and Objectives

Government Funding

Science North's revenues have been impacted by a frozen operating grant over the past 11 years, creating additional financial pressures on the organization and its ability to meet key objectives. The 2024-25 budget assumption is that the operating grant will remain at \$6,828,900 with payment flowed 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, including opportunities that may become available to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The Centre will continue 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 MTCS operating grant).

Private Sector Funding

Science North's efforts to secure private sector funding will focus on developing its cultivation and stewardship strategies to include the use of donor and sponsor data to achieve its sponsorship and donation targets, with a focused effort in Northwestern Ontario. Targeted strategies will include expansion of Science North's corporate giving program and increase its online and onsite opportunities to encourage individual donations.

Self-generated Revenue

The operating funding provided by the Ontario Government is the foundation of Science North's success allowing the Centre to meet core financial needs. Self-generated revenue has grown from 55% of total revenue in 2012-13 to 64% of total revenue budgeted in 2024-25. The Centre has adapted its operations to be efficient while meeting its objectives and building for a sustainable future.

Staffing

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

Risk Identification

Science North is well positioned to anticipate, 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 are 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			SITE SECURITY EXHIBIT SALES	IMAX INFRASTRUCTURE THIRD PARTY CONTRACTORS	GO DEEPER FUNDING
3 POSSIBLY			STAFF RETENTION RECRUITMENT NW EXPANSION		IT FAILURE
2 UNLIKELY				EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOOD SERVICES	SOCIATAL EXPECTATIONS
1 RARE		LEGAL ACTION		FIPPA	
	1 INSIGNIFICANT	2 MINOR	3 MODERATE	4 MAJOR	5 CRITICAL

Human Resources Strategy

In 2024-25, Science North will proactively implement an HR strategy to face head on several new trends and challenges which have become prevalent post pandemic. These trends and challenges pose critical focus areas for the Organizational Development unit and include:

- Ongoing recruitment challenges in specific areas of the organization due to overall labour market shortages and challenges.
- Strengthening its hybrid/flexible work culture.
- Enabling diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness throughout the organization.
- Continuing to develop its health and wellness offerings.
- Strengthening its focus on succession planning, employee and leadership development, and onboarding/orientation.

With historically competitive labour markets, Science North will continue to build its Talent Strategies based on the overarching goal of retaining staff and maximizing its Employee Experience. This includes adopting strategies aimed at building a People Centred Culture across all of Science North, including:

- Onboarding and orientation strategies and processes to ensure onboarding of new employees is welcoming and informative.
- A new internal orientation and onboarding program to support the promotion of existing Science North staff to supervisory and management level positions, ensuring new supervisors and managers are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to successfully lead their teams.
- An expansion of the centres Leadership Series and Leadership certificate program, including business acumen and value-based topics for all staff.
- A review of recruitment strategies to assess skills and experience requirements to adopt as much flexibility as possible to open up labour market options.
- A review of Science North’s total compensation strategy, specifically at the hourly staff level, to ensure Science North remains as competitive as possible. This will include a review of benefit and pension waiting periods.
- Expanding Science North’s employee recognition rewards program platform to all staff across the organization.
- A review of Science North’s performance management policies, systems, and processes to ensure best practice approaches continue to be adopted.

Science North has undertaken an organizational structural review which is anticipated to be completed in 2024/25. This review is aimed at realigning the organizational structure to better meet the strategic long-term needs of Science North. An estimate of full-time equivalent positions needed to meet Science North’s staffing needs is outlined below:

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Full Time Equivalents (FTE)	217	225	237	242

Performance Measures

By following the actions described in “Overview of Current and Future Activities” above, Science North will work towards the following performance measures and achieve the following high-level outcomes in 2024-25.

