



BC TECHNOLOGY
FOR LEARNING SOCIETY

You Donate I.T.
Youth Refurbish I.T.
BC Reuses I.T.



Executive Annual Report

2022 - 2023

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Overview & Mission

BC Technology for Learning Society is a registered charity, non-profit organization operating in the Province of British Columbia. Our mission is to provide job training for youth and access to refurbished technology for British Columbians. Our vision is a BC where everyone has equal access to technology and to tools to facilitate learning.

BCTLS distributes equipment through a variety of programs:

- *Industry Canada's (ISED) Computers for Schools Plus Program;*
- *Government of Canada's Computers for Schools Intern Program;*
- *TELUS' Internet for Good;*
- *Computers for Students.*

Highlights from the year include:

- 5660 computers distributed;
- 14,537 computers donated;
- 26 new interns hired.

Board of Directors

Doug Kinsey – Chair	Nancy Grenier – Vice Chair
Harry Johal – Secretary-Treasurer	Deena D. Simon – Past Chair
Harvinder Aujala – Director	Stephanie Chan – Director
Larina Lopez – Director	Mark Taylor – Director
Peter Vogel – Director	

BCTLS Team

Mary-Em Waddington – Executive Director

Rob Nguyen – Technical Manager & Client Services

Jim King – Director of Donations

Lori Palka/Jerred Flynn – Bookkeeper

Keely Rammage-Scott – Communications Lead

Aaron Yaremus – Technical Support

Thomas Leech – Warehouse Lead

Kevin Tran – Warehouse Support

Evania Tong – Technical Support



Chair's Report

This has been a landmark year for BC Technology for Learning! The Society had several milestones this year including the distribution of our 190,000th computer, and, in partnership with the BC Government's Access to Technology Initiative, the distribution of over 9,000 new laptops to British Columbians enrolling in training programs. We also saw some significant new donors contribute to the Society such as Emily Carr University, and TLC Solutions, joining our committed family of donors that are central to our success.

Renewal of the vision and strategic plan was a significant accomplishment this year. This plan will guide the work of the Society over the next 3 years to identify ways in which the technology we receive, and the partnerships we create, can continue to make positive impacts in the community. It will continue to focus on our key objectives: to recycle technology; to support students, non-profits, isolated families and individuals at a time where the access to these tools has become a necessity; and to provide training to prepare youth for jobs in the digital economy. However, it will also look at how we can streamline our processes, and improve our communication to the public around the value of the program to keep waste out of landfills while ensuring all hard drives and data from computers are completely erased.

Of course, a plan is only as good as the talent and dedication of those implementing it. BC Technology for Learning is blessed with some talented and committed individuals starting with our stalwart Executive Director, Mary-Em Waddington! Her leadership and the strong team she has put in place is our success.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow board members for their ongoing dedication to the Society. I would also like to recognize two members who have retired from the board after many years of exemplary contributions. Deena Simon was the previous chair and tireless champion for the Society and Nolan Clark was a former Treasurer and Executive Committee member and is a trusted colleague and friend to BC Technology for Learning.

Doug Kinsey



Executive Director's Report

The Board of Directors held a strategic planning session in September 2022 and refreshed our vision to ***A British Columbia where everyone has equal access to technology and tools to facilitate learning.***

Our discussions of this vision position the work we do, collecting donations of used technology and training youth to refurbish it for distribution and reuse across BC. It acknowledges that the digital divide still exists in 2023 and there are many families and individuals without access to a device at home. Each year we distribute ~6000 devices with approximately half of those for free to ensure there is equal access to technology and people have the access they need to facilitate their learning.

The Computers for Schools Plus program will be celebrating its 30 year anniversary and the national distribution of 2 million devices in Ottawa in September 2023. It has been an honour to personally work with this program for 25 of these years, and to see the many changes and expansions that occurred and the impacts made. Since our inception in 1995, BC Tech for Learning has distributed over 195,000 computers and laptops to all corners of the province as the BC delivery agent of the CFS+ program.

