



E2S - Edmonton 2 Spirit Society

2021-2024

STRATEGIC PLAN

Prepared by

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Message from the E2S Board of Directors

To all our relations,

We would like to acknowledge the past pioneers, leaders, and trailblazers who have laid the groundwork that made it possible for E2S to be where we are today. We would also like to honour the labour of love and heart-work that the past and present Board of Directors have volunteered by leading in servitude. Further, we acknowledge the challenges that provided opportunities for growth as a collective.

The E2S Board of Directors would also like to acknowledge our Indigenous allies, Knowledge Keepers, Elders and relations within our sovereign Nations' territories and abroad who have helped guide our organization by keeping us rooted in culture. The importance of our 2Spirit kin within the Sacred Circle is what we strive to continue to learn, share and pass on to the future generations for the collective wellbeing of our Nations.

We honour first and foremost who we are as Indigenous peoples and as a collective on the international level within the 2Spirit resurgence - that we are synonymous with the matriarch uprising. This is the center of the decolonizing framework in which we operate.

In service,

E2S Board of Directors



Message from the E2S Executive Director

Dearest members, community, collaborators, allies, partners and stakeholders,

I give thanks for the many ways we have all come together to make E2S possible. All the tireless efforts of those before us have paved the way towards realizing the **Vision** of E2S and the resurgence of our Indigenous cultures and traditions.

It is an immense honour to sit as the inaugural Executive Director for the Edmonton 2 Spirit Society in such a remarkable and critical time in our history. In December 2020, I embarked on this journey and hold true and committed to amplifying the voices of our community and advocating for equality for us all. In many shared circles and spaces, at events, ceremonies, gatherings and in many other in-person and virtual opportunities, I have been witness to how we, individually and collectively as 2Spirit/IndigiQueer/LGBTQQIPAA+ people and allies, continue to influence our vibrant communities to this day.

In 2010, I was welcomed into the queer community of Edmonton after a long arduous journey impacted by many barriers and intergenerational trauma not uncommon to Indigenous People or the 2S-BIPOC-LGBTQQIPAA+ community. With prayers answered, and the people who walk with me now and have along the way, I will continue to serve in gratitude, meeting the Vision, Mission, and Mandate of E2S. I will not flounder any gifts and will continue to be there for any and all who wish this world to be a better place closer to equality for all.

In service to our membership I will work to ensure that our 2Spirit voices are amplified through this Strategic Plan by implementing the recommendations of your voices in the creation of this plan. I look forward to working for, and with you, towards the many achievements we have together in our time ahead.

hiy hiy, thank you, merci, maarsii, mahsi cho, ishnish, oki,

Jeff Chalifoux

Executive Director and Co-Founder, E2S



Executive Summary

The E2S Strategic Plan came about over many months of discussions, engagements and facilitated sessions with Staff, Board of Directors, Community, Partners and Stakeholders. In these difficult times where face to face meetings are not possible, this plan was designed by being adaptive to the new era of on-line meeting interfaces like Zoom and Jam Boards and by using a detailed Survey that provided an incentive to those that completed it.

There were four different opportunities for the Strategic Plan to be informed by various facets of the community. We used a SWOT analysis (strength, weakness, opportunities and threats) to learn about what was working, what was not and where opportunities existed for E2S to continue working successfully for the Community. We held two different targeted community engagement sessions, one with community members, and one with stakeholders and partners. We also had the opportunity at the E2S AGM to engage members and discuss the E2S Strategic Planning Survey that was completed.

To complement all of the engagement done with community and partners, a two day session with the Board of Directors and staff was also held in which everyone walked through the history of the organization, the development of programs and services, and continued dialogue on the future endeavours of E2S. Having the full E2S Board present along with staff allowed for transparent and open dialogue on the needs of the organization as a whole. Elder Ed Lavallee was also present to guide our work in a good way and share valuable insights into our planning.

Through the input received by the E2S Community, Partners and Stakeholders and the E2S Board of Directors and Staff, we have been able to establish four main areas of Strategic focus, which are;

1. Promoting E2S Growth and Wellness through Leadership

It is important that E2S is focused not only on deepening impact and growth within the Treaty 6 Territory and Alberta as a whole, but that the organization is able to sustain and develop continued opportunities to promote wellness for the

staff and community. We will continue to engage in knowledge development and building historical records, to tell the story of Two Spirit People, through encouraging and promoting leadership roles on Turtle Island, while always staying rooted to culture and traditions.

2. Honoring Ceremony and Culture in All That We Do

E2S has always held ceremony and culture in the highest regard, using it as an organizational compass to all that we do. It is important that our ideas, actions and decisions are rooted in all Indigenous knowledge, ceremony, culture and teachings, acting as a guiding energy in our continued development as an organization.

3. Utilizing Indigenous Governance Whenever Possible

We believe that it is important to understand, envision and define how Indigenous governance will guide the growth of E2S. This is important so that we stay relevant and responsive through an Indigenous lens and remain focused on the original purpose of our organization, while honoring the importance of Indigenous knowledge and the opportunity to keep culture at the forefront of the work we do as an Indigenous Two Spirit Organization.