Scorecard Measure	Target
Budget Achievement	Improve financial performance to achieve organization wide budget targets – achieve a balanced budget in 2024/25.
Leading Revenue	Secure 80% budgeted revenue, where lead time exists, for the 2025/26 fiscal year – through travelling exhibit lease, facility rentals, summer camps and membership sales.
Private and Public Sector Funding	Secure 80% of funding from private and public sector sources to support capital projects. Achieve 85% success rate on private and public funding proposals from new and returning funders.
Attendance across all of Northern Ontario	Achieve 353,500 in attendance across all operations, including science centre admissions and all school and outreach programming across Northern Ontario
Engagement with Diverse Audiences	Increase direct engagement with diverse audiences and groups underrepresented in STEM – 7.5% of all attendance (Indigenous, 2SLGBTQ+, newcomers, minority groups, at-risk youth, persons with disabilities, low-income, etc.)
Digital Audiences	Develop and implement digital science content on all social media channels, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Achieve +5% engagement over industry standard with digital analytics across all social platforms
STEM Communication	Achieve 85% of audiences will indicate they have learned something new about STEM through Science North experiences
Partner Satisfaction	Improve partner satisfaction and engagement with Science North - 90% partner satisfaction with partnership quality, relevance, ideas for further collaboration
Internal NPS	Achieve a 80% overall net promoter score internally with corporate services.
Environmental Sustainability Initiatives	Reduce carbon emissions by an additional 5% over 2023-24 results through environmental sustainability measures produced by Science North and Dynamic Earth operations and businesses.
Innovation	Achieve targets for measuring impact of collaborative innovation cycles across operations, goal yet to be determined.
Staff Learning and Development	Engage staff in internally led employee learning and professional development, with 90% of staff who participate in training self-reporting that the training provided aligns with their development goals and will benefit them at work.
Staff Understanding of and Commitment to EDIA	Promote an inclusive environment and provide opportunities for dialogue and conversation around sensitive topics at Science North Advance staff understanding of and commitment to EDIA and Reconciliation – meet or exceed the percentage 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 (over 2023-24 actuals). 95% of all staff participate in training specifically centred on anti-racism, reconciliation and cultural competency

Performance Management

Science North measures its overall performance using its Balanced Scorecard. This tool allows Science North to track its progress on a number of performance metrics, balanced based on its Strategic Priorities. They include both leading and lagging measures, as well as measures that focus on 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 2024-25 Balanced Scorecard will be informed by its 2024-25 Business Plan, 2022-25 Recovery Plan and 2022-25 Strategic Plan, and measures will take into account likely outcomes based on key assumptions and worse-case, medium-case and best-case scenarios. Science North fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, and continuously seeks ways to improve performance management systems. In 2024-25, Science North will explore opportunities to align measures with science centre industry benchmarking, as applicable to the centres catchment area.

Financial Plan

Science North’s financial plan incorporates its recovery plan at a moderate level with a forecast of sustainability and growth beginning in 2024-25. 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.

	2023-24	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
(in millions)	Projection	Budget	Draft Budget	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Total Revenues	\$16.714	\$17.744	\$19.185	\$20.667	\$20.516	\$20.877
Total Expenditures	\$17.070	\$18.126	\$19.184	\$20.592	\$20.359	\$20.736
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$0.356)	(\$0.382)	\$0.001	\$0.075	\$0.157	\$0.141

Capital Repair and Rehabilitation

Science North’s approach to capital infrastructure investment is aligned with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport “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. The organization’s infrastructure funding needs far outweigh the average Ministry funding, which has been on average \$1 million annually over a four-year period. Science North’s identified renewal requirements are on average \$6.6 million per year. Science North’s average funding allocation for Capital Repair and Rehabilitation represents 15% of its infrastructure needs. 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. Science North continuously seeks alternate funding sources to help mitigate the shortfall of the program, although these opportunities are often limited.

The 2023-27 Capital Plan was developed using a comprehensive planning process and risk-based prioritization that considered strategic alignment, asset condition, operational and revenue impact, threat assessment, customer service, safety, as well as regulatory or statutory requirements. The projects were determined by assessing the associated assets in two independent categories: 1) the current physical condition of the asset, and 2) the operational impact that the asset has on the site where it is located.

The 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. The updated Condition Assessment will allow Science North to better understand the long-term needs of the organization to align major capital renewals with the Ministry’s Capital Repair and Rehabilitation priorities, as well as other public and private sector funding opportunities.

