

# Empowering voices and fostering a space for all



March 2024

**BCE**

## Caution concerning forward-looking statements

This document contains forward-looking statements including, without limitation, statements relating to Bell's anticipated capital expenditures and network deployment plans, our environmental, social and governance (ESG) objectives and the benefits expected to result therefrom which include, without limitation, our objectives concerning diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, our objectives, plans and strategic priorities, and other statements that are not historical facts. A statement we make is forward-looking when it uses what we know and expect today to make a statement about the future. Forward-looking statements are typically identified by the words *assumption, goal, guidance, objective, outlook, project, strategy, target, commitment* and other similar expressions or future or conditional verbs such as *aim, anticipate, believe, could, expect, intend, may, plan, seek, should, strive and will*. All such forward-looking statements are made pursuant to the 'safe harbour' provisions of applicable Canadian securities laws and of the *United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995*.

Unless otherwise indicated by us, forward-looking statements in this document describe our expectations as at March 7, 2024 and, accordingly, are subject to change after such date. Except as may be required by applicable securities laws, we do not undertake any obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

Forward-looking statements, by their very nature, are subject to inherent risks and uncertainties and are based on several assumptions, both general and specific, which give rise to the possibility that actual results or events could differ materially from our expectations expressed in, or implied by, such forward-looking statements and that our business outlook, objectives, plans and strategic priorities may not be achieved. These statements are not guarantees of future performance or events, and we caution you against relying on any of these forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements are presented in this document for the purpose of assisting readers in understanding, in particular, certain key elements of our ESG objectives, and in obtaining a better understanding of our anticipated operating environment. Readers are cautioned, however, that such information may not be appropriate for other purposes.

We have made certain economic, market, operational and other assumptions in preparing the forward-looking statements contained in this document, which include, without limitation, the assumptions described in the subsections of BCE's 2023 annual Management Discussion and Analysis dated March 7, 2024 (BCE 2023 Annual MD&A) entitled Assumptions, which subsections are incorporated by reference in this cautionary statement. The BCE 2023 Annual MD&A has been filed by BCE with the Canadian provincial securities regulatory authorities (available at [Sedarplus.ca](http://Sedarplus.ca)) and with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (available at [SEC.gov](http://SEC.gov)), and is also available at [BCE.ca](http://BCE.ca). Subject to various factors, we believe that our assumptions were reasonable at March 7, 2024. If our assumptions turn out to be inaccurate, actual results or events could be materially different from what we expect.

Important risk factors that could cause actual results or events to differ materially from those expressed in, or implied by, the previously-mentioned forward-looking statements and other forward-looking statements contained in this document include, but are not limited to the risks described in section 9, *Business risks* of the BCE 2023 Annual MD&A, which section is incorporated by reference in this cautionary statement.

Forward-looking statements contained in this document for periods beyond 2024 involve longer term assumptions and estimates than forward-looking statements for 2024 and are consequently subject to greater uncertainty. They assume, unless otherwise indicated, that the relevant assumptions and risks described in the BCE 2023 Annual MD&A will remain substantially unchanged during such periods.

We caution readers that the risk factors described in the previously-mentioned section and other sections of the BCE 2023 Annual MD&A are not the only ones that could affect us. Additional risks and uncertainties not currently known to us or that we currently deem to be immaterial may also have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, liquidity, financial results or reputation. We regularly consider potential acquisitions, dispositions, mergers, business combinations, investments, monetizations, joint ventures and other transactions, some of which may be significant. Except as otherwise indicated by us, forward-looking statements do not reflect the potential impact of any such transactions or of special items that may be announced or that may occur after March 7, 2024. The financial impact of these transactions and special items can be complex and depends on the facts particular to each of them. We therefore cannot describe the expected impact in a meaningful way or in the same way we present known risks affecting our business.

# Empowering voices and fostering a space for all

Bell is moving diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging and well-being forward within our workforce and within society at large. We live in a diverse nation, we serve a diverse customer base and we employ a diverse group of people. Our aim is to foster a more inclusive, equitable and accessible society where our team members, our customers, suppliers and communities feel valued, respected and supported.

To achieve our purpose of advancing how Canadians connect with each other and the world, we invest in our people and create a sustainable future by striving to provide a positive work environment for our team members. We aim to give them the necessary resources to help them, and their families, thrive. We cultivate diversity among our suppliers, partners and workforce. We drive belonging through engagement initiatives around diversity, equity and inclusion and through our various external efforts and internal cultural values. We focus on connecting isolated communities and giving them access to the digital society and the digital economy. We also actively engage with topics around reconciliation with Indigenous people and their communities.

In all these ways, we are helping to better reflect and celebrate our society's rich diversity. This is how we build a more equitable and prosperous future for all.

