

2024 College of Applied Biologists ANNUAL REPORT



Strategic Plan 2022 - 2024

Our Vision

Responsible resource management supported by accountable and trusted professionals.

Our Mission

To serve the public interest by regulating applied biology professionals.

Our Values

- **Collaborative:** We build relationships with others to protect the public interest.
- **Accountable:** We are responsive and open in our relationships with the public, employers and College registrants.
- **Respectful:** We value Indigenous Knowledge in the management and protection of natural resources.
- **Ethical:** We follow the principles of administrative justice and take a fair, transparent and judicious approach to the application of College processes.

CONTENTS

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2024 - 2

BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT - 4

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT - 6

LAY BOARD MEMBERS' REPORT - 7

2024 FINANCE REPORT - 8

STATUTORY COMMITTEES' REPORTS - 11

2024 HIGHLIGHTS - 16

Photo: Furry Creek, Howe Sound, BC by Lijuan Guo - Shutterstock.

On the College's Continuing Evolution

As the outgoing Chair of the CAB, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our dedicated staff, board, committee, and task force members for their unwavering commitment and collaborative efforts over the past year. Navigating the complex and evolving landscape of the *Professional Governance Act* has been a significant undertaking, and it is through the collective strength and diligence of this team that we continue to advance our mandate with integrity, transparency, and professionalism.

As we continue to evolve through our compliance requirements under the PGA it has demanded strategic foresight and operational adaptability, that would not be possible without our staff and volunteers (board, committees, task forces). There is a continuous and tireless effort to implement new regulatory processes, update internal systems, and ensure

“ We continue to advance our mandate with integrity, transparency and professionalism. ”

that registrants receive timely and accurate guidance. Through these endeavours, there has been an approach of professionalism

and responsiveness that is instrumental in maintaining the confidence of the public, the regulated community, and our registrants in the changing landscape.

It has been a privilege to participate as the Chair and have observed these transitions over the duration of my time on the board. This particular year in review has seen exciting changes, with plans and strategies for the next five years outlined in the Strategic Plan. Other exciting initiatives have included the

credentialling standards task force, continued efforts toward collaboration with post secondary institutions, and analysis of our systems to confirm potential adaptive changes needed for compliance with the *International Credentials Recognition*



Victoria Burdett-Coutts, RPBio,
Board Chair

Act. Our staff work tirelessly; to identify our direction so we stay connected to identify strategies required to remain responsive to the evolving needs of our profession.

While the demands of the PGA present challenges, it has been an opportunity to enhance public trust, improve accountability, and support excellence in the practice of biology. I am confident that our continued collaboration, open communication, and shared

commitment to ethical and effective regulation will allow us to meet these challenges with resilience and purpose.

I look forward to the oncoming year, as I move into the Past Chair position, and pass the gavel. I continue to be proud of our organization for its growth, resilience and responsiveness to change. We are after all deeply connected to evolution, and this is reflected in the adaptability shown by the CAB over the past and coming years. 🌍



Mountain caribou in the Cariboo Mountains, BC by Danita Delimont - Shutterstock.

A Year of Growth

2024 was a year of growth for the College. Growth in the number of applications and correspondingly the number of registrants, an increase in inquiries about practice particularly around reserved practice, a surge in complaints, and additional reporting requirements to the provincial government that came with the implementation of the *International Credentials Recognition Act*. These factors along with many others put an immense strain on the College's resources – volunteer, staff and financial.

To ensure that the College continued to deliver on its mandate we invested in human capital that is critical to a healthy and effective organization.

We recruited more assessors and statutory committee members and provided training opportunities including face-to-face working sessions to learn from each other, we invested in training for the Board and staff to take important steps down the long and important road of reconciliation, and we increased our

staffing complement so that is vital to maintaining a robust and efficient organization.

The result of these investments means we are on our way to decreasing application review times (even with

an increase in applications), providing more practice guidance to registrants, doing pro-active work on both title and reserved practice compliance, and providing more rigor to the organizations through the self-evaluation to the Standards of Good Regulation and the organizational Risk Assessment.