4. Financial and Organizational Stability

Having a strong organization that is financially stable is crucial to the growth and development of E2S as a leading Two Spirit Organization in Alberta. We recognize that nurturing positive, transparent relationships with funders and our community is of the utmost importance, so that we are seen as a credible and stable organization, making sound financial decisions, and leading our work with a strong Board of Directors, a well trained team, and transparent practices and policies in the work that we do.

The areas of Strategic Focus are intended to guide the work that E2S does to serve the Community, but they are also meant to support the Staff and Board of Directors in their wellness and confidence in what they do as part of the organization. Much of the conversation with the Board of Directors was focused on having a well trained, mentally, spiritually, emotionally and culturally sound and connected team, Board and inclusive approach to working with the community. Each strategic focus works in unison with the other to ensure overall success of the organization, and wellness is the ultimate goal in what E2S does.



The Plan

Areas of Strategic Focus

Promoting E2S Growth and Wellness Through Leadership



It is important that E2S is focused not only on deepening impact and growth within the Treaty 6 Territory and Alberta as a whole, but that the organization is able to sustain and develop continued opportunities to promote wellness for the staff and community. We will continue to engage in knowledge development and building historical records, to tell the story of Two Spirit People, through encouraging and promoting leadership roles on Turtle Island, while always staying rooted to culture and traditions.

E2S will do this by:

- Ensuring that our organizational infrastructure meets the needs of our evolving and growing programs and services; from spiritual support and understanding, to physical space, technological needs, human resources and staff training, Board retention and training, developing innovative partnerships, building a solid financial structure, and continued strong marketing and communications strategies to share our living experiences.
- Re-imagining program delivery and thinking in a future forward way that is responsive to the needs of staff and community, while honoring the Vision, Mission, and Mandate of E2S
- Continuing to practice thoughtful inclusivity, providing a safe place for gathering, learning, and sharing gifts and ideas within the Two Spirit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous LGBTQ+ communities within Treaty 6 Territory.

- Actively supporting the wellness of those we serve and those that work for us through consistent access to meaningful opportunities for healing and the development of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual growth and wellness.
- Bringing awareness within Turtle Island to the experiences and gifts of Two Spirit peoples and continuing to be leaders in educating others on a local, provincial, and national scope through initiatives like research, policy and program development, and education.

Utilizing Indigenous Governance Whenever Possible



We believe that it is important to understand, envision, and define how Indigenous governance will guide the growth of E2S. This is important so that we stay relevant and responsive through an Indigenous lens and remain focused on the original purpose of our organization, while honoring the importance of Indigenous knowledge and the opportunity to keep culture at the forefront of the work we do as an Indigenous Two Spirit Organization.

E2S will do this by:

- Recognizing that the opportunity to decolonize and Indigenize our governance structure is an active process, pursued in a good way, and is a cyclical, iterative process of looking at Indigenous ways of knowing and being and then evaluating how they can be weaved into what we do as an organization.
- Understanding the importance of community voice and connecting our work to their living experiences and ensuring that we are promoting understanding and consideration of the diversity of the Two Spirit, Indigenous and non-Indigenous LGBTQ+ communities,
- Encouraging inclusive and diverse opportunities for engagement and growth that places focus on Indigenous governance.
- Honoring the importance of storytelling, oral history, and the gifts of our Elders and young people in guiding what we do as an organization, ensuring that we stay focused on our Vision, Mission and Mandate.

Honoring Ceremony and Culture in All That We Do



E2S has always held ceremony and culture in the highest regard, using it as an organizational compass to all that we do. It is important that our ideas, actions, and decisions are rooted in Indigenous knowledge, ceremony, culture, and teachings, acting as a guiding energy in our continued development as an organization.

E2S will do this by:

- Continuing to pursue Indigenous ceremony and culture as our foundation and a way to support decision making, planning, programs, and our understandings as a Two Spirit organization, allowing us to ensure how we move is grounded in traditional knowledge and teachings.
- Ensuring that our Board, Staff and Community have access to diverse opportunities to learn as Indigenous people, through supporting pathways to knowledge sharing with Elders and community leaders, cultural events, ceremonies, and celebrations.
- Actively supporting the wellness of those we serve and those that work for us through consistent access to meaningful opportunities for healing, respect for identities and nations, and the development of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual growth.

Financial and Organizational Stability



Having a strong organization that is financially stable is crucial to the growth and development of E2S as a leading Two Spirit Organization in Alberta. We recognize that nurturing positive, transparent relationships with funders and our community is of the utmost importance, so that we are seen as a credible and stable organization, making sound financial decisions, and leading our work with a strong Board of Directors, well trained team and transparent practices and policies in the work that we do.

We will do this by:

- Developing a financial plan that focuses on a diverse, solid, and innovative fundraising strategy and investment plan, with a range of partnerships, collaborations, and relationships that support the Mission of E2S.
- Building a financial infrastructure that aligns with our growth as an agency and is responsive and adaptive to the environment we work in, with well trained staff supported by thorough organizational policies and procedures in human resources and financial management that supports control over finances.
- Ensuring that our Board of Directors is well informed and well trained with knowledge of their important legal responsibility and governance roles within the organization when it comes to fiduciary responsibility and that we have strong retention and succession plans in place when needed.
- Honouring accountability to our community, team, and funders by being transparent with our financial plans and health, so trust and confidence are at the forefront in all that we do.