# 1. Supporting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities

**Bell strives to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities, including Bell team members, clients and those who live in the communities we serve.**

Bell supports the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. All team members are empowered through various initiatives to learn more about contributing to reconciliation at work and in their personal lives.

As a committed member of the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program established by The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, Bell is committing to achieving successful positive business relations and aims to improve Indigenous relations with a certification that confirms corporate performance and commitment. This program helps build a robust framework and evolves our Indigenous relations at a company-wide level.

At company events (including Annual Meetings of Shareholders) we respectfully honour Canada's Indigenous peoples by acknowledging their profound connection to the land on which our workplaces are located and our commitment to Indigenous inclusion.

**At Bell, we recognize the injustices of the past. We take steps to improve the inclusion and engagement of Indigenous peoples in economic development projects and through their representation at Bell. We also provide improved access to mental health support, skills development and job opportunities.**

## 1.1 Supporting truth and reconciliation in the workplace

**Bell strives to offer a workplace where First Nations, Inuit and Métis team members feel supported, respected and connected. Through our diversity and inclusion strategy, and our commitment to employment equity, we actively strive to remove the barriers that Indigenous team members may face in the workplace and ensure that everyone has equitable access to career development opportunities.**

In providing critical services to communities across Canada, we often develop, analyze and manage plans for special and subsidized projects within Indigenous communities. To ensure we're supporting Indigenous communities in effectively navigating each stage of these projects, minimizing obstacles, keeping dialogue open and maximizing the customer experience we have implemented an Indigenous Relations Specialist in Ontario. This role is filled by a team an Indigenous team member who has extensive background and experience with Indigenous issues.

We provide opportunities for team members to learn about Indigenous issues through expanded training and engagement. The goal is to help them appreciate the systemic inequalities and discrimination that Indigenous peoples experience. In 2023, as part of Bell's commitment to Indigenous reconciliation, we continued our partnership with the First Nations University of Canada and Reconciliation Education to offer the 4 Seasons of Reconciliation Indigenous awareness training. This training supports building a more inclusive workplace that acts upon the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action.

We also provide resources, training and informative events to educate our team members about Indigenous issues and the contributions and culture of Indigenous peoples. In June, we recognize National Indigenous Peoples Day, and, each September, we honour the lost children and survivors of residential schools, their families and communities. In 2023, we continued to partner with Woodland Cultural Center to host virtual tours of the former Mohawk residential school, presenting its history from its opening in 1831 to its closing in 1970.

To read more about our collaborations, see Section 6: [Embracing and increasing diversity, equity and inclusion within our teams](#) within this document.

## 2. Connecting remote and Indigenous communities to our network

Expanding our networks to remote and Indigenous communities in Canada is key to the success of these communities – and to ours. Such network connectivity creates economic growth that enables prosperity. Connectivity also breaks down social barriers by reducing isolation. This paves the way for the exploration of new opportunities and resources that enrich the lives of those living in such rural areas. By expanding our networks we seek to create an equality of access for all Canadians.

Bell has a long history of working with Indigenous communities, including through partnerships between our subsidiary Northwestel and Indigenous-led groups and businesses for more than 40 years. Northwestel serves 96 communities in Canada's North – all on traditional Indigenous territories.

In partnership with local First Nations, Northwestel has expanded high-speed fibre internet to 24 locations in Yukon and 18 in the Northwest Territories, significantly boosting internet speeds. They have also collaborated with the Tłı̄chǫ Government to provide fibre internet to Whati, Northwest Territories, where the First Nation owns local fibre assets, operated by Northwestel, ensuring improved access and benefits for the next two decades. Through the Every Community Project, launched three years ago and funded by the CRTC Broadband Fund and Northwestel's investments, these initiatives have transformed the connectivity landscape in northern communities, now exceeding the CRTC's broadband standard with speeds up to 500 Mbps.

In 2023, Northwestel took several steps to fulfill commitments laid out in its public reconciliation plan, including breaking ground on its new Yukon headquarters, built in partnership with the Kwanlin Dūn First Nation's development corporation.

Since 2020, Bell has been collaborating with over 30 Indigenous communities in Ontario and Labrador to provide high-speed fibre internet through the federal Universal Broadband Fund. We assist these communities in applying for subsidy programs designed to expand access, serving as technical experts. Bell is working with Grand Council Treaty #3 on the Grand Council Treaty #3 Dibaajimowin Project, approved at \$51 million, aiming to bring broadband fibre internet to 23 Indigenous and 13 non-Indigenous communities in Northwestern Ontario. Projects are also underway, or in development, in Magnetawan First Nations, Moose Deer Point First Nations, and Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nations in Ontario, and with the Nunatsiavut Government to enhance high-speed internet connectivity in Northern Labrador, among others.

