

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COLLABORATIVE
For British Columbia's Public Post-Secondary Sector

Strategic Plan | 2023/24 - 2025/26

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Co-Chair Welcome

Collaboration is at the heart of our vision for the sector.

We are pleased to present our refreshed 3-year strategic plan to continue to reap the benefits that come from the strong and well-established partnership between public post-secondary institutions (PSI), BCNET, and the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (the Ministry).

The vision of the Administrative Services Collaborative (ASC) is fundamentally about partnership – sharing knowledge and creating better solutions for administrative and support services across the public post-secondary sector by working together. Our focus has evolved to include seven strategic priorities to guide our work: Campus Safety and Security, Business Continuity Readiness, Cyber-security, Enterprise Resource Planning, Financial Services Committee, Accessibility Plan, and Procurement.

We look forward to continued success that builds on our culture of partnerships amongst public-sector institutions that delivers outstanding value.



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Chief Financial Officer & Vice President,
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Who We Are

The ASC brings together 25 of B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions, BCNET, and the Ministry to share knowledge and partner on opportunities that benefit the sector. While each institution is unique, collaboration presents opportunities to leverage these individual strengths and bring benefits not only to the PSI sector but for all British Columbians.

Founded in 2012/13, the initiative has evolved to focus on sharing knowledge and creating better solutions and outcomes for the post-secondary sector including:

- Hosting forums to discuss shared opportunities
- Piloting initiatives to solve common challenges
- Delivering shared services that benefit institutions and the sector
- Providing advice on government initiatives for sector-wide programs and supports

We collaborate on both sector-generated ideas and government initiatives. In this plan, we outline the vision, goals and priorities for our partnership for the next three years.

To achieve our vision, we rely on expertise from across the sector through a steering committee and sector engagement.

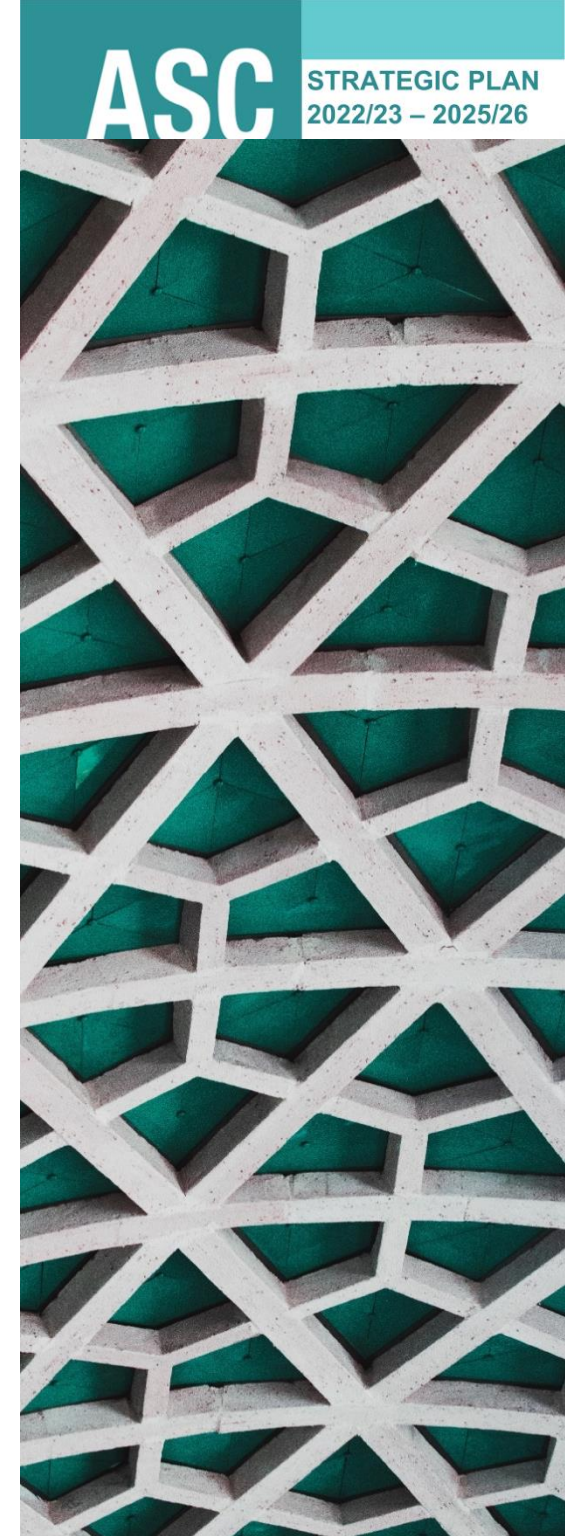
Steering Committee

The steering committee is comprised senior executive including Vice-Presidents of Finance and Administration from across the sector, the President and CEO of BCNET, and representatives from the Ministry.

