

Strategic Plan College of Applied Biology 2013 - 2015



COLLEGE OF
APPLIED BIOLOGY

www.cab-bc.org

Mandate

The College of Applied Biology exists through the College of Applied Biology Act (2002) which sets out the purpose of the College as follows:

The purpose of the College is

- (a) to uphold and protect the public interest by
 - (i) preserving and protecting the scientific methods and principles that are the foundation of the applied biological sciences,
 - (ii) upholding the principles of stewardship of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and biological resources, and
 - (iii) ensuring the integrity, objectivity and expertise of its members, and
- (b) subject to paragraph (a),
 - (i) to govern its members in accordance with this *Act* and the Rules, and
 - (ii) to cooperate with other professional or occupational bodies charged with governing the conduct or competence of their members on a matter the college considers relevant to applied biology.

Vision 2020

Summary

The College will be a leading voice to promote and uphold scientific principles and methods in applied biology and the principles of stewardship according to our mandate. We will provide public assurance of professionalism in the practice of applied biology by our members.

The vision for the College of Applied Biology is further described through four dimensions that provide a concrete, implementable model for the future.

Scope

Refers to the range of activities in which the College will be engaged or involved.

- Providing assurance to the public and other professionals of the **competency** of our members, through:
 - Acceptance criteria;
 - Audits;
 - Practice Reviews;
 - Disciplinary proceedings; and

- o Accreditation of education programs in post-secondary institutions.
- Informing College members about the requirements and procedures relating to maintaining their professional designation.
- Informing the public (including stakeholder groups) about the role of the College and the value and meaning of the professional designations.
- Promoting scientific methods and principles *and* stewardship of resources through:
 - o Fostering dialogue about the value of science in the public domain;
 - o Providing unbiased reviews about the credibility of scientific work;
 - o Holding members accountable to a high standard of practice for their work.
- Serving as a leading voice in setting standards for the practice of applied biology by registered professionals, possibly including introduction of “right to practice” in some areas of expertise.
- Promoting collegiality and cooperation among applied biology professionals.

Scale

Refers to the size of the organization.

- The College membership will include all practicing applied biologists in BC.
- The College will connect and collaborate nationally and internationally through partner organizations to provide reciprocity for members (e.g. Society of Biology, UK).

Reach

Refers to the organizations or stakeholders which the College will influence through its activities.

- Other associations in the field of biology.
- Other resource professional organizations or regulatory bodies.
- Elected representatives and civil servants in decision-making roles regarding the credibility or employment of applied biology professionals.
- First Nations organizations, environmental organizations and corporate bodies that employ or consult with applied biology professionals.
- The general public, through targeted groups such as biology students, media, citizens/residents with interests in applied biology.

Structure

Refers to the organizational structure which will support and enable the College's activities.

- Staff capacity and governance structure will evolve to respond to growth of the membership and resources for the organization.
- One additional Council seat for an R.B.Tech representative.
- Approximately 7 FTEs on staff, using engaged volunteers in addition to Council members as well as contractor resources as needed.
- Maintain the grassroots structure with an active Council and membership in a committee structure to direct College operations and conduct peer reviews, audits, etc.

2013-2015 Strategic Focus

The strategic focus is the Big Idea from which we derive our priorities for this three-year period.

Build the recognition and credibility of the College of Applied Biology

2013-2015 Strategic Objectives

Each Objective is expressed through a series of strategies, which are to be applied over the next three years. A baseline monitoring framework, indicators of success and performance metrics will be established where appropriate/needed and are noted under each objective to guide evaluation of the College's progress. Some strategies or indicators of success may apply to multiple objectives but are only stated under one objective to reduce duplication. Strategies will be pursued through action plans laid out for each theme. While continuing to maintain and fully resource our Core Business (office operations, Council and standing committees), the College will undertake the strategies described under the following five Objectives:

1. Enhance communication with members.

Strategies

- 1.1 Promote the use of the College logo and designations by members in a way that enhances the College's overall visibility and reputation.
- 1.2 Develop a broader scope of content for *College Matters*, to include a range of topics including ethics, College discipline processes, and emerging issues.
- 1.3 Enhance the College website to encourage more frequent and in-depth use by members.
- 1.4 Develop webinars to provide educational opportunities to help members meet their learning needs and CPD requirements.
- 1.5 Implement additional or enhanced communication tools (business cards, e-newsletter, short YouTube videos) to increase the depth and variety of our communication with members.