The impact of these refurbished computers in schools, non-profit organizations and family homes is often hard to quantify. As technology has become a more encompassing part of our lives, we are more likely to notice the absence of it when something goes wrong, rather than how enmeshed we are with it. In the early days of the CFS program, schools either did, or did not, have computers available for students. Labs were often incomplete, students had to share devices and rarely did a classroom have a stand alone system. That scenario changed in the 2000's, and has now changed again to where most schools no longer have a computer lab and students are either bringing in their own device, or using laptops or tablets from a mobile cart. There is an expansion into Learning Commons (Libraries) and Maker Space rooms. Technology is a ubiquitous part of these areas and the technology is certainly more than the standard desktop computer.

What has not changed is that some people still do not have their own device to bring to any of these spaces and our work and vision remain relevant and needed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary-Em Waddington". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Mary-Em Waddington



Treasurer's Report

Fiscal Year 2023 was a busy and productive year with the delivery of our federal programs and the extension of the Access to Technology program.

Good financial management and planning are the backbone of any organization; my role as Treasurer is to offer guidance and oversight on how BC Tech is managing federal funding and public donations.

Our work delivering the government's Computers for Schools Plus program remains solid with no risk. We look forward to submitting new business plans next year that will showcase our commitment to core operations and the ability to offer paid youth internships for 16 individuals.

The Access to Technology project was extended to conclude in September 2023 and further protect the Society's revenues through project management delivery. It was impressive to see the high volume of laptops distributed throughout the year and see the team adapting to challenges as they arose.

With the extension of the Access to Technology into fiscal 2024, the Directors determined to continue with audited financial statements. Rolfe, Benson LLP conducted the work this spring and reported a clean audit opinion. We appreciate all the preparation and hard work that goes into the delivery of audited statements.

I am grateful for the foundational work developed by our past Treasurer, Nolan Clark, and the work of the Finance Committee. BC Tech remains in a strong financial position as we embark on a new fiscal year ahead of program renewal and continued opportunities to make positive impacts in people's lives.

Harry Johal, CPA, CA



I can now work on reports and documents, receive and send emails for my specialist, appointments, schedules etc, and best of all I can do this at home. Before I was going to the library, and due to my disability it was really hard for me. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to have an easy life in touch with technology. - **Maria**

Programs

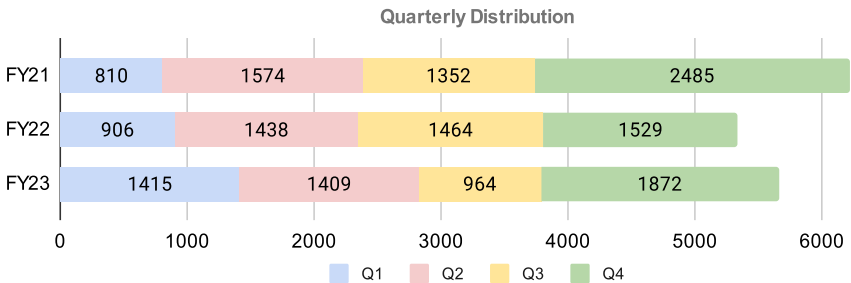
At the front of our work is the redistribution of donated devices* refurbished by youth interns and volunteers.

Devices are distributed through either the:

- Computers for Schools Plus;
- TELUS Internet for Good;
- Computers for Students programs.

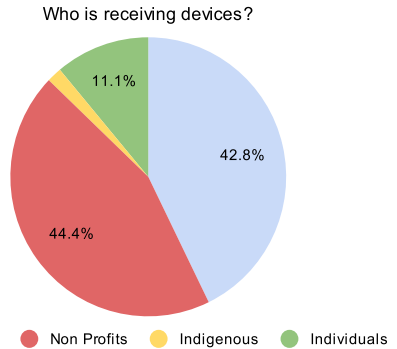
*Note: For the purposes of this report, the word device is used synonymously with computer, laptop, and tablet. In actuality 2202 computers, 3115 laptops, 80 phones and 263 tablets were distributed.