The Steering Committee represents the interests of the overall public post-secondary sector in British Columbia. The committee provides leadership, oversight, and advice to advance initiatives that address common sector challenges through shared solutions.

Sector Engagement

Each strategic priority draws on the expertise of representatives from across the sector. From formal committees to communities of practice to networking opportunities, the ASC aims to engage a diverse range of voices and develop solutions that meet the needs of those working at the institutions.



Our Partners

We thank our partners for their continued support in growing this initiative. We look forward to collaborating on new ideas and solutions that deliver benefits to the post-secondary sector



Our Governance

Purpose

To deliver value to the public post-secondary sector through collaboration on support services.

Goals & Objectives

Deliver value through collaboration and shared services

- 1.1 Enhance existing shared services offerings
- 1.2 Pilot initiatives that show potential for shared benefits across the sector
- 1.3 Support the long-term sustainability of shared services initiatives
- 1.4 Share leading practices on common sector challenges
- 1.5 Work together to deliver real savings and efficiencies for the sector

Enhance Success of Government Initiatives

- 2.1 Build and leverage sector expertise on key initiatives
- 2.2 Advise on approaches for engagement with post-secondary institutions and students

Principles

Collaborative

Engage in open and constructive dialogue to develop shared solutions

Results Driven

Realize significant measurable value for the sector

Active Participation

Institutions actively participate in ASC initiatives to support sector wide benefits.

Transparent

Share information openly and transparently with our partners

Innovative

Use innovative thinking to help tackle challenges and advance shared services

Sustainable

Intentionally use sustainability as a consideration in the planning and delivery of our initiatives and advocacy efforts.

Our Operating Context

There are several factors outside of our direct influence that we must navigate in order to deliver our service mandates. With 25 institutions across the province, few problems are unique. By working together, the sector can achieve administrative efficiencies and innovation to help mitigate these risks.

Our strategic priorities and direction for the next three years have been informed by the operating context we find ourselves in today.

Environmental, Social and Governance

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) are increasingly being used to provide guidance to institutions on environmental, economic, and social considerations. This includes addressing climate change, cultivating lasting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, promoting diversity and inclusion initiatives, and supporting social services like childcare and health. Students and stakeholders hold expectations on institutions to take a leading role in being part of the solution. There are significant advantages to working together, sharing knowledge, and piloting innovative initiatives that benefit multiple institutions in navigating this shifting landscape.

Inflation

With inflation impacting costs and the potential of a recession on the horizon, the post-secondary sector faces constantly growing demands on finite resources. As a result, institutions need to find more efficient and innovative ways to deliver support services.

Technological Change and Security Risk

Like all organizations, post-secondary institutions increasingly rely on technology to deliver student services and manage operations. In response to a sector-wide shift to online learning and services, the Digital Learning Advisory Committee (convened by the Ministry) has developed a Digital Learning Strategy for BC PSIs.

Heightened reliance on technology has come with an increasing number of attempted cyber-attacks on networks and systems, leaving IT security a critical risk. In an evolving technology environment, the sector can leverage resources, expertise, and shared solutions to mitigate risk and optimize the use of existing technology.

Our Strategic Priorities

Below are the strategic priorities that ASC have committed to advancing in the next few years, along with key action items that will bring us to our goals.



Campus Safety and Security

We will support the sector to develop plans and strategies to improve safety and security on campus for staff, students, and faculty members. This will include shared programs, guidelines, and standardizing data collection.

Key Action Items:

- Establish a cross-sector working group to identify challenges and opportunities.
- Engage partner ministries and other stakeholders to develop plans to address key issues.
- Develop in consultation with students and administration campus safety and security guidelines including tracking and reporting standards.