Indicators of Success:

- Increasing responses from members to College-initiated requests, surveys and notices.
- Increasing constructive and productive member-initiated contacts with Staff and Council.
- Members participating in webinars and accessing enhanced communication tools (e.g. views, opens, time on site).
- Increased instances of College logo use on members' communications or presentations.

2. Increase members' interest and engagement.

Strategies:

- 2.1 Establish an editorial board for oversight of College publications.
- 2.2 Hold Council meetings in a variety of locations and combine with Open Houses to invite people to meet Council and staff.
- 2.3 Host a series of Road Show events which encourage and enhance members' discussions with the College and with other members.
- 2.4 Increase members' involvement in Governance of the College.

Indicators of Success:

- R.B.Tech seat on Council created and filled by election for 2015.
- Increasing number and range of members participating on Council or in Committees.
- Increasing participation in College events (e.g. attendance by members at Open Houses/Road Shows).
- Members' survey in 2015 shows satisfactory or excellent awareness of College activities, programs and policies.

3. Expand the College's outreach and influence.

Strategies:

- 3.1 Promote the College's vision and mandate through formal outreach with decision-makers in government, First Nations, business and NGOs.
- 3.2 Engage with and welcome non-members to College meetings and events.
 - 3.2.1 Explore and prepare to host a conference, engaging national and international attendees.
 - 3.2.2 Attract non-member attendees to AGMs and other College events.
- 3.3 Lead the development of a national umbrella organization working towards recognized self-regulation of the applied biology profession in each province.
- 3.4 Enhance and expand the College's relationships with other professional and regulatory organizations.
- 3.5 Participate in conferences relating to applied biology and self-regulating professions to increase the College's visibility.

Indicators of Success:

- Increasing Council and staff participation in meetings, joint initiatives and policy reviews (reported regularly to Council).
- Publication (formal or self-published) of papers on joint initiatives, e.g. qualified person /professional reliance, white papers on policy issues.
- Increased instances of R.P.Bio requirement for hiring – different roles, organizations.
- Conference prepared for hosting in 2016; international attendee registration and net-zero or profitable business plan.
- Nationally-registered society for Applied Biology formed, with strong interest/buy-in from provincial governments and organizations.
- Number of reciprocal agreements between the College and similar organizations in other jurisdictions.

4. Boost the College's branding and name recognition among related stakeholder groups.

Strategies:

- 4.1 Attract new College members through outreach to students.
- 4.2 Develop deeper relationships with First Nations Band Councils.
- 4.3 Create interest and awareness of the College within industry (organizations or companies that hire applied biology professionals).
- 4.4 Increase our visibility in the media and public awareness of the College's activities.

Indicators of Success:

- Measure College awareness among stakeholders in 2015 through an e-survey.
- Tracked (favourable/relevant) media mentions of the College.
- Volume of scholarship program applicants.
- Level of participation in meetings or conferences with First Nations, environmental groups
- Increased enrolled memberships.