Initiatives Involving Third Parties

In addition to the relationship with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, 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 2024-25 to implement a more robust reciprocal partnership strategy to achieve the centre's mandate.

For fiscal 2024-25, Science North has the following confirmed third-party relationships:

Name / Type	Nature of Relationship
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)	Funding – Special Projects Indigenous Ingenuity, Northwest Expansion, Go Deeper
FedNor	Funding – Special Projects Indigenous Ingenuity Northern Ontario Tour, Northwest Expansion, Go Deeper
Canadian Heritage	Funding – Special Projects Go Deeper, Canada Day, Northwest Expansion
Natural Sciences & Engineering Research Council of Canada	Funding – Special Projects Promoscience
City of Sudbury & Greater Sudbury Development Corporation	Funding – Special Projects Go Deeper at Dynamic Earth, 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
Employment & Social Development Canada (ESDC)	Funding– Special Projects Enabling Accessibility
Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund	Funding– Special Projects Skeletons: The Wonders Within
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
Indigenous Tourism Ontario (ITO)	Exhibition design, development, and tour Indigenous Ingenuity
Arizona Science Centre	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, customized exhibits
Bimose Grand Council Treaty 3	Program development, delivery, and evaluation Indigenous Advisory Committees, Braiding of Indigenous knowledge
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, customized exhibits, Northwest Expansion
North Bay Discovery Museum	Northern Ontario – Special Projects THINK Hubs, Northern Nature Exchange, 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, Northern Nature Exchange, customized exhibits
West Parry Sound Museum	Northern Ontario – Special Projects Northern Nature Exchange, customized exhibits

Marketing and Communications Plan

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

Science North's partnerships with tourism partners in Northern and Southern Ontario will allow for the creation of unique marketing campaigns, organic and paid content, cross-promotion, awareness, contests, attraction exposure and monetization. Working directly with tourism partners across the province, Science North actively provides annual and seasonal updates on marketing initiatives, campaigns, and targets to collaboratively create innovative content on and offline. This collaboration increases audience engagement, brand awareness, and drives visitors to its website, social channels, on-site locations, and special events. Science North's strong relationships with these tourism organizations allows for a presence at many tourism tradeshow and conferences. A strong rapport developed over many years has provided strong communication and support, which helps drive attendance and awareness in both the Sudbury community and across Northern Ontario.

In 2024-25, Science North will continue to collaborate with leading partners to develop effective and targeted marketing campaigns aimed at increasing brand awareness, affinity and recall, driving increased in attendance and revenue at its science centres and across Northern Ontario. As Science North continues to focus on increasing self-generated revenues, marketing will develop communication strategies to increase external awareness of these initiatives, particularly it relates specifically to both onsite and online Retail and Business services.

Science North will promote new, enhanced and/or renewed science-based exhibits and experiences, including renewals of the 4th level of the science centre (Space Place) and special exhibits. To ensure attendance and revenue goals are met or exceeded during key attendance periods such as March Break and Summer, a detailed Marketing Plan will be developed for Skeletons: The Wonders Within that identifies all marketing tactics with clear and measurable goals. The execution of this plan will begin in February 2024 and run until August 2024. Science North will work with tourism partners such as Sudbury Tourism and Destination Northern Ontario and leverage funding through the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund (OCAF) to help drive awareness and attendance.

Science North will communicate diversified programming that appeals to varied audiences, leveraging its internal staff expertise through the Indigenous Initiatives Steering Committee and EDIA Committee to create authentically inclusive marketing campaigns. The centre will build community relations and strategic partnerships with partners such as Indigenous Tourism Ontario, Destination Ontario, Northeastern

Ontario Tourism and Sudbury Tourism to further support these efforts through shared best practices, as well as to drive reach and engagement across the province.