Our distribution levels have averaged 6000 devices per year and FY23 continued this trend with 5660 devices prepared. This is an actual increase in regular program distribution as the Connecting Families program, which offered 1200 devices per year between 2018 - 2022, excluded a computer offering to participating families upon program renewal. If Connecting Families had still been in effect, we may have seen distribution exceed 7000 units for the first time since 2012.



Since 2020, demand for laptops over computers has been increasing, making it additionally challenging to find new homes for desktops. This was one of the other benefits to Connecting Families as it helped to move that inventory for reuse, whereas now it's being moved to recycling.

Our distribution by client type is also stabilizing. A 5 year trend analysis shows that the non-profit sector and independent schools had a moderate increase in device uptake over past years.





Computers for Schools Plus

Computers for Schools Plus (CFS+) is the national, Government of Canada program operating in each province and

territory to collect donations of used technology equipment for refurbishment and distribution. The CFS+ program was established to direct refurbished equipment to schools and in 2004 expanded to include non-profits, and again in 2018 to include low income Canadians. Given the 30 year history of the program there have been evolutions in who clients are and how they use technology.

BC Tech for Learning is the partner delivering on this work within British Columbia and has contributed 195,000 to a national total of 2 million devices distributed since 1994.

Schools and non-profit organizations are important partners in the CFS+ program. Many of the application forms received identify that they expect to redistribute the equipment to students and individuals, rather than using them within their organization.



Computers refurbished by BC Tech being used at Children's Arts Umbrella's Vancouver campus in their animation studio.

In total, 5033 devices were distributed to 241 organizations through the CFS program. Please see Appendix A - Who is Supported with CFS Equipment to learn more about the organizations accepting equipment.



I just want you to know how much I value the support and partnership and your computers have been a huge reason for our success as many training programs are virtual due to limited office space and accommodation for PWD participants. - Jenny, Founding Peoples Society

BC Tech for Learning continues to partner with TELUS in delivery of the Internet for Good initiative where eligible families are offered \$10 or \$20/month internet access and access to a device as needed. TELUS continues to expand the offering to new demographics including low income families, seniors and persons with disabilities. 351 clients were supported this year, a moderate increase from the 311 supported in FY22.

BC Tech had been temporarily delivering devices to clients in Alberta and now in April 2023, Computers for Schools Alberta has assumed responsibility for those individuals.



I have kidney failure and can't work and I go to Hemodialysis 4 to 5 days a week. It is hard to make ends meet, never less get new technology for my family but Telus has been so good with this program and others by their company. I was so stressed out about my 15 year old son being left behind in school because he didn't have the technology that is needed for a child of his age going to school in this day of age to be able to keep up with his classmates. – Jay

Computers for Students

In 2014, BC Tech launched the Computers for Students initiative to support low income families with a student in the house in advance of Internet for Good and Connecting Families launching. We distributed 276 devices, a slight decrease from the 301 delivered in the previous year.

The goal of this project is to be a “catch-all” place for individuals not supported through a sponsoring non-profit organization or school to still receive equipment, however we noticed an increase in individuals, including seniors and persons with disabilities, who are not students still needing equipment. Effective April 2023, we rebranded this initiative to Tech for Home to ensure our program language is inclusive and those in need can see themselves reflected and eligible.



I have had some time with my new-to-me laptop and I have to say it is fantastic, I thank you so much, my setup is so much better now, and the cat stays off it, although she loved the box it came in for quite some time!!! Thank you again, I appreciate you all. – Lisa

CFS Interns

The CFS Interns program allows us to hire youth as hardware technicians for 6 – 8 month internships. Funding for this program is provided through the Government of Canada’s Youth Employment Strategy. We employed 26 interns during the fiscal year who worked 11,480 hours.