5. Strengthen the credibility of the College's activities.

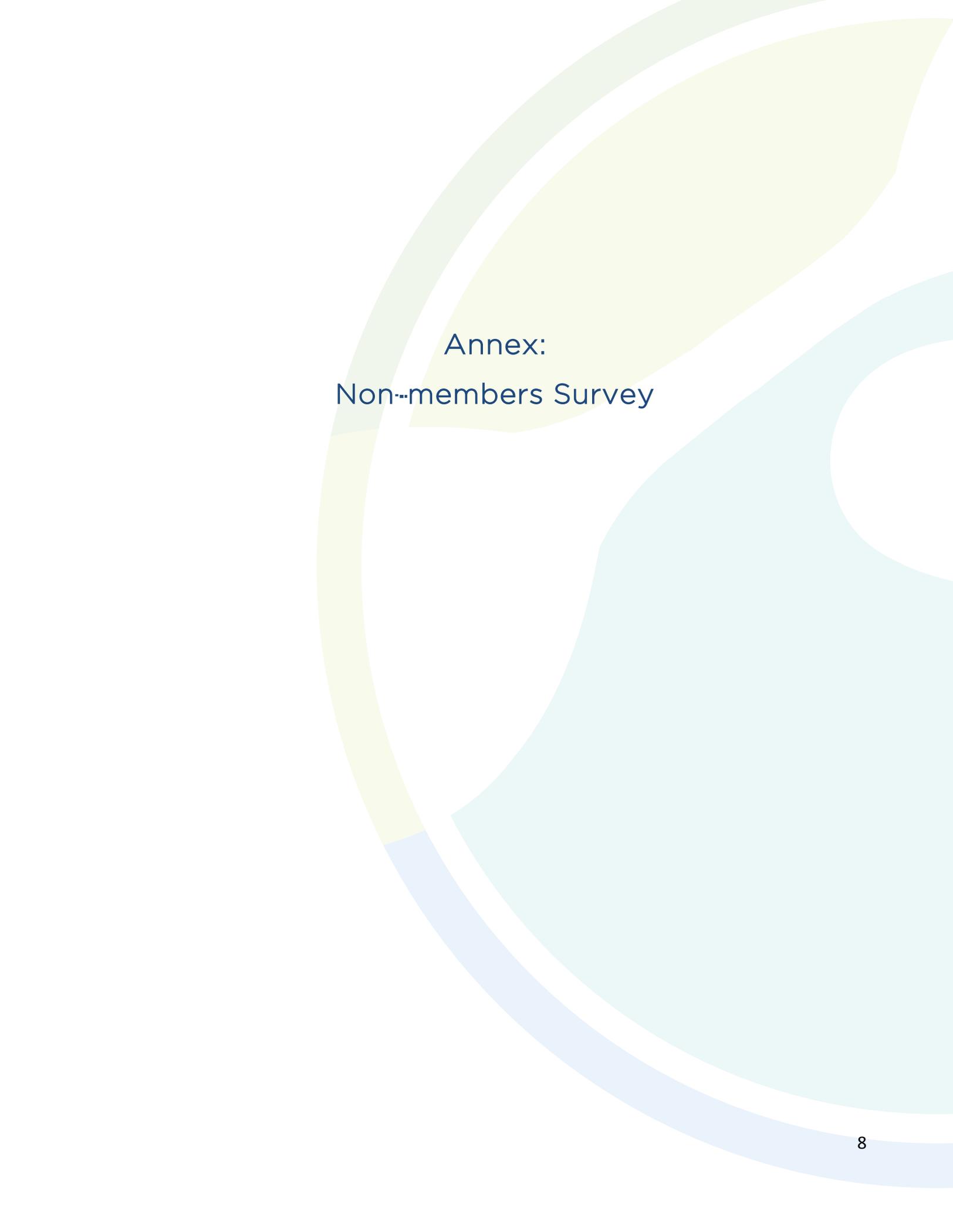
Strategies:

- 5.1 Establish and implement a practice review process to provide deeper investigation than that enabled through audits.
- 5.2 Increase member awareness of the College's Stewardship Principles.

- 5.3 Raise member compliance with respect to the College's ethics requirements.
- 5.4 Develop the College's reputation for protecting and upholding scientific principles, through preparation and publication of "state of science" reviews and commentary on issues within the College's mandate.