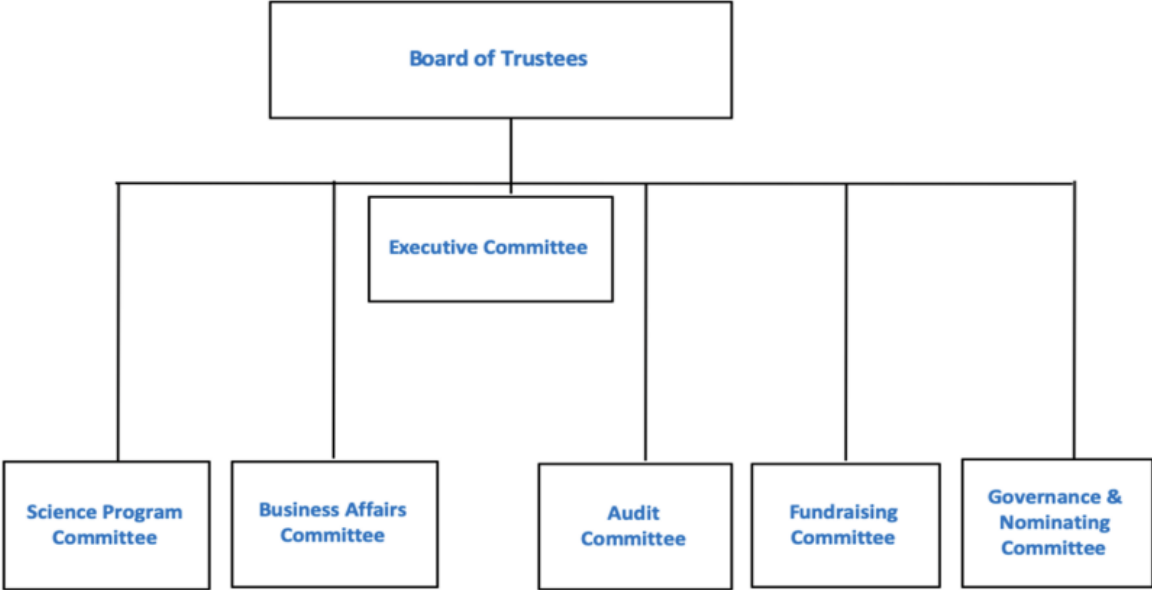
Science North will continue to be promoted to Ontario group tour operators in Northeastern Ontario, Central Ontario including the Muskokas, Barrie and Southern Ontario, including the Greater Toronto area, through the Science North website and the partnership with Sudbury Tourism and the City of Greater Sudbury. Science North works closely with the City to target annual and one-time special events to market to regional sporting, arts and cultural events, and will leverage the increased operations at Dynamic Earth and its onsite draw of the Big Nickel to enhance appeal to tour groups.

Science North will evolve marketing strategies based on industry trends, including short-form video, audio content, and hybrid events featuring digital elements (virtual and augmented reality) to create immersive experiences. Science North will continue to leverage its robust social media calendar to actively engage online communities through all social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, TikTok, and LinkedIn. Science North will strategically tailor each piece of content for the specific channel that will be posted to ensuring that it resonates with the audience on each platform.

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

Appendix A: Organizational Chart

Science North Board of Trustees Organizational Chart



Appendix B: Risk Register

	Risk Statement	Risk Category	Existing Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation/Action Plan	Risk Owner
	<i>Clearly outline the root cause, risk, and potential impact.</i>	<i>Select the appropriate risk category.</i>	<i>What controls currently exist to minimize or reduce the risk?</i>	<i>Risk Likelihood: Considering existing controls, what is the likelihood of the risk occurring?</i>	<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>	<i>What mitigation plans are you going to implement to minimize or reduce the risk?</i>	
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	Critical	Continued focus on reducing costs and growing revenues, investing in innovation. Reducing impact as a last alternative	Senior Executive Team
				High			
2	IT Failure: Due to aging systems and rapidly evolving industry the current IT assets and procedures need improvement.	Operational	Cloud based platform ITSM software. End point security solution upgraded. Cyber Insurance. Wi-Fi upgrades completed DE & SN.	Possibly	Critical	Multi-factor Authentication launching November 2023. Outsourcing services. Recruiting for additional staff is difficult due to the Northern Ontario labour shortage.	Director of IT
				Medium- High			
3	Go Deeper Project: Additional funding is required, current shortfall.	Financial	Insurance purchased Government funding secured Capital Campaign for private sector ongoing	Likely	Critical	Secure remaining funding. Build strong relationships within the industry. Enhance project and fundraising team. Extend opening to Dec 2024. Develop custom project control dashboard	CEO, Science Director, Director of Finance
				High			