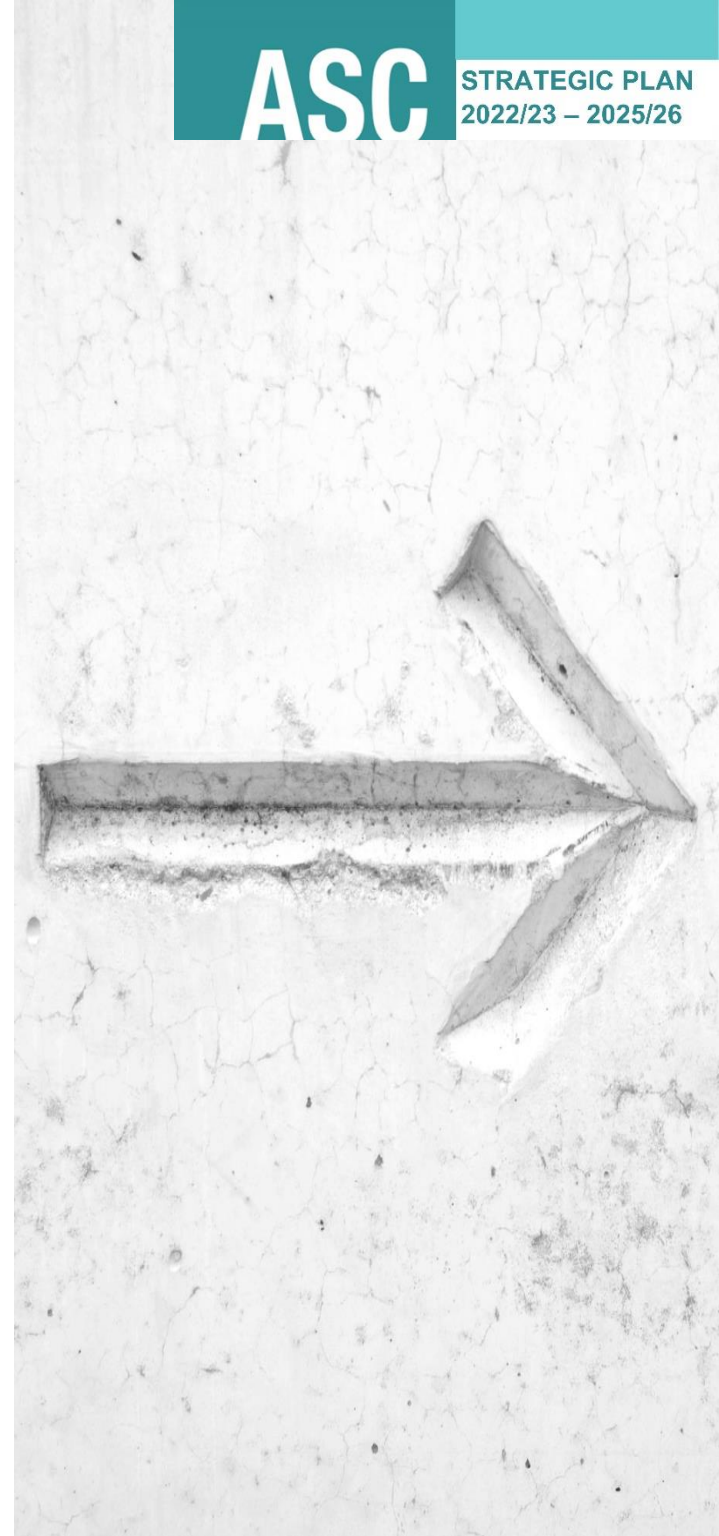


Business Continuity Readiness

We will support the sector to build and maintain effective business continuity plans and programs. This will include developing new tools and templates to help PSIs conduct self-assessments of their business continuity programs.

Key Action Items:

- Establish a working group to assess current state capacity, tools, and expertise.
- Engage the Ministry of Emergency Management, Climate Readiness and other partner ministries and stakeholders to develop a PSI specific business continuity maturity self-assessment tool.
- Develop plans and programs to support PSI's growth in the maturity of their business continuity programs.





Cyber Security

In partnership with BCNET, we will continue developing strategies to mitigate cybersecurity risk and create shared learning opportunities for the sector.

Key Action Items:

- Promote sector participation in provincially and federally funded initiatives and monitor and share information on services adoption.
- Identify and advocate for investment in sector-wide cybersecurity initiatives.



Enterprise Resources Planning

We will continue to partner with BCNET to provide advisory and technical service to the sector.

Key Action Items:

- Complete an assessment of risks and collaborative opportunities.
- Identify and advocate for investment in sector-wide initiatives including resources to support existing technology and transition to cloud-based solutions.



Financial Services

The Financial Services Committee (FSC) will continue to meet regularly to develop new and updated policies and identify common areas in which the sector can work collaboratively, within policy, revenue-generation, student impact, and other areas.

Key Action Items:

- Explore opportunities to develop hubs for common services and applications.
- Build on FinWizards community of practice and draw broad sector resources as needed.
- Update policies and identify common areas in which the sector can collaborate.



Accessibility

We will work collaboratively with sector stakeholders to support the implementation of Accessibility Plans at all PSIs. This will include developing and supporting the implementation of common policies and programs in PSIs in-line with the mandate and goals of the *Accessibility Act*.