These investments do mean the College had a sizeable deficit in 2024, and we recognize that that is not sustainable over the long run, however they also mean that we are well positioned to continue to serve the public interest as a “respected leader in professional accountability.” 🌍



Christine Houghton,
Chief Executive Officer

“We invested in human capital that is critical to a healthy organization.”



Brittany John

The College's four lay board members – Mark Croos, Brittany John, Jason Kuzminski, and Susan Wells – were active this year in providing valued oversight through their various roles on the Board, Board Committees, and Task Forces.

The Finance Governance Committee was chaired by Mark Croos with additional support from lay member, Susan Wells. Mark provided sound financial guidance and oversaw the development of policies, reporting, and controls to lead the College's financial performance.

The Strategic Plan Task Force also benefitted from lay members' contributions. The Strategic Plan now covers five years and was an important opportunity for



Jason Kuzminski

all lay members to participate and ensure the public interest was embedded in discussions and strategy development. The resulting *2025-2029 Strategic Plan* paves a balanced way forward for the College and its registrants and the public.

Lay members also attended several Information Sessions for College Registrants. This experience enables lay members to learn firsthand how the College operates and fulfills its mandate. Lay members are continuously learning through opportunities like this, along with other more formal sessions offered by the College and the Province. 🌍



Mark De Croos



Susan Wells



Regulatory bodies are required to have four lay board members appointed by government serving on their boards. Lay board members bring an external and independent perspective from registrant board members and represent the public interest in the governance of the profession(s).

The College continues to operate from a strong financial position. Applications and registrations for all designations continue to see growth with Registered Professional Biologists (RPBio) increasing by 6.71%, Registered Biology Technologists (RBTech) by 8.82%, and Biologists in Training (BIT) up 4.96%.

While the College remains fiscally sound, there was an operating deficit in 2024. This overage was due in part to inflationary costs, increasing staffing levels to meet the demands of the *Professional Governance Act* and *International Credentials Recognition Act*, and lack of increase to registrant dues over the previous year. 🌀

Balance Sheet

Year End December 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$ 970,159	896,878
Short-term investments	913,028	1,022,678
Accounts Receivable	399,628	378,421
Prepaid expenses and deposits	32,201	42,246
	\$ 2,315,016	2,340,223
Tangible capital assets	20,285	24,188
Intangible assets	27,316	32,282
	\$ 2,362,617	2,396,693
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 119,357	143,999
Deferred revenue	1,399,432	1,149,575
	1,518,789	1,293,574
NET ASSETS		
Operating Fund	180,972	460,364
Capital Fund	47,601	56,470
Contingency Fund	19,793	19,793
Legal Contingency Fund	595,462	566,492
	843,828	1,103,119
	2,362,617	2,396,693

Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets
Year End December 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

