



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Capilano University awarded \$450,000 in funding from TD Bank Group for the Indigenous Digital Accelerator program** *Supporting Indigenous entrepreneurs to develop skills and create jobs*

NORTH VANCOUVER B.C. September 28, 2020 – Capilano University (CapU) is pleased to announce it is the recipient of a \$450,000 donation from TD Bank Group to develop and strengthen the University's [Indigenous Digital Accelerator](#) (IDA) program. TD's financial contribution will play a significant role in building this innovative program that works with Indigenous entrepreneurs in Western Canada to help them access unique educational opportunities, gain mentorship support and grow their business.

"Prioritizing funding support for Indigenous business owners has incredible impact for our people," said Doreen Manuel, director of the Nat and Flora Bosa Centre for Film and Animation at CapU and a key member of the IDA team. "The IDA program bridges gaps in digital skills and business training to help Indigenous entrepreneurs break through barriers and succeed in the tech, digital-creative and cultural sectors. Fostering successful Indigenous-led businesses leads to vibrant and healthy Indigenous communities."

The IDA comes at a critical time for Indigenous-led businesses hit hard by the economic effects of COVID-19. Approximately 85% of Indigenous-owned businesses are experiencing moderate to major impacts to their business model due to difficulty or inability to shift to virtual or digital service delivery, according to the [Indigenous Business and Investment Council](#).

Working with 10 to 20 Indigenous businesses or organizations over the next three years, the IDA aims to help each one to scale up and grow to create 100 new jobs for Indigenous Peoples in the next five years and hundreds of student employment opportunities. The program focuses on supporting Indigenous startups and companies with high growth, commercialization and technological potential to increase participation of Indigenous peoples in the digital-creative and cultural sectors including film, TV, games, digital media and communications.

"As we look to the future, we know part of our economic success will be predicated on the growth and sustainability of businesses and organizations in the province including those that are Indigenous-led," said Andy Cribb, regional senior vice president, TD Pacific Region. "TD is proud to support a program that will encourage Indigenous participation in the economy, and it affirms our commitment to the prosperity of Indigenous Peoples and communities in Western Canada for years to come."

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This funding from the [TD Ready Commitment](#) – a community investment strategy by TD to support change, nurture progress and contribute to improved inclusivity – will be used to help address acute labour shortages in the digital sector, while creating opportunities for growth in new Indigenous digital IP, content, products and services.

Working in partnership with [Indigenext](#), the University anticipates the IDA will result in a cluster of digitally focused businesses and organizations that will add to BC's fast-growing digital-creative economy. The University formally launched the IDA program in April 2019 through an agreement with Western Economic Diversification Canada.

### **About Capilano University**

Capilano University is a teaching-focused university based in North Vancouver, with programming serving the Sunshine Coast and the Sea-to-Sky corridor. Founded in 1968, the University features such highly regarded programs as jazz, film, animation, performing arts, business, paralegal, early childhood care and education, music therapy and design programs. The University offers 93 programs, including bachelor's degrees in areas as diverse as film, jazz, early childhood education and tourism management. Capilano University is named after Chief Joe Capilano, an important leader of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation of the Coast Salish Peoples. We respectfully acknowledge that our campuses are located on the territories of the Líl'wat, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), shíshálh (Sechelt), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlílwətaʔ/ʔSelilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

### **About TD Bank Group**

The Toronto-Dominion Bank and its subsidiaries are collectively known as TD Bank Group ("TD" or the "Bank"). TD is the sixth largest bank in North America by branches and serves over 26 million customers in three key businesses operating in a number of locations in financial centres around the globe: Canadian Retail, including TD Canada Trust, TD Auto Finance Canada, TD Wealth (Canada), TD Direct Investing, and TD Insurance; U.S. Retail, including TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank®, TD Auto Finance U.S., TD Wealth (U.S.), and an investment in TD Ameritrade; and Wholesale Banking, including TD Securities. TD also ranks among the world's leading online financial services firms, with more than 14 million active online and mobile customers. TD had CDN\$1.7 trillion in assets on July 31, 2020. The Toronto-Dominion Bank trades under the symbol "TD" on the Toronto and New York Stock Exchanges.

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