- 8 had their work terms carry over into FY24;
- 6 found employment;
- 5 returned to school;
- 7 quit due to mental health or moved out of province.

We encountered challenges with hiring and retaining staff during the year. Some interns quit their positions due to mental health concerns and others found permanent employment elsewhere during their internship. In fact, other than those who had to leave for personal reasons, this is the first period where all interns completed their work term and immediately moved to other employment or schooling options. Everyone had an identified path.

These interns refurbished computers and also learned inventory management, quality control, packaging, attention to detail, and how to work in a peer-learning environment.



Volunteer Programs

BC Tech is very fortunate to have 3 streams of volunteers support our work.

5 community volunteers contributed 1153 hours throughout the year. Goodwin continues to come in to refurbish equipment and Peter also keeps our network up-to-date while training interns.

Through a new pilot partnership with YWCA, we had another 6 volunteers contribute 126 hours to BC Tech in December. These volunteers work at TechLink, a remote help desk program, and found that learning how to refurbish equipment gave them better insights into diagnosing and resolving people's computer issues. The pilot was a success and will be further expanded into FY24.



29 high school students contributed 1498 hours. Most of this student volunteer activity occurs from March to June, starting with Spring Break and continuing as students are winding down their school year. Students have been particularly valuable in the warehouse, learning inventory management, removing parts from open devices, and refurbishment.



Ministry of
Social Development
and Poverty Reduction

Access to Technology

In March 2021 BC Tech was recruited to act as a procurement and distribution agent for a new BC Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction project. We were funded with \$10M to purchase 9,220 brand new laptops and distribute to eligible clients identified by government service workers. The Access to Technology equipment is not counted as part of our computer distribution as it is a stand alone project, and differs from all other programs by its use of purchased goods, not donated and refurbished equipment.

This project encountered many challenges including early procurement delays and changes in software which rendered the prepared user guides useless. The greatest challenge was the low uptake in the first year with only 972 laptop requests, compared to 8046 in year two. Ongoing dialogue with the Ministry helped proactively resolve this issue well in advance of the March 2023 expected completion date.

The project is now essentially wound down with all but 92 laptops shipped on March 31. We will continue to fulfil any additional equipment allocations as they become available. We are proud of our delivery of this project and the impacts made to individuals in support of their online training and future employment opportunities.

Promotions

We have continued to build our reach through improved media and communications work over the past two years.

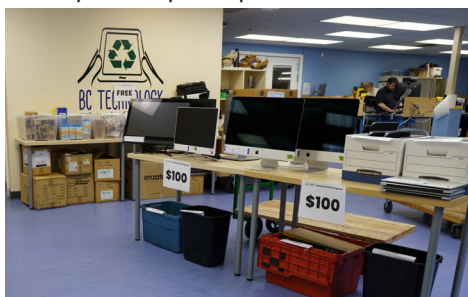
In FY23 we continued an ad spend with Business in Vancouver focussed on increased technology donations. Using a QR code and UTM tracking we were able to see some of the results of the advertising campaign and where to make improvements for the upcoming year.

Other marketing initiatives included the launch of a quarterly newsletter, YouTube videos with an increased emphasis on Shorts, and a Google Ads strategy to maximize the non-profit 10K ad grant budget. This is particularly critical as most new donors indicate they find us through a Google search. Our monthly blog now features bi-monthly “Meet Our Team” interviews with BC Tech staff members. Social media campaigns include “Tech Tip Tuesday”, and “Thank you Thursday”.

The **ReuseTechBC.ca** website was updated with specific emphasis on the Featured Inventory section. This is where equipment outside of PC computers, monitors, laptops is made available to eligible clients and has become our third most visited landing page. Some significant upgrades to the Featured Inventory site will be made in FY24 to better manage constantly changing inventory and provide a better user experience.