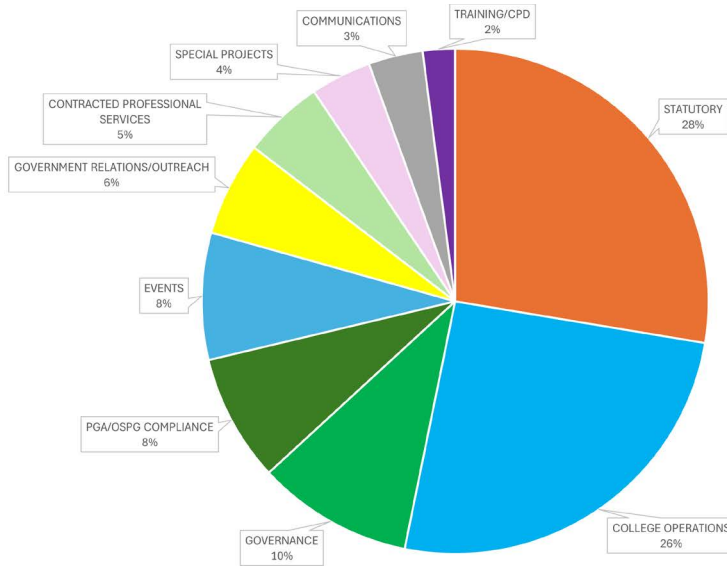
	Operating Fund	Capital Fund	Contingency Fund	Legal Contingency Fund	Total 2024	Total 2023
REVENUE						
Annual Dues	\$ 1,396,868	-	-	-	1,396,868	1,302,616
Course fees	190,652	-	-	-	190,652	172,550
Application	162,341	-	-	-	162,341	161,890
Conference	87,020	-	-	-	87,020	78,815
Other fees	60,108	-	-	-	60,108	49,074
Interest income	27,328	-	-	28,970	56,298	47,464
	1,924,317	-	-	28,970	1,953,287	1,812,409
EXPENSES						
Advertising	1,828	-	-	-	1,828	9,487
Amortization	-	14,199	-	-	14,199	16,417
Bank charges and processing fees	51,499	-	-	-	51,499	44,491
Conference expenses	85,998	-	-	-	85,998	104,004
Council and committee meetings	167,838	-	-	-	167,838	132,555
Database and website	13,145	-	-	-	13,145	49,817
Insurance	11,470	-	-	-	11,470	11,270
Office and general	176,815	-	-	-	176,815	144,023
Professional fees	85,318	-	-	-	85,318	66,249
Rent	134,285	-	-	-	134,285	57,784
Salaries and benefits	1,453,635	-	-	-	1,453,635	1,126,432
Training	16,548	-	-	-	16,548	10,967
	2,198,379	14,199	-	-	2,212,578	1,773,496
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	\$ (274,062)	(14,199)	-	28,970	(259,291)	38,913
Net assets, beginning of the year	460,364	56,470	19,793	566,492	1,103,119	1,064,206
Interfund transfers	(5,330)	5,330	-	-	-	-
Net assets, end of a year	\$ 180,972	47,601	19,793	595,462	843,828	1,103,119

→ The Annual Report contains a summarized version of the financial statements. The full audited statements are available on the College’s website.


 Mark De Croos
 Chair - Finance Governance Committee


 Christine Houghton
 Chief Executive Officer

Expenses Allocations to Categories



The Finance Governance Committee provides oversight of budget development, monitoring and financial audit.

Expenses Categories	
Statutory	611,556
College Operations	565,387
Governance	220,089
PGA/OSPG Compliance	179,796
Events	179,705
Government Relations/Outreach	133,513
Contracted Professional Services	114,548
Special Projects	85,837
Communications	76,772
Training/CPD	45,375
Total Expenses FY 2024	2,212,578

In 2024, the Nominations Committee continued to deliver a fair, transparent and impartial elections process in compliance with the *Professional Governance Act*.

Four members of the committee – three registrants and one Lay committee member – and the chair were appointed in June 2023. The Committee began its work in September 2023 after an additional, returning registrant committee member was appointed. The College Board conducted a self-assessment of competencies in September 2023. The Nominations Committee used the Board Member self-assessment to develop a gap analysis to identify potential candidates and qualify them for the ballot. The Committee provided its final report to the Board in June 2024, where it was approved.

Seven applications were received for three vacancies (Vice Chair and two Board member positions). One applicant withdrew their application prior to the screening stage. The successful candidate for the Vice Chair position was midway through their term on the Board, so the Board determined that the candidate for the Board member position that received the third-most votes should fill the vacancy until the next election.