4	<p>Sociatal Expectations: Due to targeted efforts around reconciliation and diversity of staff and vendors the social expectations are greater.</p>	Reputational	<p>Strong relationships Advisory committees Internships Social media monitoring</p>	Unlikely	Critical	<p>Continued ongoing efforts Enhanced staff training</p>	CEO/ Executive team				
Medium				5	<p>Emergency Procedures: Due to the public nature of operations including a large youth demographic , lost child and emergency procedures are required</p>	Operational / Reputational	<p>Updated plans available in-person and digitally Ongoing staff training Practice runs for key emergencies. Crisis Management Planning Team Fire exits alarmed</p>	Unlikely	Major	<p>Ongoing Crisis Management Planning, Continual training for all staff. Summer camp bracelets. Enhanced CRM. Fall 2023 Fire Drill.</p>	Director of Operations
Medium				6	<p>Recruitment: Due to current labour issues in Northern Ontario we are currently experiencing staffing shortages, including Francophone shortages</p>	Operational / Reputational	<p>Have hired over 150 people this year, but in need of more, a new program employee referral created. New Directors in key roles hired.</p>	Possibly	Moderate	<p>With the recent hiring of over 20 positions we are in a much better place than we were six months ago, less than a dozen position vacant.</p>	Director of OD
Medium				7	<p>Staff Retention: Due to financial pressures and increasing competition qualified labour is hard to retain.</p>	Operational	<p>Over 30 qualified long time staff retired, these are the staff needed to train the next employees. Incentives to come back on contract to help train and continue to work have been created.</p>	Possibly	Moderate	<p>Staff Retention is below Canadian and Ontario averages, and far better than most organizations.</p>	Director of OD
Medium											

8	Infrastructure: Due to age of the building and financial pressures the infrastructure is at risk.	Operational	Preventative Maintenance Capital renewal	Likely	Major	Regular Maintenance Renewal through Capital R&R Seek new funding sources Internal prioritization of projects to ensure finances are appropriately directed. Asset condition assesment launching September 2023.	Director of Operations
				Medium - High			
9	Food Services: Due to staff shortages and heightened social responsibility, Elements financial and reputation are at risk	Operational	Hired key positions. Increased salaries. Healthier offerings. New equipment	Unlikely	Major	Increased profit margins. Trial of healthier options, Staff retention. Elements renovations complete. Daily specials attract new customers.	Director of Operations
				Medium			
10	Site Security: Maintain a Healthy and Safe environment for Staff and Visitors, with 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 May 2023 Fire Doors signs posted, locked & alarmed	Likely	Moderate	Ongoing training Ongoing assessment quarterly Use of Ambulatory Services encouraged by Police. Updated after hours information shared with the security team.	Director of Operations
				Medium- High			
11	Expansion: Broaden our reach with expansion to Northwestern Ontario potential revenue shortfall, complications with off site controls	Operational	Building of relationships within Thunder Bay and Kenora area that allow sharing of crucial information. Expertise in project management.	Possibly	Moderate	A pre-construction phase will occur following schematic deisgn.	CEO/ Executive team
				Medium			

12	IMAX: Low attendance due to market condition changes, increased competition, decrease in school funding, economic factors due to region and population	Financial	Ongoing monitoring of results. Industry trends, and feedback through surveys. Reduction of IMAX fees. Relationship with Movie Distributor with access	Likely	Major	IMAX Innovation wave has been deferred to Spring 2024. Oppenheimer a success with 600 visitors. Taylor Swift Eras Tour coming soon.	Director of Operations
				Medium - High			
13	Legal Action: Any third party damages resulting in law suit	Financial	Have Commercial General Liability Insurance Policy in place to cover damages from third party claims. Safety Red Binder updated.	Rare	Minor	Updates on critical injury and occurrence reporting. Additional yearly training reviews with sign-off implementation in 2023.	Director of Finance/ Risk & Director of OD
				Low			
14	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	Additional work on archiving policy required, incorporate into OD training	CEO/ Executive team
				Low			
15	Exhibit Sales: Booking cancellations, fabrication delays, delayed deliveries, travel issues, potential revenue lost, no current leases for September 2023-2024.	Operational	Contract officer in place to review and provide contract recommendations to ensure terms and language support Science North. New sales staff generated new opportunities	Likely	Moderate	Focus on revenue generating opportunities, through new sales manager role. Hired consultant firm for sales of exhibits; Arctic Voices. Few contracts in the works for 2024, 2025.	Director of Sales & Marketing
				Medium-High			