Our work in FY23 continued to focus on bringing in new donors. This has proven very effective as we secured 68 new donors in FY23 up from 59 in FY22. The focus for FY24 will shift to be more client focused reinforcing the message that BC Tech offers a variety of programs to help people access technology in alignment with our mission and vision statements.

In March a Featured Inventory Garage Sale was held for local non-profits and schools to open up our space to clients so they could pick up some ‘clearance’ items including iMacs, mini PC computers, as well as speakers, head phones and more. This was a great opportunity to interact with clients as well as put equipment in the hands of those who need it, rather than counting it at the March 31 Inventory Count. We will continue to offer more of these Garage Sale days throughout the year.

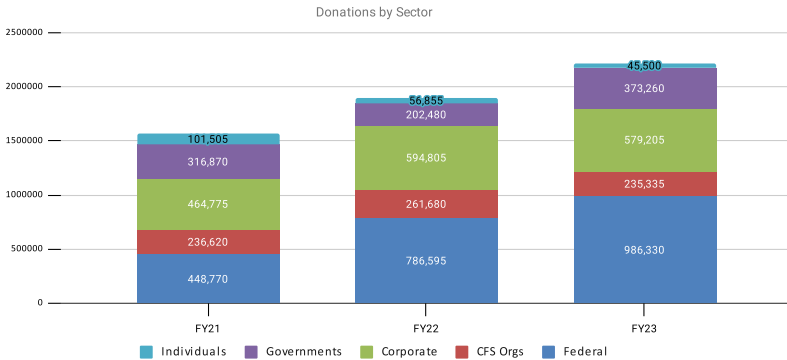


The highlight of the year was the Donor & Partner Recognition Event at our Burnaby workspace. Set to a F•R•I•E•N•D•S theme, we celebrated donors and partners against the backdrop of the orange couch and a mild wind storm outside which brought us all indoors (quite the event ice-breaker)!

We are looking forward to hosting our next Donor Recognition event in June 2023 at TELUS Garden.

Donations

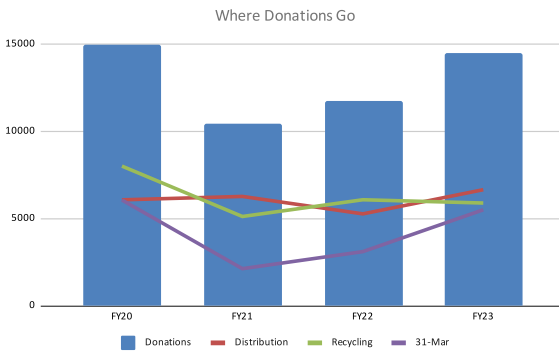
Donors are the means by which all our work is supported and made possible. Without donors we could not have equipment for techs to learn to refurbish and provide to people without tech at home. A steady rise in donations is evident since our banner year of FY20 with \$2.5 million worth of assets donated. Other organizations to donate. A list of our donors is found in Appendix B.



*Note: "Governments" include local municipalities, regional districts, and post secondary institutions.

The federal government continues to be our largest donor. In November a presentation to primarily federal procurement managers was delivered. City of Vancouver staff were also in attendance and are now a donor with an expected 2000 units over the next year. We continue to be well supported by local post secondary institutions such as Capilano University, KPU, UBC and Langara College, who will be awarded our "Partner in Education" award at the 2023 Donor Recognition Event. Since 2000, Langara has contributed over 5000 devices valued at \$784,000.

This chart demonstrates the volume of inventory received and where it goes. March 31st indicates the level of equipment held on the warehouse floor on the audited inventory count.