2024 Nominations Review

- > 23 registrants contacted directly
- > Seven applications received; one applicant withdrew
- > Six nominees qualified by the Committee for the ballot

2024 Elections Review

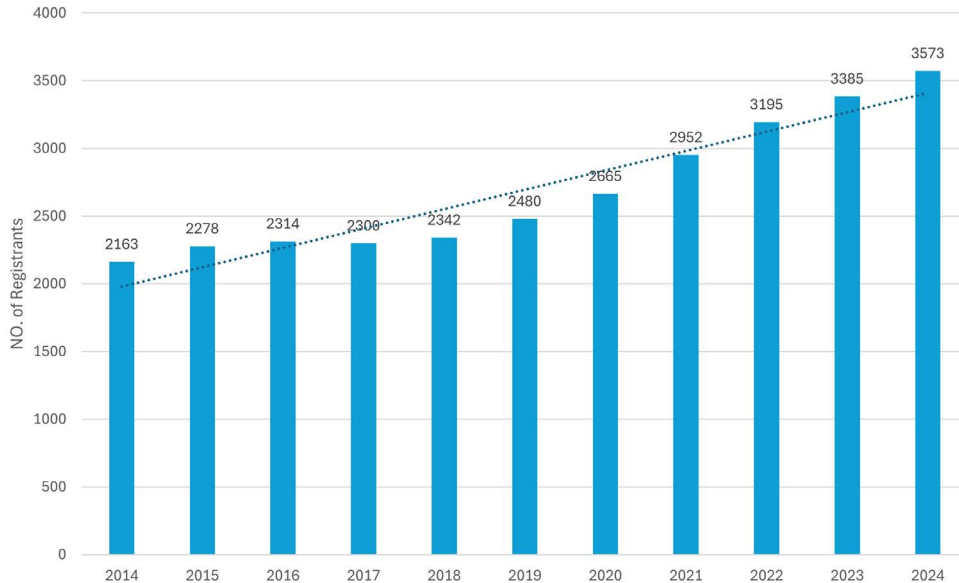
- > 621 ballots cast
- > 22 per cent voter participation out of 2785 eligible voters. 🌐



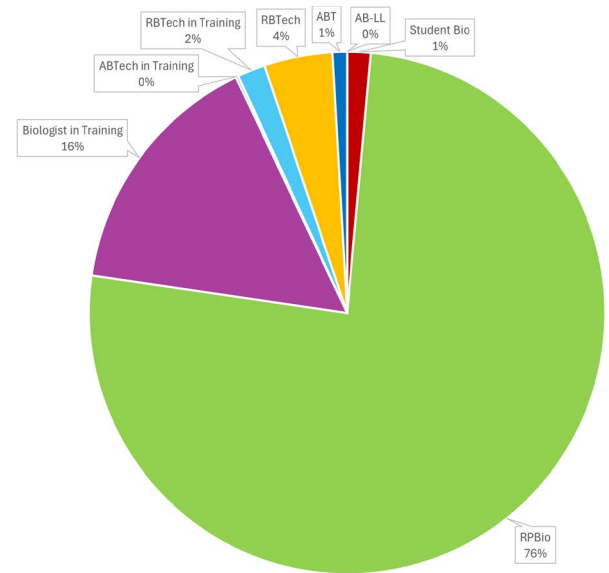
The Nomination Committee's work includes communicating vacancies, identifying competencies, conducting a gap analysis of identified competencies and assessing potential nominees via a written application, interviews and verification of references.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

- > The College Register had 3573 registrants (as defined by the Professional Governance Act) and 53 Student Biologists as of December 31, 2024.
- > The Register increased by 188 College registrants, or 5.6%, from 2023.
- > RPBios make up the majority of registrants (77%), with BITs being the next largest registrant category (16%).
- > The number of RBTech registrants increased by 9%, and ABTs by 14%, since 2023.
- > A total of 617 completed applications to join or reclassify were received, which represents a 3.7% increase from 2023. 🌐



Registrants from 2014 to 2024 includes active, on leave and retired. Student Biologists are excluded as they are not a registrant under the Professional Governance Act.



Percentage of College Registrants as of December 31, 2024.

2024 Audits

Fifty-seven (57) registrants (3% of all eligible registrants) were audited in 2024. All were found compliant.