Key Action Items:

- Engage with the ministry responsible for accessibility (Social Development and Poverty Reduction) and other sector stakeholders to develop clear goals and outcomes.
- Work with PSIs and stakeholders to determine collaboration opportunities and to increase alignment.
- As required, establish work groups to develop and implement plans and programs.
- Identify and advocate for investment in accessibility initiatives that have common applicability across the sector.



Procurement

We will continue to build our joint procurement initiative, in partnership with BCNET where appropriate. We are developing guidance and resources to support institutions in embedding Indigenous and ESG goals into procurement. We are continuing to expand our pre-qualified list, focusing on consultancy and technical services.

Key Action Items:

- Identify priority ESG issue areas (environmental, social, indigenous, ethical etc.).
- Identify strategic collective sustainable procurement opportunities.
- Develop tools, guidelines, and measures to support with implementation and measuring success.
- Establish pre-qualification list of experts in policy writing, change management, process mapping and cyber security.
- Identify strategic collective sustainable procurement opportunities.

Reporting and Monitoring

The ASC will closely monitor progress on its seven priorities and commits to providing regular public reports on progress.

Each priority will have a sub-committee that leads the development and implementation of the initiative. The sub-committees will be responsible for appropriately managing and coordinating resources and providing advice and regular reports to the ASC Steering Committee.

Starting in June 2024, the ASC will issue an annual report on the status of work related to the priorities and outline goals and strategies for the upcoming year.

The ASC will continue to monitor progress with both the Feed BC initiative to support post-secondary institutions in increasing their use of B.C. foods, and the **Student Housing Working Group's** progress in supporting the creation of new student beds. As both these groups are now largely or fully self-governing, the ASC will shift to a reporting and advising function.

What We Have Achieved

The ASC has made vast amounts of progress since our last Strategic Plan (2018/19 – 2021/22). A few of our previous priorities, like Feed BC and Student Housing have moved to a nurture and monitor mode. While it is still a priority for ASC, it will not require as much dedicated attention for our refreshed Strategic Plan. Below summarizes progress made towards our previous strategic priorities.

Priorities (2018/19 - 2021/22)

Feed BC

Partnering with the Ministry of Agriculture to support increasing B.C. foods in post-secondary institutions.

- Through participation in Feed BC, universities and colleges showcase and demonstrate a commitment to their sustainability goals and student interests in local food. Feed BC is connecting PSIs to local food producers, which measurably contributes to their local B.C. communities' economic development and vibrancy. Since formally launching on campuses in February 2021, over 80% of PSIs have joined this initiative.
- Participating PSIs have doubled their local spending from 20% to over 41%.
- PSIs have launched innovative local food initiatives that bring together local producers, Indigenous foods, and students. Many of these initiatives, such as a project to develop First Nations food curriculum, will have a lasting impact on local communities.

Student Housing

Partnering with government on increasing new student housing across B.C.

- Demand for affordable housing continues to grow within the province and remains a focus for ASC members. A Student housing demand survey was completed in 2019 which estimated an unmet student housing demand between 15,900 - 26,200 beds.
- To meet this need, a \$450M Student Housing Loan Program was launched in February 2018 to assist the expansion of on-campus student housing with a target of building 8,000 new beds by 2028
- A dedicated Student Housing Working Group was established in 2018 to develop a provincial student housing strategy, best practice guidance for student housing agreements and to meet student housing demand with improved planning.
- In 2022, the working group published their guidance document for leading practices on student housing agreements. Also in 2022, the working group began developing leading practices to prioritize student housing beds for Indigenous and Former Youth in Care learners.

Procurement Services

Expanding joint procurement opportunities in partnership with BCNET.

- Joint procurement with BCNET continues to grow and provide members with added value and cost savings. BCNET has worked with the sector on new procurements including Administrative and IT Recruitment Services, Executive Recruitment Services Rosters, Office, and Education Furniture Rosters.
- BCNET has over 600 participation agreements and over 94 master agreements established, showcasing high member engagement.
- Joint procurement has resulted in \$2M in rebates / commissions this year and is expected to grow as BCNET continues to diversify the portfolio of agreements. BCNET now offers over 130 cost-effective technology products and services, and general contracts to PSIs.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

Working with BCNET to develop an ERP office, which provides advisory and technical services to the sector.

- Following an ERP services trial with BCNET these services are now permanently established to enhance sector support for ERP.