At Bell, we engage in meaningful dialogue with Indigenous communities to mitigate local concerns about our network. For example, our network infrastructure environmental evaluation program is embedded directly in our environmental management and review system. This arrangement seeks to minimize the negative impacts of network projects on the environment.

### 3. Supporting the mental health and well-being of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities in Canada

We believe we have a responsibility to help communities thrive. The Bell Let's Talk mental health initiative encourages Canadians to take action and achieve real change in their mental health, and supports community and mental health programs across Canada

The Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund provides grants for organizations working to increase access to culturally informed mental health and well-being support for BIPOC communities across Canada. (To learn more about the partners and projects we are supporting through the fund, visit the Bell Let's Talk [website](#).)

Since its launch in 2020, the fund has committed \$5.45 million in donations to 49 organizations from around the country, including 10 new recipients announced in January 2024. New Partners include: [Café-Jeunesse Multiculturel](#), [Eva's Initiatives for Homeless Youth](#), [Hong Fook Mental Health Association](#), and [Réseau d'intervention auprès des personnes ayant subi la violence organisée \(RIVO\)](#), to name a few. Read more [here](#).

The mental health podcast series [From Where We Stand: Conversations on Race and Mental Health](#) is also available on the Bell Let's Talk website and the [Bell Blog](#) features diverse perspectives and experiences related to mental health.



### 3.1 Support for Indigenous mental health

Bell Let's Talk has long-partnered with Indigenous groups to support mental health initiatives in communities around the country.

Bell Let's Talk proudly partners with organizations supporting the mental health of Indigenous communities. In January 2024, Bell Let's Talk announced new Diversity Fund partnerships with [Centre de justice des Premiers Peuples de Montréal/ First People justice center of Montréal](#), [Fort Smith Métis Council](#), [Mashkiwizii Manido Foundation](#), [Sagkeeng Child and Family Services Inc.](#), [Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq](#), and [Wolastoqey Tribal Council Inc.](#) Some of the new Bell Let's Talk Community Fund partners include Qajuqturvik Community Food Centre, Shkoday, Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS), and Child and Family all Nations Coordinated Response Network. Bell Let's Talk also supported the [Embrace Life Council](#), the [Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre](#), [Ogjiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin](#), the [Bear Clan Patrol](#), the [Behavioural Health Foundation](#), and the [Peguis Foundation](#) in Canada's northern territories and in Manitoba.

Northwestel supports Indigenous mental health in the North with partners such as [Iitaaqsiq](#), the Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiaqatigiit Embrace Life Council (IIEKELC), Canadian Metal Health Association Yukon Division, and BYTE – Empowering Youth Society.



## 4. Cultivating diverse arts and culture

We foster diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging through initiatives that promote arts and culture in community events and media. At Bell, we support initiatives that allow each culture to flourish and contribute.

### 4.1 Cultivating diverse arts and culture through media

Through our media assets, we create and deliver original and meaningful content to Canadians across the country. This content is integral to fostering a culture that represents all Canadians. Bell Media also continues to enhance the Canadian industry and provide opportunities for Canadian talent to achieve both artistic and commercial success both behind and in front of the camera.

In 2023, Bell Media continued its support of major arts and culture festivals. We partnered with organizations that deliver the Banff World Media Festival, the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and the Inside Out Film Festival (showcasing works by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community). These events showcase Canadian and international productions and talent.



The ImagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival, featuring global Indigenous storytelling, returned in 2023 with both in-person and online programming. As an Institute Partner, Crave and Bell Media sponsored Industry Days, including panels, workshops, networking, and masterclasses, to support Indigenous content creators and facilitate connections with industry decision-makers.



The 27th Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival, highlighting contemporary pan-Asian cinema, received support from Crave as a Premier Sponsor. This partnership not only included presenting the opening night screening but also backing the Reel Ideas Conference, which fosters insightful conversations among industry professionals and aims to inspire future storytellers.



The Reelworld Producer Program, founded by Bell Media, and executed by the Reelworld Film Festival and Screen Institute returned for its fourth year. The intensive 12-month program aims to develop, support, and connect BIPOC participants with the Canadian film and television industry.

### Developing new voices

Bell Media renewed its partnership with BIPOC TV & Film for The Unscripted Producers Lab. This is a professional development initiative for emerging producers and aspiring showrunners working in unscripted, factual, and reality series production to bring their perspectives to the media landscape, both in front and behind the camera.