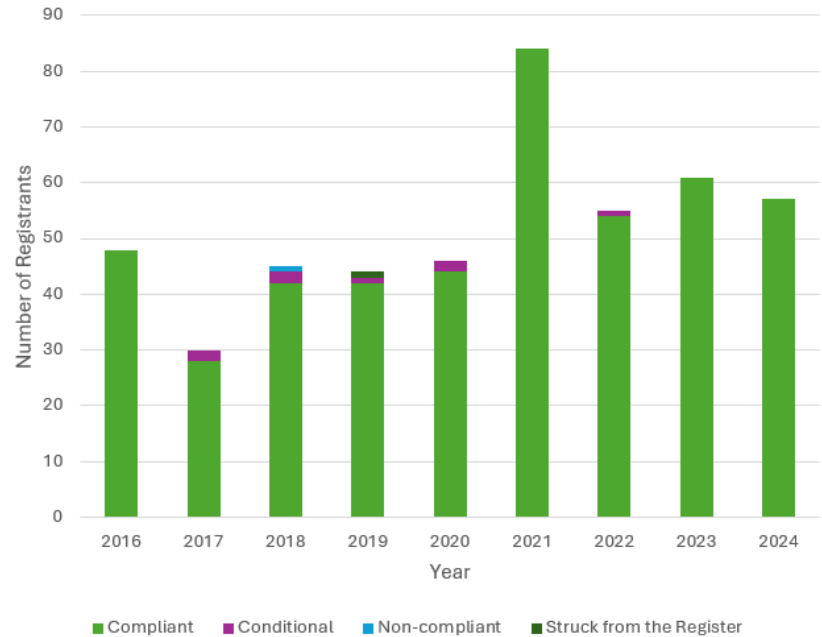
Practice review

In 2024, the Audit and Practice Review Committee reviewed the College’s audit and practice review policies and recommended updates to the following policies for improved clarity and effectiveness:

- > Policy 8-300: Practice Review Program
- > Policy 8-400: Audit and Practice Review Extension and Exemption Requests

One referral from the Investigation Committee was made to APRC for practice review. 🌐

Audit Results: 2016 - 2024

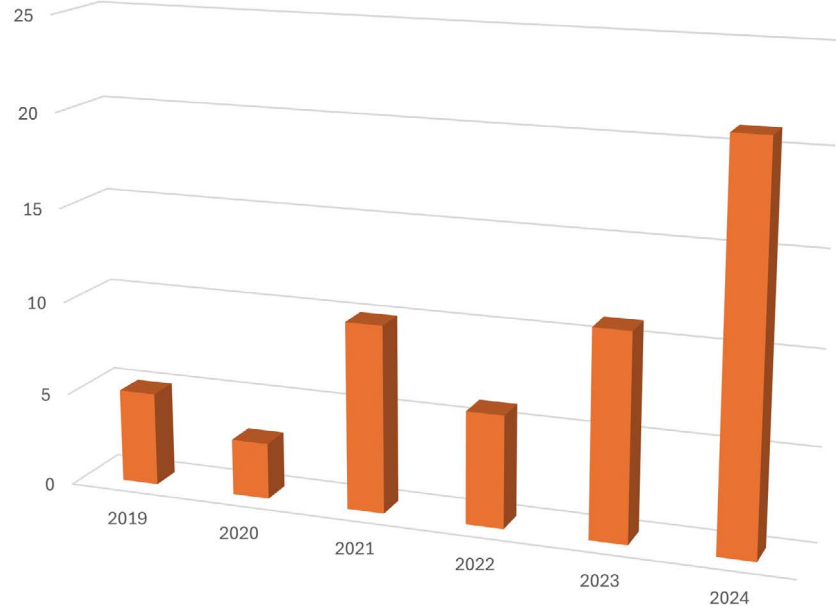


Note: In 2021, 3% of the total registrants were selected. This was an error as 3% of the *eligible* registrants should have been selected.

INVESTIGATION & DISCIPLINE COMMITTEES REPORT

As of December 31, 2024

- > The College received twenty-one (21) complaints in 2024.
- > One (1) complaint was at the intake stage.
- > Fourteen (14) complaints were under investigation.
- > Six (6) complaints were dismissed.
- > The Investigation Committee issued a consent order for a complaint received in 2023.
- > The Investigation Committee issued a RRAC for a complaint received in 2023.
- > The Discipline Committee issued a consent order for a complaint received in 2021.
- > The Discipline Committee concluded a hearing for a complaint received in 2023. 🌐



Complaints received by year
from 2019 to 2024.