16	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	Major	Blue Card Innovation Wave success, presentation of yellow card imminent.	Director of Operations
				Medium High			

Appendix C: Operating Budget

AGENCY: Science North

	2023-24	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	Budget	Projections	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
PROVINCE OF ONTARIO						
MTCS Operating (including maintenance)	\$6,828,900	\$6,828,900	\$6,828,900	\$6,828,900	\$6,828,900	\$6,828,900
MTCS Summer Experience	30,000	35,083	32,000	32,000	33,600	33,600
Other Provincial - NOHFC	0		0	0	0	0
Other Provincial - Ministry of Education	0		0	0	0	0
Other Provincial - Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development	0		0	0	0	0
1> TOTAL PROVINCIAL FUNDING	6,858,900	6,863,983	6,860,900	6,860,900	6,862,500	6,862,500
OTHER GOVERNMENT						
Other Government	582,000	447,978	524,500	574,500	630,250	689,500
2> TOTAL OTHER GOV'T FUNDING	582,000	447,978	524,500	574,500	630,250	689,500
SELF GENERATED REVENUES						
Admissions	2,528,037	2,542,992	2,645,474	2,684,424	2,686,538	2,721,158
Corporate Sponsorships	240,000	180,000	355,000	705,000	729,999	829,999
Education/Program fees	1,516,299	1,655,128	2,084,330	2,160,825	2,240,671	2,322,982
Facilities Rental	349,852	362,780	384,351	401,822	413,876	426,293
Gift Shop/Retail	749,692	948,034	1,046,912	1,078,320	1,110,669	1,143,990
Individual Donations & Gifts (with book value)	20,000	6,500	5,000	7,500	10,000	15,000
Investment Income & Other	277,241	329,382	517,750	518,050	518,355	568,666
Membership Fees	655,000	586,500	705,000	716,050	722,161	733,332
Parking	135,000	165,000	202,050	205,750	219,538	223,415
Restaurant/Food Service	548,509	739,033	782,947	806,436	830,629	855,547
Sales of Programs/Products/Expertise	3,273,045	1,887,125	2,920,785	3,775,764	3,343,000	3,286,364
Special Events	10,000	10,000	150,000	172,500	198,375	198,375
3> TOTAL SELF GENERATED	10,302,675	9,402,474	11,799,600	13,232,440	13,023,811	13,325,121
4> TOTAL REVENUE:	17,743,575	16,714,435	19,185,000	20,667,840	20,516,561	20,877,121
Salaries & Benefits	9,686,998	9,702,209	10,538,405	11,581,200	11,773,261	11,919,813
Program Delivery	2,135,843	2,064,782	1,860,697	2,030,919	2,049,820	1,970,281
Administration	1,112,607	1,039,241	1,266,981	1,312,353	1,374,884	1,374,861
Restaurant/Food Service	275,879	268,424	472,621	486,710	501,227	516,184
Gift Shop/Retail COGS	317,028	351,899	381,808	393,345	405,223	417,495
Occupancy/Lease Costs	64,000	64,000	69,420	71,727	74,115	76,587
Maintenance/Utilities	1,869,188	1,720,341	1,840,060	1,860,051	1,901,503	1,963,768
Fleet & Security	248,759	239,632	266,577	273,139	279,875	286,790
Fundraising & membership development	30,800	30,399	51,800	55,145	61,990	62,335
Marketing & Communications	314,735	344,334	383,049	394,329	404,882	416,033
Cost of Programs/Products/Expertise	1,784,435	1,182,272	1,970,188	1,817,836	1,250,666	1,457,935
Fund Transfers - restricted funds	286,080	62,859	82,265	315,416	282,133	274,343
5> TOTAL EXPENDITURES	18,126,352	17,070,392	19,183,871	20,592,170	20,359,578	20,736,425
Net Income Surplus/(Deficit): 4-5	(382,777)	(355,957)	1,129	75,670	156,983	140,696