Indicators of Success:

- Practice review volunteers prepared/trained to conduct reviews as triggered by requests, discipline or audit processes.
- Member surveys and audit results demonstrate increased:
 - o knowledge of Stewardship Principles; and
 - o ability to recognize ethical dilemmas and apply principles to resolve appropriately.
- Member surveys and audit results show increased ability to recognize ethical dilemmas and apply principles to resolve appropriately.
- College is approached by media, government or other stakeholders to provide commentary or review of issues within the College's mandate.



Annex:
Non-members Survey

Results of the Non-member Survey

A survey, designed to probe issues of awareness of the College of Applied Biology and attitudes and experiences of those who were practicing biologists but are not at the moment members, was made available to non-members via the web page, by email to those recommended by College members and to all past members who resigned within the past 5 years.

The survey was posted on the College web page and distributed December 7, 2012 and removed from the web page June 6, 2013. Of the 228 individuals who accessed the survey, 147 provided answers to all the questions.

Council was interested in collecting data on the reasons those who were practicing applied biology and could become members, or were members at one time, or might be considering application for membership had not acted on an application or had left the College. Council was also interested in seeking insight with which to make decisions concerning outreach to those not yet among our members.

In addition to collecting the data desired, it was hoped that the survey would raise awareness among those who could be but weren't members of the College.

Survey Results

1. The most represented age group in this survey was in the 31-40 and 41-50 age classes (31% each).
2. Government accounted for 45% of respondents with employees from the provincial government making up the largest sector in this group. At present Government represents approximately 20% of the College's membership.
3. Of those who responded to the question "Social media offers many choices. What is the one you primarily use?" Facebook was the most widely used (65%) with females in the 20-40 year age range making up the largest portion (50%) of Facebook users.
4. Education level of survey participants revealed 5% completed a Diploma, 34% completed a BSc, 44% completed an MSc, 13% completed a PhD and 4% did not provide an answer.
5. Only 9% of the survey participants work outside of BC which is the same percentage currently registered with the College in this category.
6. 49% of the survey participants list their current position as biologist (23% senior, 15% junior and 11% field) and 11% as researcher. Report writing, data collection, and risk assessments were chosen as the primary responsibilities, followed by literature review, supervision and data analysis.
7. In answer to the question "Are you aware that the College of Applied Biology is the only body in North America that grants biologists and technologists professional status through self-governing legislation" 57% of the respondents were not aware of the unique status of the College.

8. Similarly in response to “Are you aware that Professional Biologist members (R.P.Bio.) of the College of Applied Biology can be registered in Alberta as a Professional Biologist (P.Biol.) with the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists (ASPB) through the Trade Investment and Labor Mobility Agreement (TILMA)?” 64% were unaware of TILMA.
9. And further 91% were unaware of the Mutual Recognition Agreement in place with the Society of Biology in Britain which affords a streamlined membership process as a Chartered Biologist for RPBios.
10. 80% of participants believed they meet the College’s entrance requirements.
11. Of the 101 survey participants to the question “Why have you chosen not to be a College member” 25 cited cost as a factor, 12 said it wasn’t required for their job and had no perceived benefit, the credibility of the College was questioned and specific application requirements were cited as other deterring factors.
12. Of the 82% of respondents who answered the question “What, if any reservations do you have about becoming a member?” The 2 most cited responses were cost and lack of credibility and recognition of the College. Entrance requirements, uncertainty as to the benefits of membership and CPD requirements were other points raised by survey participants.

Council has paid close attention to this concern, and as part of the Strategic Plan, has placed considerable emphasis on outreach to and dialogue with members and others in the community of biological sciences, in order to better understand if these are also issues for current members. The follow-up survey of members, currently circulated to the membership, should provide us with additional data on this issue. In any case, given the results of this Non-members Survey, Council has greater insight into the perceptions of those who have chosen not to become members and those who have but for a variety of reasons are no longer members, all valuable information to continue to increase the effectiveness of the College.