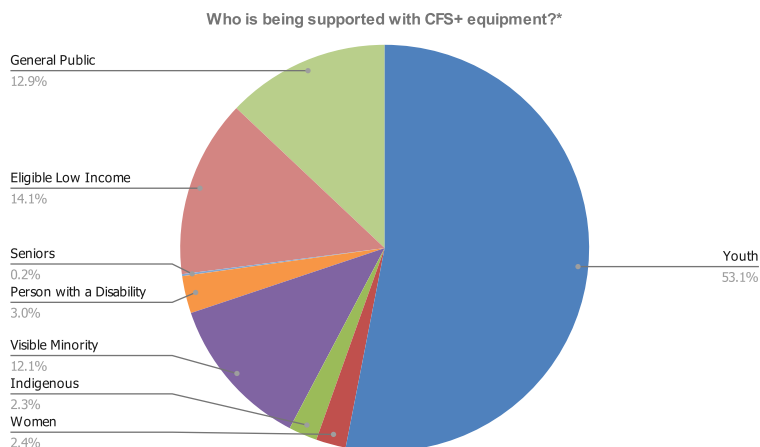


Unfortunately we are unable to use all the equipment donated to BC Tech and a significant amount was recycled during the course of the year due to age and poor condition.

Top 10 donors continue to be recognized on our website, featured on the shipping manifests sent to clients, and via social media shout outs or

monthly blog posts. This is intended as both a thank you and call to action for other organizations to donate. A list of our donors is found in Appendix B.

Appendix A: Computer Distribution by Sector



*The broad categories of organizations are suggested by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada to learn how different segments of Canadian society are being supported through the CFS+ program. "Official Languages" is also on this list, but there were no requesting organizations with that designation again this year.

114 Youth organizations including 110 schools (public and independent), the Pathfinder Youth Centre Society, Broadway Youth Resource Centre and various RAF cadets chapters.

9 Women's organizations including Vancouver Women's Health Collective, African Women Empowerment Society, and as several transition houses.

11 Indigenous communities and organizations including Kitasoo Community Band School and Circle of Eagles Lodge Society, and several friendship centres.

20 Visible Minority organizations were supported including the Kamloops Immigrant Settlement Society and Refugee Jumpstart Project.

20 organizations supporting Persons with a Disability organizations received equipment including PALS Autism School Society, South Mental Health Team (VCH) and a number of community living homes.

16 organizations supporting Seniors, including organizations like Mount Douglas Seniors, Queen Charlotte Housing Society, and Bonsor 55+ Society.

503 Eligible Low Income individuals were served through the Computers for Students and Internet for Good initiatives.

54 General Public organizations were supported including libraries and literacy centres, hospice societies, and a number of amateur radio emergency service organizations who were very interested in the Panasonic Toughbooks!

Appendix B: List of Donors Over \$10,000

Royal Canadian Mounted Police	\$304,080	Tolko Industries	\$34,280
Dept. of National Defence	\$247,815	University of British Columbia	\$27,965
Canada Revenue Agency	\$197,965	Emily Carr University	\$25,280
TELUS Communications Company	\$190,345	Johnston Meier Insurance Agencies Group	\$25,020
Langara College	\$109,390	Public Safety Canada	\$18,500
Dept. of Fisheries & Oceans Canada	\$98,420	Pi Financial Corp.	\$16,650
Arc'teryx Equipment	\$79,750	Titmouse Canada Animation	\$15,875
Employment Services Development Canada	\$66,756	Zymeworks	\$13,675
Immigration & Refugee Board of Canada	\$60,435	Paladin Group of Companies	\$13,445
Metro Vancouver	\$56,905	Uncommon Purpose	\$13,305
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	\$51,995	Indigenous & Northern Affairs	\$12,855
BC Ministry of Social Development	\$44,890	Shared Services Canada	\$11,985
Canada Border Services Agency	\$42,900	Health Canada	\$11,000
Correctional Service of Canada	\$41,840	Cadillac Fairview	\$10,605
Capilano University	\$37,690		

Thanks to our partners and funders:

Canada



Innovation, Science and
Economic Development Canada