Our focus on supporting the development of Canadian talent from underrepresented groups extends to initiatives like the Canadian Film Centre's Comedy Story Room Intensive presented by Bell Media, the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television's Executive Residency Program, the Women in Film & Television's Media Business Essentials Program, the Canadian Journalism Foundation's CTV News Black Journalism Fellowship, and the National Screen Institute's Access BIPOC Producers program. We also support organizations like RTDNA Canada and Content Canada, which help celebrate and nurture Canadian voices in journalism, media, and popular culture.

Bell Media's strong presence in Québec is also reinforced by our commitment to supporting francophone productions and developing talent for the benefit of French-language audiences everywhere.



The Rendez-vous Québec Cinéma is the only film festival entirely dedicated to Québec cinema. Operating for more than 40 years, the festival offers the widest range of cinematographic genres and approaches. It brings together the works of both emerging and established filmmakers.



The Montreal International Documentary Festival (RIDM) is one of the most important documentary film festivals in North America. Each year, the RIDM presents more than 130 Canadian and international documentaries.



Cinéma Mania is a francophone film festival in Montréal. Since 1995, the festival has been an active participant in the dynamism and cultural influence of Québec. The films come from Québec, France, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Senegal, Belgium and Central Africa.



Bell Media recognizes the importance of women's inclusion and participation and is the year-round lead partner of the Alliance des femmes des industries créatives (Allia). Allia promotes the talent, creativity and innovation of women and emerging artists in the industry.



The Abitibi-Témiscamingue International Film Festival presents more than 100 productions from over 20 countries. Short, medium and feature length films, documentaries, animation, and fiction films are screened.



Bell Media encourages the next generation of filmmakers. For many years, we have been an annual supporter of Kino. This organization supervises the creation of short films. It also supports the community of short film creators, helping to accelerate the development of individual artists, and to promote them and their work.

## 4.2 Supporting arts, sport and culture in our communities

Bell proudly continues its long tradition of supporting Canadian arts, sport and culture. We work with a variety of partners to enrich the communities we serve and to encourage creative expression. These initiatives range from a full roster of activities and festivals around the country, to discreet, individual projects such as transforming Bell utility boxes into art.

### Partnering with sport and culture across the country

Bell supports a wide variety of sports and cultural festivals across the country. In 2023, Bell supported the Bell Canadian Track & Field Championships in British Columbia, the Manito Ahbee Festival in Manitoba, the Le Festival de Baie-Saint-Paul in Quebec, the North American Indigenous Games in Nova Scotia and many others.



### Transforming Bell utility boxes into works of art

The Bell Box Art Murals Project is an innovative collaboration between community arts organizations, local artists, resident associations, and local governments. The project helps to reduce vandalism and replace graffiti with original works of art. Bell has supported the painting of murals on Bell utility boxes since 2009 and in Aurora, Ontario, Metis Objive artist Gloria Hope is helping bring her vision to these spaces. Gloria's first design features a thunderbird, water and greenery. In the past year, nearly 100 Bell Boxes have been painted in Ontario. Over 550 utility boxes have been painted since 2009.



## Supporting Indigenous Culture in the North

Kaytlyn Amitnak Niego, Inuit artist from Baker Lake, Nunavut was asked by Northwestel to create the design for their September 30, 2023 orange shirt in recognition of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The design featured a mother figure wearing an amauti and uplifting a child, representing the collective, to the safety of the Northern Lights. Kaytlyn shared her intent for the design; “I know this day affects a lot of people so I put a lot of extra love into the art for this shirt with the intention that when someone wears it, they will feel it.” Northwestel marked the day through art but also through action, recommitting to walking the path of reconciliation together with Indigenous partners, communities and customers. Find out how Northwestel is working with Northern Indigenous communities and governments to build a better future for all. Learn more at [www.nwtel.ca/reconciliation](http://www.nwtel.ca/reconciliation).



Northwestel has a longstanding partnership with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the North Slave Métis Alliance to recognize and celebrate the rich, diverse cultures and heritage of the North's Indigenous peoples. Northwestel team members volunteer to serve traditional feasts of stew, local whitefish, bannock and all the fixings to our community as a way of saying thank you. Northwestel celebrated [National Indigenous Peoples Day](#) with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Solstice Feast and the North Slave Métis Alliance Fish Fry.



The Alianait Arts Festival once again took place under their signature big top tent in Iqaluit, showcasing Nunavut artists and their northern stories, experiences, and culture. Since 2005, the Festival has been a world-class talent showcase for Inuit and other circumpolar artists. As a festival partner for more than a decade, Northwestel is proud to connect northerners to each other and what they love most.



Northwestel partners with the Adäka Cultural Festival to celebrate the culture of Indigenous people across the Yukon and in other parts of Canada. Northwestel believes strong connections build stronger communities. Adäka means “coming into the light” in the Southern Tutchone language. Since 2011 the festival has brought Indigenous visual and performing artists from the Yukon and around the world to its stages, shining a light on Indigenous creativity and culture.

