



ballad

**Bigger than  
our business.**



**Social Impact Strategy**



# Empowering resilient people, communities, and businesses.

## Where Visions Become Reality

Ballad is a purpose-driven business. Marking its ten-year anniversary, and at a pivotal time of growth, Ballad invested in social impact (SI) as a core initiative and business function in 2023.

The SI function is a cross-organization role that supports all core functions and service lines. SI strategy, measurement, implementation, and innovation falls within the company's Growth and Strategy division. The SI strategy was built with an understanding of Ballad's current social impact initiatives, in hopes of solidifying, clarifying, and amplifying this work. The SI strategy encompasses Ballad's corporate services, community investment, workforce development programming, consulting services and strategic partnerships.

## Four Impact Commitments

Ballad has identified four impact commitments where we think we can make real change. Ballad's impact strategy outlines the key activities and indicators used to ensure we deliver on our ambitious impact commitments, and to ensure transparency, consistency, and accountability. Our four impact commitments are:

**1.**  
PAGE 3

### **Begin with Ballad**

*Optimize the positive impact and reduce the negative impact created through our day-to-day business and operating decisions.*

**2.**  
PAGE 5

### **Resilient and Employable Workforce**

*Long-term reattachment to the workforce and increased capacity to be resilient to economic vulnerability.*

**3.**  
PAGE 6

### **Empowered and Prosperous Communities**

*Thriving and prosperous businesses and communities that are empowered to pursue their long-term vision.*

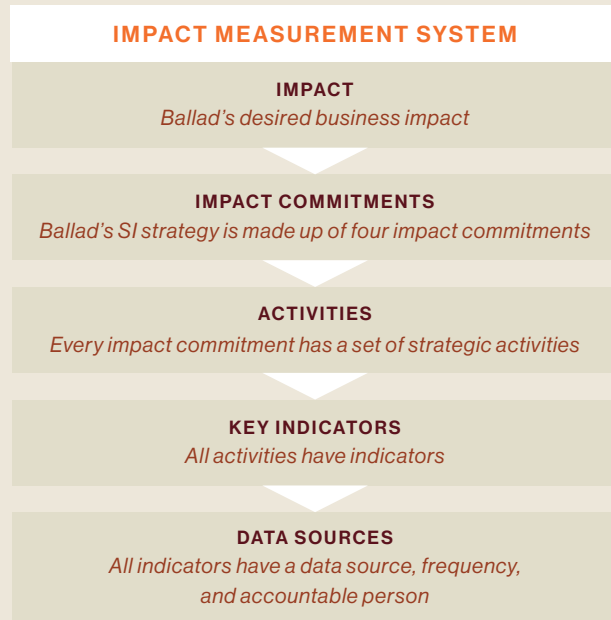
**4.**  
PAGE 7

### **Scaling Impact and Transforming The Ecosystem**

*Concerted knowledge mobilization and relationship building for industry advancement.*

# Three Key Alignments to Industry Standards

Aligning our measurement system to widely accepted standards will help to build a strong foundation for our impact data to be shared with and evaluated by others. By aligning our impact indicators with industry standards we can further the impact of our financial partners and funders.



## 1. COMMON FOUNDATIONS IMPACT MEASUREMENT

The social impact strategy aligns with the Common Approach – Common Foundations to impact measurement practices which include describing the desired change, select indicators, collect useful information, gauge performance, and communicate results.

The impact indicators will be tracked and monitored on a quarterly and annual basis through Ballad's company scorecard and the social impact scorecard. These indicators will be used to measure the desired change outlined in the impact map over time. The results will be used to inform future operations and service line delivery, to better serve our clients and amplify our impact.

The indicator results will be shared internally at quarterly virtual general meetings, along with an annual report. The social impact strategy and accompanying annual reports will be publicly available on Ballad's website.

## 2. TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA: CALL TO ACTION #92

Additionally, our social impact activities and indicators are aligned with the TRC Call to Action #92 for the corporate community where possible.

## 3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

This work is aligned with the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) SDGs and the Canadian SDG Framework, which were launched and adopted in 2015 by all 193 UN member states. It is important that this work is aligned with external systems, policies, government approaches, and initiatives for the greatest cross-sectoral and collective impact in improving local capacities. In addition, it allows for a shared language and measurement system with our community, industry, and government partners. Ballad's SI strategy has identified seven goals it is in alignment with (below).



# 1.

## Begin with Ballad

Our scope for this commitment covers all corporate activities including operations, marketing, human resources, finance, and governance.

Our desired change is to optimize the positive impact and reduce the negative impact created through our day-to-day business and operating decisions.

To stand behind our external commitments, there is a shift in the way in which we see and operate our business. To maximize our impact, we will have a deep and integrated look at the policies, tools, people, and processes in place.