Appendix D: Capital Plan

No.	Project Name	Project Description	New Project? Y/N	Total Cost \$	Capital funding provided by self-generated or operating funds \$	Partner (Private Sector) or Foundation funding \$	Expected contribution by MHSTC \$	Expected contribution by other government partner \$	Actuals to March 2023 \$	2023-24 Projected Cost \$	2024-25 Forecast Cost \$	2025-26 Forecast Cost \$	2026-27 Forecast Cost \$	2026-27 Forecast Cost \$	2027-28 Forecast Cost \$	Project Cost to be Expensed or Amortized?	Expected Start Date	Expected End Date	Project Rationale
01	Roofing Replacement	Replacement of building roofing	N	\$ 4,890,000			\$ 4,890,000		\$ 50,000	\$ 990,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 500,000		\$ 1,000,000	\$ 850,000	A	Nov-22	Jun-28	These assets are beyond their useful life. This project will ensure that the asset is functioning to its fullest capacity while maintaining safety standards.
02	Underground Remediation	Remediation of underground infrastructure at Dynamic Earth	Y	\$ 540,500			\$ 540,500		\$ -	\$ 540,500						A	Apr-23	Jun-24	These assets are beyond their useful life. This project will ensure that the asset is functioning to its fullest capacity while maintaining safety standards.
03	Vale Cavern, Lighting Upgrades	Replacement of all lighting and audio equipment for the Vale Cavern	N	\$ 1,000,000			\$ 1,000,000		\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ -					A	Jan-23	Jan-24	Lighting is 20+ years old and failing no longer support multimedia, functions or operations.
04	Enabling Accessibility for Staff & Visitors	Compliance with regulatory requirement of AODA	N	\$ 600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 600,000			\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	A	Apr-15	Mar-28	Science North is committed to creating an accessible organization by removing barriers for people with disabilities whether they work at Science North, do business with Science North or are members of the public who enjoy our attractions and facilities every day.
05	Information Management Security Renewal	Upgrade and renewal of existing local area network infrastructure	N	\$ 1,548,566	\$ 295,000	\$ -	\$ 1,048,566	\$ 205,000	\$ 691,566	\$ 507,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 150,000	A	Apr-22	Mar-28	This project ensures that the security of our information is enhanced to minimize risk of loss or intrusion.
06	Floors and Wall Renewal	Floor and wall renewals throughout the Science Centre for enhanced esthetics both to visitors and staff	N	\$ 1,250,000		\$ -	\$ 730,000	\$ 520,000			\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	A	Apr-24	Mar-28	These assets are beyond their useful life. This project will ensure that the asset is functioning to its fullest capacity while maintaining safety standards.
07	Parking Lot Refurbishments for Dynamic Earth	Replace damaged bridges, install new LED lights, expand parking to be closer to the doors, provide accessible parking that is to code	Y	\$ 1,094,450			\$ 1,094,450					\$ 257,450	\$ 837,000			A	Apr-25	Sep-27	This project would include repairs to sections of the parking lot, including the bridges over culverts and ditches, installing new LED lights in parking, expanding the parking to have accessible parking that is up to code.
08	Washroom Upgrades	Replace existing washrooms with Gender Neutral washrooms in all visitor spaces	Y	\$ 1,800,000			\$ 1,800,000				\$ 450,000		\$ 250,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 500,000	A	Apr-24	Oct-28	This project aligns with Science North's Reconciliation and EDIA catalyst.
09	EV Charging Stations	Installation of new EV charging stations at Both Science North and Dynamic Earth	Y	\$ 200,000		\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000			\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000					A	Apr-24	May-26	This project is aligned with SN Environmental sustainability catalyst. This project is positioned to secure external funding through other gov. programs