# 5. Fostering diversity in our value chain

Having diversity throughout our value chain is important. Supporting diverse groups fosters their sense of belonging and the unique richness that diversity provides. Through our suppliers and our workforce, we seek to provide opportunities for everyone. This in return creates stronger relations and synergies for all.

## 5.1 Promoting and choosing diverse suppliers GRI 2-6

We believe that our supplier base should reflect the diverse communities in which we operate. This reflection helps drive the delivery of advanced products and services that resonate with our customers. By extending the values of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging to Bell's supplier relationships, we aim to provide equal sourcing opportunities for capable, diverse suppliers. Bell's supplier diversity program encourages the active inclusion of businesses that are majority owned and managed by Indigenous peoples, visible minorities, women, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, veterans, and persons with disabilities.

We aim to promote equal sourcing opportunities for capable, diverse suppliers. In collaboration with Canadian certifying organizations, we continue to expand our network and advocate for diverse-owned business opportunities. We further maintain accessibility to a certified diverse-supplier database to build awareness within the company.



In 2023, Bell sponsored and participated in multiple supplier diversity industry events, roundtables and networking events. We met with diverse suppliers and promoted them to internal buyers, and continued to support women-owned businesses in Québec, through our partnership with the Réseau des Femmes d'affaires du Québec. Additionally, we facilitated education and awareness sessions for Bell employees on supplier diversity, and we continued to expand on Bell's tier 2 reporting program, and communicated our support for supplier diversity to various suppliers and business clients, encouraging the conversation of inclusive supply chains across North America.

In 2023, BCE spent \$70M with certified diverse suppliers<sup>[1]</sup>. In 2024, we will continue to advocate for supply chain diversity. We seek to increase year-over-year spend with diverse suppliers by 3% to 5%, and to increase the number of active certified diverse suppliers by 5%.

For more information on Bell's supplier diversity program, visit our webpage: [bce.ca/suppliers](https://bce.ca/suppliers) and the Our customer and relationships tab of our [ESG data summary](#).

[1] We define certified diverse supplier as a business that is officially certified by a formal third-party certifying organization. Bell's diverse spend is underrepresented, and limited to our current visibility of certified diverse suppliers. Year over year volatility can be a result of many factors, including but not limited to, supplier acquisitions, de-certification and/or a result of fair and equitable competition.

## 5.2 Supporting Indigenous-owned businesses

Bell's Procurement Supplier Diversity Program promotes inclusive, equitable and accessible sourcing opportunities to capable diverse suppliers which are majority owned and managed by diverse groups, including Indigenous peoples.

As part of our Supplier Diversity Program, we are corporate members of the [Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business](#) and the [Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council](#). These organizations foster economic opportunities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses and communities.

Our supplier diversity team also promotes self-proclaimed Indigenous businesses registered with the Government of Canada Indigenous Business Directory.

On another level, Bell encourages suppliers to implement programs that promote, identify and increase representation of Indigenous people among their own teams and suppliers through our Supplier Code of Conduct, available [here](#).

## 6. Embracing and increasing diversity, equity and inclusion within our teams

Bell serves a rich and diverse demographic in this country and we take pride of our 144-year history as a groundbreaking Canadian company. We value and aim to foster and grow our diverse workforce who collectively advance how Canadians connect with each other and the world. Diversity creates value for all.

Bell's employee value proposition describes what makes Bell unique and what team members value most about working at Bell. We aim to provide a more inclusive, equitable and accessible society where our team members, our customers, suppliers and communities feel valued, respected and supported.

At Bell, we have an incredible team with a diversity of experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives, representing Canada's society, enriching our work and leading to better outcomes.

Based on a self-disclosure rate of 89% among Bell team members, our diversity and inclusion strategy is significantly increasing representation of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour, persons with disabilities, and women. We have a strategic focus on making our senior leadership team more representative of our overall employee population. As part of this, we have focused talent management strategies and development programs for high-potential leaders, including those from underrepresented groups. In our [ESG data summary](#), as a federally regulated employer we disclose our workforce representation by four Employment Equity designated groups: women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities and Indigenous people in our overall workforce as well as in executive positions (vice president level and above).



### Key initiatives included:

- Launched in 2020, we committed to address the impacts of systemic racism on team members who self identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) at our company and in our communities. These standards include a target for BIPOC representation in our senior management team (director level and above, including executives) of at least 25% by 2025, and a target of 40% BIPOC representation in our graduate and intern hiring programs to help develop our leaders of tomorrow.