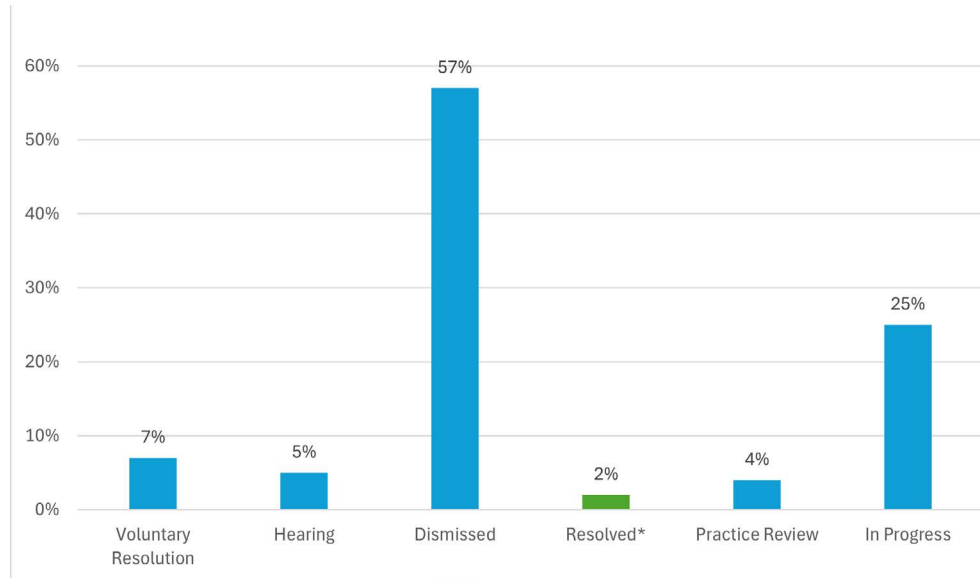
2024 Complaint Summary:

- > Intake: 1
- > Under investigation: 14
- > Dismissed: 6

The results of the 2024 complaint files reviewed by the Investigation Committee and the Registrar are published in the *Discipline Digest*. Any current or past citations and hearing results are posted on the College's website. 🌐

Summary of complaint outcomes from 2019 to 2024.

Note: *Resolved was an option under the *College of Applied Biology Act & College Rules* and not an option under the *Professional Governance Act (PGA)*. Voluntary resolutions under the PGA include Reprimand or Remedial Action by Consent (RRAC), Consent Order (CO), and Alternative Complaint Resolution (ACR).



2024 HIGHLIGHTS



Developed new five-year strategic plan for 2025-29

The Executive Governance Committee with support from Lay Board members, College staff and outside facilitation developed a new, five-year strategic plan to guide the College. The Board approved the strategic plan at its December 2024 meeting.



The College's ongoing commitment to Reconciliation

The College Board and staff undertook cultural training with the Ktunaxa Nation at St. Eugene Resort, the former site of the St. Eugene Mission residential school in June 2024. The Board and staff also did training on Land Acknowledgements with Salishan Solutions later in the year.



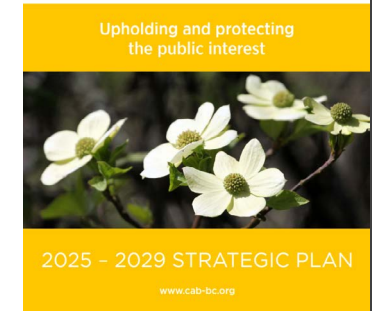
Completed the rollout of mandatory training for registrants

The final cohort of registrants completed the mandatory training in the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and Indigenous Awareness as a condition of their registration, ensuring that all College registrants have this training. The process began in 2022.