## Key Activities

### **EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION**

*Foster a diverse, inclusive, and equitable work culture that promotes continuous learning and understanding.*

#### Activities:

- Develop Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Create Salary Range Transparency Plan
- Update Indigenous Awareness Training
- Deliver Trauma-Informed Care Training

### **IMPACT MANAGEMENT**

*The development of a robust, integrated and monitored impact management process.*

#### Activities:

- Develop Impact Strategy
- Develop Impact Dashboard
- Develop Annual Impact Report
- Develop Impact Manager Role Accountabilities
- Apply for B Corp Certification

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## Key Activities Continued

### CORPORATE PROCUREMENT

*The development of a procurement approach that supports diverse suppliers, creates workforce opportunities for marginalized groups, stimulates local economic development, and seeks to improve our overall performance.*

#### Activities:

- CapEx Vendor Criteria and Evaluation Form
- Procurement Policy with Social and Environmental Lens
- Employee Procurement Training

### SUSTAINABLE AND QUALITY WORK ENVIRONMENT

*Create a work environment that promotes health, and wellness, while reducing our environmental footprint.*

#### Activities:

- Create Facilities Criteria (Waste, Water, Energy, Footprint, Air Quality, Lighting, HVAC, Equipment)
- Conduct an Energy Audit of Whitecourt Facility
- Create and Implement Waste Reduction Program

### PEOPLE AND CULTURE

*Foster an engaged and valued work force.*

#### Activities:

- Update employee engagement policy and budget
- Develop and implement mentorship program
- Develop and implement leadership playbook
- Regular eNPS and employee well-being survey
- New professional development process and budget

### COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

*By re-investing our time and money we can contribute to resilient, thriving, and sustainable communities where we live and work. Ballad's community investment initiatives include donations, sponsorship, matched gifts, and volunteer days.*

#### Activities:

- Update community investment policy
- Coordinate ballad volunteer day(s)

# 2.

## Resilient and Employable Workforce

Our Workforce development programs (WFD) seek to create long-term reattachment to the workforce and increased capacity for resilience to economic vulnerability.

Canada continues to go through periods of economic uncertainty and transformation. In addition, our labour force is being pushed to keep up with an ever-changing demand in skills. We understand that by supporting a resilient labour force there are better outcomes for the individual in withstanding these times of economic uncertainty and stress. Ballard does this through the design and delivery of workforce development programs that include additional supports and resources such as mental health, life skills, and relationship building opportunities.



### Key Activity

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

*The workforce development programs are designed to support individuals improve their skills, employability and enhance their overall resiliency.*

#### Activities

- Delivery of WFD programming
- WFD holistic evaluation development and implementation
- Mental health and life skills programming

# 3.

## Empowered and Prosperous Communities

Community, economic and business consulting services to create thriving and prosperous businesses and communities that are empowered to pursue their long-term vision.

Ballad's consulting services are tailored to the unique goals and needs of our clients. We differentiate ourselves by ensuring that all our projects are focused on client capacity building, and providing locally based solutions that inform future decision making. By doing this, we can support our clients in building thriving and prosperous futures.



### Key Activities

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*We embed local voices into our projects to ensure that deliverables are reflective of the needs and vision of the community.*

##### Activities

- Integration of meaningful community engagement activities

#### SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Through our consulting services we aim to foster sustainable community and economic development for the businesses and communities we serve.*

##### Activities

- Delivering community, economic and business consulting services

# 4.

## Scaling Impact and Transforming the Ecosystem

Leadership team and senior team members fostering concerted knowledge mobilization and relationship building for industry advancement.

We understand that to empower people, businesses, and communities we need to identify and nurture strategic partnerships that can influence and catalyze change in the industry and within systems at large.



### Key Activity

#### THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION

*Active participation and contribution to the industry on topics such as: workforce development; micro-credentials; integrated training; navigating employment pathways; employer-led solutions; diversity, equity, and inclusion in the labour force; sectors in transition; upskilling; skills for a net-zero economy; community economic development; and Indigenous reconciliation.*

#### Activities

- Strategic partnerships
- Participation in industry roundtables and taskforces
- Membership to associations



# BALLAD IMPACT MAP



	BEGIN WITH BALLAD	RESILIENT AND EMPLOYABLE WORKFORCE	EMPOWERED AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES	SCALING IMPACT AND TRANSFORMING THE ECOSYSTEM
ACTIVITIES: <i>What are we doing to bring about change?</i>	Delivery of all corporate activities including operations, marketing, human resources, finance and governance	Delivery of integrated-training, micro-credentials, and employment readiness workforce development programs.	Delivery of community development, economic development and business advisory consulting services for clients.	Building strategic partnerships and sharing knowledge to advance the future of work and community economic development.
OUTPUTS: <i>What are the immediate results of the activities? (take-up, awareness, quality, quantify, access)</i>	Enhanced policies, tools, and processes to consider environmental and social implications.	Increased industry specific skills, soft skills and work experiences to obtain meaningful employment in their desired career pathway.	Support businesses and communities in implementing locally-based solutions that inform future decision-making.	Alignment of mission with strategic partners within the ecosystem.
OUTCOMES: <i>What will change in the medium term? (behaviour, condition, attitude, performance, capacity)</i>	Increased positive impact and reduced negative impact created through our day-to-day business and operating decisions.	Long-term reattachment to the workforce and increased capacity to be resilient to economic vulnerability.	Thriving and prosperous businesses and communities that are empowered to pursue their long-term vision.	Concerted knowledge mobilization and relationship building for industry advancement.
IMPACT: <i>What is the desired change?</i>	<b>Improved socioeconomic conditions, economic resiliency and self-sufficiency for Canadians.</b>			