French has always been central to Bell's culture. French is the first language of more than a third of our team members and a second language for many others. This fluency enables us to serve our customers throughout Canada in their choice of French or English – Canada's two official languages. Bell is proud to have held a francization certificate since 1981. We were one of the first companies to obtain this important designation that verifies our use of French complies with the laws and regulations of the Government of Québec. Our team's French-language capability is an important strategic asset that enables us to do business in Québec and makes our company uniquely well suited to work on large-scale, national and international projects. New training was launched in 2023, French at Bell - fostering respect of our linguistic diversity and alignment with language regulations.

### External Engagements

In 2023, a number of Bell executives participated in external speaking engagements with our partners including;

- Women in Communications and Technology (WCT) Fuelling innovation: Empowering Women in STEM conference panel including Faye Katsaros, VP, Customer Operations
- Ascend Canada Event: Pan-Asians in Tech event - Anuja Sheth, SVP, Technology Services & Angie Harrop, Director, Talent Management
- BPTN: Amplifying Black Excellence in Tech event with Julie Ricketts Daniel, VP, Real Estate, Corporate Services
- In 2023, Bell took on a large role in sponsoring the Black Professionals in Tech Network's BFUTR Global Tech Summit. In addition to hosting a recruitment booth, over 15 senior leaders delivered learning sessions to summit attendees on a variety of tech topics
- In 2023, Bell leaders hosted sessions with the Onyx Initiative which is an organization that expands the Black talent pipeline and closes the systemic gap for Black students joining corporate Canada, with Bell Canada as a Founding Partner

## 6.1 Engagement initiatives within our workplace

**At Bell we are proud of our commitment to foster an inclusive, equitable and accessible workplace where all team members and customers feel valued, respected, and supported. In this section you will find additional details on engagement initiatives and actions taken to support an inclusive workplace.**

We have a vast DEIB training offering, including Gender Inclusive Practices. Our inclusive leadership development program for leaders focuses on disrupting unconscious bias and supporting leaders in developing and advancing our diverse talent pipeline. Since 2018, we have trained over 3,700 leaders, with 86% of executives and senior leaders having completed the course.

Additional 2023 highlights include:

- With the support of subject matter experts, Bell designed, developed and launched a new mandatory accessibility training. The training aims to increase team members' awareness of accessibility at Bell, our initiatives to foster a more accessible workplace and customer service experience, and more.
- In an effort to accelerate gender equality as well as workplace inclusion, Bell participated in the Prosperity Project.
- Bell sponsored the Giants of Africa Dream Big Gala, which is an organization that encourages youth to develop their leadership potential and provides them with opportunities to learn and grow. Their goal is to inspire tomorrow's African leaders to make lasting change in their communities and around the world.
- Bell offered a summer fellowship program to University of Toronto students from Black Future Lawyers and Future of Law Lab to provide first-hand experience with in-house legal practice.
- Bell continued to participate in the Athena program to support women in STEM through leadership development, mentorship, and advocacy initiatives.

To recognize the diversity of our workforce, we have a flexible holiday policy that allows team members to forego taking a national or provincially recognized holiday and 'bank' the day off to be taken at their discretion. This accommodates religious and family obligations, as well as personal choice.

Bell has updated our benefit programs to be more inclusive and accessible. For example, this includes introducing a new gender affirmation benefit and single parent coverage benefit, two programs that support inclusivity and a culture of belonging by providing increased access and financial support to meet the diverse needs of our team members.

## 6.2 Fostering mental health and well-being in the workplace

**At Bell, we believe that taking care of the mental health of our team members is essential to their personal success and to our organization's ongoing progress. Accordingly, we continue to develop, implement and share robust workplace mental health practices to support psychological health and safety, resilience and the management of mental health conditions.**

Bell currently holds the most prestigious award level from Excellence Canada. Excellence Canada, an independent not-for-profit corporation dedicated to advancing organizational performance across Canada, awarded Bell Canada the Order of Excellence for Mental Health at Work. This certification recognizes Bell's mental health at work best practices, benchmarked against world-class organizations, and the demonstrated impact of Bell's mental health focus over several years.

Providing mental health training to team members and leaders supports mental health and is essential to Bell's commitment to a culture of psychological health and safety. Our Workplace Mental Health Leadership certificate program for leaders, and our "Building Blocks for Positive Mental Health" courses further our commitment.

We continue to evolve and strengthen our workplace mental health programs to meet our changing needs, including enhancing our suicide prevention and intervention program. In 2023, we updated the program, with weekly newsletter communications to team members to address stigma and provide support resources. Additional information sessions and training were also offered to HR and Labor Relations teams, with plans to continue extending support to leaders and postvention efforts.