10	Paving of Parking Lot Science North	The parking lot has not been resurfaced in over 15 years. Large holes and crumbling curblines are apparent, causing substantial trip and fall hazards.	Y	\$ 3,500,000			\$ 3,500,000				\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,000,000			A	Apr-24	Mar-27	This project repairs and expands the existing parking lot at Science North.
11	Boardwalk Refurbishments	The exiting infrastructure of the board walk is failing. Structural beams, decking and anchors need to be replaced.	N	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 400,000		\$ 1,000,000				\$ 1,000,000	\$ 400,000				A	Apr-24	Jun-26	These assets were significantly damaged during the flood which occurred on Nov 15/17. The project would include expanding the current space.
12	Security Video Surveillance System	The current system is dated, with limited opportunity to replace or add components. The lack of security footage poses a risk for SNC as many assets are left without coverage	Y	\$ 500,000	\$ -		\$ 500,000				\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 150,000			A	Apr-24	Apr-27	These assets are beyond their useful life. This project will ensure that the asset is functioning to its fullest capacity while maintaining safety standards.
13	Window Caulking & Replacement	Window replacement and remediation on unique architecturally designed building	N	\$ 5,875,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,875,000	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	\$ 200,000	\$ 3,800,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,000,000	A	Apr-23	Mar-28	These assets are beyond their useful life. This project will ensure that the asset is functioning to its fullest capacity while maintaining safety standards.
14	Critical Systems	Renewal of key critical building systems	N	\$ 14,935,000	\$ 50,000		\$ 14,885,000			\$ 460,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 3,600,000	\$ 4,750,000	\$ 3,125,000	\$ 2,500,000	A	Apr-21	Mar-28	These assets are beyond their useful life. This project will ensure that the asset is functioning to its fullest capacity while maintaining safety standards.
15	Dynamic Earth Go Deeper	Expand Dynamic Earth underground mine and visitor experiences to reflect modern mining, critical minerals, and innovation	Y	\$ 15,000,000		\$ 9,400,000	\$ 5,600,000	\$ 4,452,802	\$ 1,417,187	\$ 5,130,011	\$ 4,000,000					A	Apr-22	Mar-26	Customer focused to offer new experiences for repeat visitors; brand enhancement, revenue generating; build partnership relationships with mining community;
16	Science North Journey - Phase 1	The initial phase sees a renewal and expansion of the retail and food services spaces.	Y	\$ 12,500,000	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 4,600,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 4,300,000		\$ 250,000	\$ 1,750,000	\$ 5,500,000	\$ 5,000,000			A	Sep-24	Mar-27	Phase 1 sees a renewal and expansion to the restaurant and retail spaces at Science North to improve the Visitor Journey and grow self generated revenues.
17	Object Theatre Renewal	Renew 'Between the Stars' object theatre featuring dark matter science content	Y	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 200,000				\$ 20,000	\$ 480,000	\$ 500,000		A	Dec-24	Oct-26	Customer focused to offer new experiences for repeat visitation; brand enhancement, revenue generating; Opportunity for new products (external sales)
18	Thunder Bay Science Centre	New science centre in Thunder Bay.	Y	\$ 60,000,000		\$ 20,000,000	\$ 40,000,000						\$ 3,700,000	\$ 5,300,000	\$ 51,000,000	A	Apr-25	Mar-29	The building of Canada's next Science Centre in Thunder Bay to ensure equitable access across all of Northern Ontario.
19	Kenora Science Centre	Expansion in Kenora	Y	\$ 8,000,000		\$ 1,000,000	\$ 7,000,000							\$ 1,000,000	\$ 7,000,000	A	Apr-26	Mar-29	An expansion to an existing building in Kenora to further Science North's reach across all of Northern Ontario.
20	Skeletons Travelling Exhibition	Development of 600sqm travelling exhibition to tour North America	Y	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 900,000	\$ 1,500,000			\$ 166,718	\$ 1,900,000	\$ 333,282					A	Sep-22	Jun-24	Customer focused to offer new experiences; brand enhancement, revenue generating; Opportunity for new products (external sales)