Financial Services

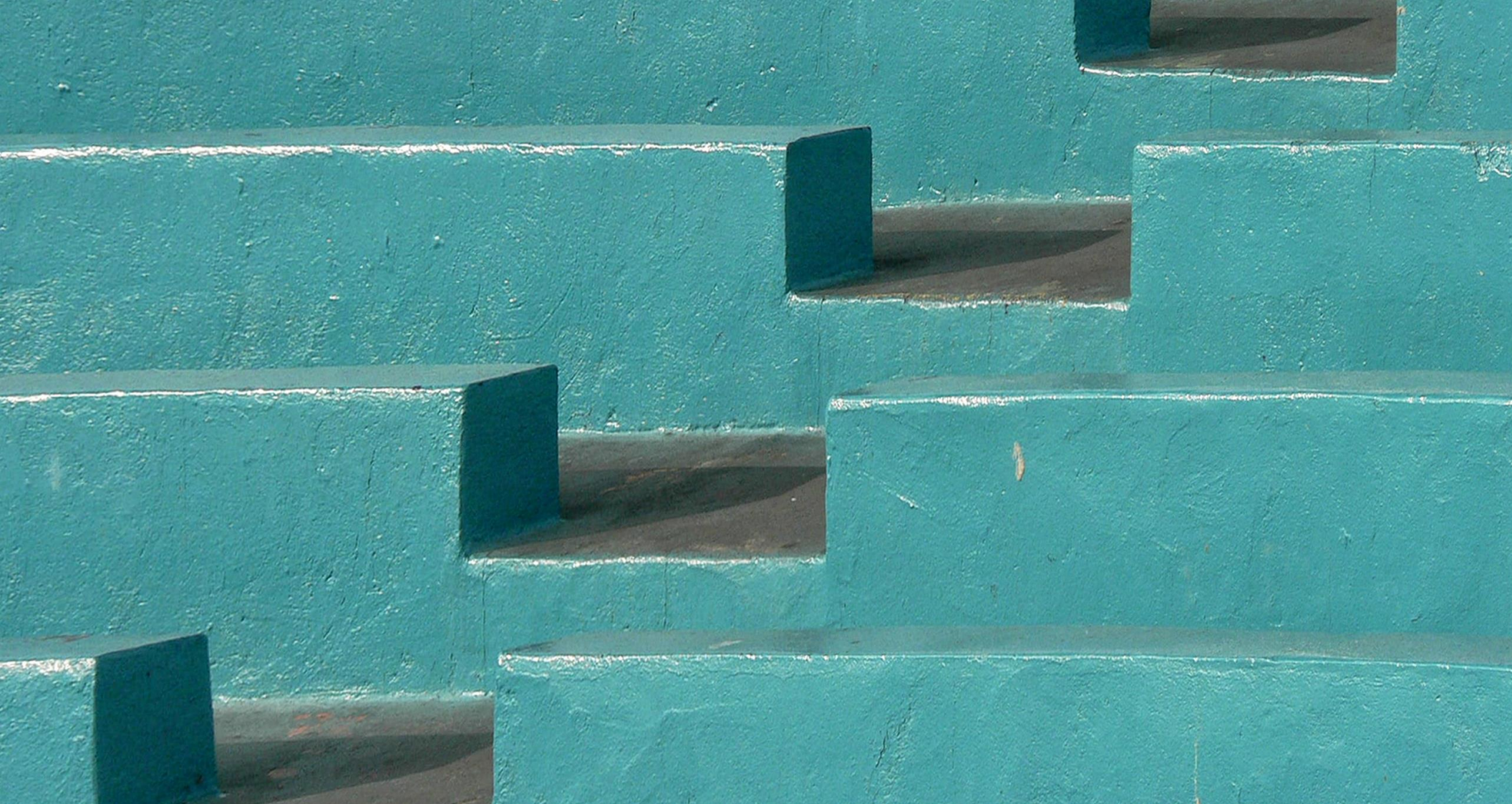
Developing shared solutions to financial services challenges.

- ASC continues to identify and implement streamlining of financial reporting to reduce the administrative burden on members and the PSI sector. This is achieved simultaneously with work done to improve the delivery of financial services at institutions.

Emergency Management

Collaborating to mitigate business disruptions and effectively respond to emergencies.

- Catastrophic events happen more often than we would like, and good emergency management processes are essential to keeping people safe and maintaining business continuity.
- From COVID-19 to flooding and wildfires, ASC members have had many challenges to navigate. Through sharing information and resources, members have been able to better prepare and respond to these events. During the 2021 wildfires, PSI members focused on accommodation provision and supporting evacuees. This expertise was then applied during the floods later that year.
- ASC members have taken after-action reviews of these events and continue to share learnings within the PSI sector.



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