We maintain a strong governance practice and continuously monitor, assess, and adapt program outcomes to meet the evolving needs of team members and to match industry standards.

- Since 2010, we have conducted a quarterly assessment of the mental health of our team members. We track more than 90 key performance indicators and evaluate trends and insights. This data includes short-term and long-term disability, and use of mental health benefits, support programs, and training. Collecting both qualitative and quantitative data is critical in ensuring we have the right focus and guides us if any adjustments are required to our mental health programs.

Team members are actively engaged in creating positive change in mental health. On Bell Let's Talk Day 2023, team members volunteered to assemble 4,000+ care packages for local charities, and later in the year collectively raised \$255,000 during the annual Walk So Kids Can Talk campaign.

Bell continues to support and promote the adoption of the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace and other workplace mental health and well-being best practices across corporate Canada. We have shared our own best practices across hundreds of organizations in Canada. We achieve this through tailored presentations, conferences, benchmark exercises, and various advisory committees. We believe this provides both encouragement and guidance to others as they adopt healthier frameworks in their own workplaces.

### 6.3 Attracting diverse talent

**Attracting diverse talent is important in Bell's evolving business environment as we maintain our aim to lead in a highly competitive marketplace. We pursue a variety of initiatives which build a diverse talent community, with a focus on attracting and hiring candidates who reflect the customers and communities we serve.**

In 2023, we received over 570,000 applications and hired more than 6,500 new team members. Internally, we also saw over 3,800 employees<sup>[1]</sup> successfully move into new roles within the company.

Our talent attraction strategy encompasses a strong digital and social presence, direct candidate engagement through virtual and in-person events, effective talent sourcing tools, and partnerships with diverse community organizations.

In 2023, Bell continued to prioritize hiring more people from underrepresented groups by advertising job opportunities and partnering on career-focused events with organizations such as:

- The Canadian Black Scientists Network (CBSN) BE-STEMM event where Bell hosted a virtual booth at the Career Fair to display employment opportunities and programs.
- A Premier Partnership with the [Onyx Initiative](#), which focuses on driving corporate Canada's recruitment of Black college and university students.
- Partnering with the [Black Professionals in Tech Network](#) (BPTN) – Canada's largest organization dedicated to bridging the network gap between Black talent and career opportunities. It aims to engage and recruit talent in technology and communications. In 2023, Bell's Recruitment team were also active on BPTN's Obsidi platform which allows recruiters to engage with their members and share opportunities.
- The BFUTR Global Tech Summit where we hosted a Tech Leadership and Transformation lounge and where we shared exclusive access to panels on digital transformation and tips to support candidates on how to stand out.
- Our latest partnership with QueerTech supports an organization that strives to queer the tech ecosystem by breaking down barriers, creating spaces, and connecting communities.

[1] This figure does not include Affiliate companies, International or temporary employees.

- JumpStart Refugee Talent to help bring economic empowerment to refugees. In 2023, we established a consistent process to receive candidates from their recruitment partners and attended multiple events.
- Additional recruitment partners, including Lime Connect, Pride at Work, and [Indigenous Careers](#), to attract talent and assist job seekers as they search for and take advantage of opportunities to develop their careers.
- A new partnership with CANWiN to enhance hiring practices, develop training materials and implement best practices within employment.
- Through the HireBIPOC partnership, BIPOC TV & Film and Bell Media have developed a web portal that connects Black, Indigenous and People of Colour creatives with jobs and career opportunities in Canada's media industry. Bell Media also supports the portal with public service announcements on TV, radio and social media, through use of the Astral out-of-home advertising platform.
- In 2023, Northwestel launched an Indigenous work placement program that seeks to provide an alternative pathway for young Indigenous workers to start their career with Northwestel. Ten Northern youth took part in the program.

For early career and student hiring, our Campus Recruitment team continued to create strong connections with students. The team offered opportunities to connect virtually and in person on campuses, which ensured our efforts were inclusive, wide-reaching, and mutually rewarding for both the company and potential team members. In 2023, we saw an increase in our percentage of permanent regular hires who identified as BIPOC compared to 2022.

In 2023, Bell Technical Solutions (BTS), registered a record hiring year, welcoming 68 women to the team in frontline field roles. Year over year, BTS has achieved a significant increase in underrepresented groups, reflecting the retention efforts put in place to open the dialogue through stay interviews, mentoring and ambassador groups.

Bell also continues to advocate for more women and other underrepresented groups to take on roles in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). We collaborate with organizations such as SheHacks, ElleHacks, McGill Women in Tech, WomenHack and many more to promote STEM-related roles within Bell and advance opportunities for women in this field. Building upon the success of a virtual recruitment event in 2022 centered around technology and digital careers, we organized another successful virtual event this year. These events enabled our team to directly engage with a diverse pool of potential candidates and inspire them to pursue high-tech careers with Bell.

## 7. Awards and recognitions

In 2022, Bell's commitment to gender equity in the workplace has been repeatedly recognized by [Women in Governance](#), an organization supporting women in leadership development, career advancement, and board governance. Bell received the highest level of certification – Platinum Parity Certification.

Additionally Bell was awarded the Canada Order of Excellence certification in Mental Health at Work by the Canada Awards for [Excellence program](#) in December 2022. The Canada Awards for Excellence program celebrates organizational excellence based on rigorous integrated standards that demonstrate a positive improvement trend for at least three years in different frameworks<sup>[1]</sup>.

In early 2024, Bell Canada has again been recognized as one of Canada's Top Employers for Young People (2024)<sup>[2]</sup>, Montréal's Top Employers (2024)<sup>[3]</sup>, and Canada's Top Family-Friendly Employers (2024)<sup>[4]</sup>. This underscores BCE's commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace for all employees.

Bell was also recognized by Canada's LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce for the Supplier Diversity Program Ambassador of the Year Award (Winner)<sup>[5]</sup> and by Women Business Enterprises Canada for the Top Corporation in Supplier Diversity Award (Winner)<sup>[6]</sup> We were also nominated for the Canadian Aboriginal & Minority Supplier Council's Procurement Business Advocate of the Year (Finalist)<sup>[7]</sup>.



- [1] Excellence Canada, an independent, not-for-profit corporation dedicated to advancing organizational performance across Canada. Excellence Canada was founded by Industry Canada as the National Quality Institute (NQI). For more information, see: <https://excellence.ca/bell-canada-2022/>
- [2] Bell was recognized as one of "Canada's Top Employers for Young People" in the years 2018 to 2024 by Canada's Top 100 Employers. Winners are evaluated and selected based on the programs offered to attract and retain young employees, when compared to other employers in the same field.
- [3] Bell was recognized as one of "Montréal's Top Employers" in the years 2013 to 2024 by Canada's Top 100 Employers. Winners are evaluated and selected based on progressive and forward-thinking programs offered in a variety of areas, when compared to other organizations in the same field.
- [4] Bell was recognized as one of "Canada's Top Family-Friendly Employers" in the years 2020 to 2024 by Canada's Top 100 Employers. Winners are evaluated and selected based on the programs and initiatives offered to help employees balance work and family commitments, when compared to other employers in the same field.
- [5] Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce, a non-profit dedicated to uniting and advocating for 2SLGBTQI+ owned businesses, selected Kayla Maduk from Bell as the winner of the Program Ambassador of the Year Award, for her outstanding efforts to raise awareness and support for the 2SLGBTQI+ Supplier Diversity Program in Canada. For more details, visit [here](#).
- [6] Women Business enterprises Canada, a non-profit dedicated to facilitating access for Canadian Women-owned Businesses to national and global supply chains, selected Bell as the winner of the Top Corporation in Supplier Diversity Award, for Bell's significant involvement & contribution to supporting women-owned businesses. For more details, visit [here](#).
- [7] The Canadian Aboriginal & Minority Council, a non-profit that champions business relationships and the economic growth of Aboriginal and minority suppliers, selected Bell as a Finalist for the Procurement Business Advocate of the Year Award, for Bell's promotion and advocacy of Supplier Diversity. To learn more, visit [here](#).

Bell Technical Solutions (BTS) was recognized by the Minister of Labour and Seniors for its Outstanding Commitment to Employment Equity as part of the 2023 Employment Equity Achievement Awards. The award honours companies that have demonstrated leadership in the implementation of their equity plans to remove employment barriers, as well as adopt special measures and accommodations to correct underrepresentation of people in designated groups. These employers also establish positive policies and practices to create an environment that supports a diverse workforce.



To read more about the criteria used to assess these nominations, please read our [2023 Integrated annual report](#).



In 2023, **Alicia Jarvis**, Senior Product Manager, Consumer & SMB, received the Rising Star Award from Women in Communications and Technology (WCT). Alicia is a vocal advocate, committed to combating the barriers that exist regarding disability, accessibility and inclusivity.



In 2023, **Kayla Maduk**, Program Manager, received the Supplier Diversity Program Ambassador of the Year award from the Canadian LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce. The award recognizes Kayla's outstanding efforts to raise awareness and support for the 2SLGBTQI+ Supplier Diversity Program in Canada.



**Catherine Goyer**, Director, Corporate Responsibility and Environment, has been named one of Canada's Clean50 leaders for 2023. This ranks her among the Canadians who have done the most to move the country toward a sustainable economy over the last two years.