Jurisdictional scan survey and report

With support from the Credentials Assessment Improvement Fund, the College hired a law student and conducted a survey to determine if there were any other jurisdictions in Canada and the world that regulated applied biology professionals similar to BC. Results showed at least five other countries with some degree of regulation, including some with reserved practice areas.



Credentials Assessment Improvement Fund Progress Report for Foreign Jurisdiction Scan

Date: July 18, 2024

Prepared for: Eleni Wasi, Director, Credentials Recognition Improvement Branch

Progress Report: Foreign Jurisdiction Scan Research Project

The College of Applied Biologists (the College) has undertaken a "Foreign Jurisdiction Scan" research project whose purpose is to determine whether the regulation of applied biology professionals exists in jurisdictions outside of BC and/or Canada.

To carry out the project, the College hired a legislation student for a 18-week work term, for which the position was filled by a law-grad student from the University of Victoria. The student was assigned a primary and secondary supervisor from the College with whom they collaborated on the project.

First steps of the project included the student familiarizing themselves with the legal mandate and credentialing requirements of the College before planning with the assigned supervisors an approach to the project. Once in motion, the research was conducted largely independently by the student. Frequent check-ins with the supervisors have ensured that the research remains relevant to the purposes of the project. Where pertinent, the student collaborated with other members of the College's team, including on matters related to survey creation and deployment as well as overcoming language barriers during research.

The project is currently in the synthesis stage, where information collected is being organized into an accessible format for future use and reference. The remainder of the project will involve preparing final project reporting, including materials for presentation or permit results. The results of the research may be used to develop policy options for ensuring that foreign accredited applied biology professionals are received by the College in keeping with the International Credentials Recognition Act, which may include engaging with other jurisdictions to establish mutual or unilateral recognition agreements.

It should be noted that the Province of Alberta, which regulates applied biology professionals through the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists, was excluded from this research project as its mandate is already well understood by the College.

866-2377 Douglas Street, Victoria BC V8W 2R7
T 250-363-8344 | www.cab-bc.org



Provided greater flexibility to meet the experience requirements

The Credentialing Committee recommended changes to the registration process to provide applicants with greater flexibility to meet the work experience requirements. These changes were approved late in 2024.



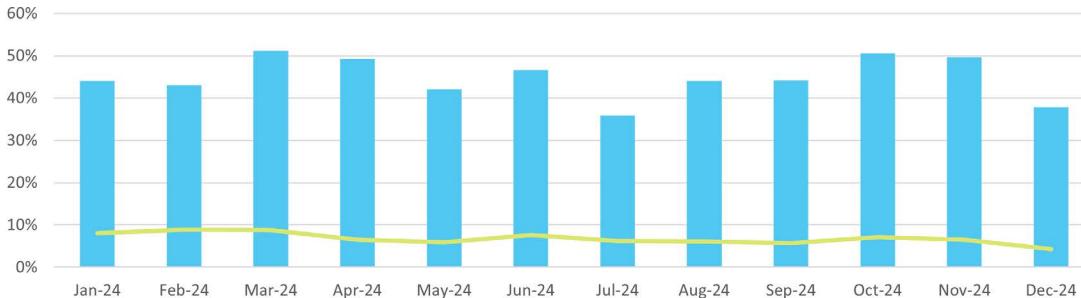
Updated Compliance Plan to enforce reserved title and reserved practice rights

The College updated its Compliance Plan for reserved practice as the initial phase of the rollout was complete, and the plan needed to reflect the implementation of the compliance and enforcement phase.



Made legislated requirements to credentialing reporting tools to be in compliance with the *International Credentials Recognition Act (ICRA)*

The Government of BC enacted the *International Credentials Recognition Act (ICRA)* in 2024, which required consequent changes to how the College collects and reports data about applicants that are trained internationally. 🌐



**2024 College Connections
Readership and Click %**



COLLEGE OF
APPLIED BIOLOGISTS
Professional Accountability

Publications mail agreement #42053528

Return undeliverable copies to

The College of Applied Biologists

Suite #310 - 1207 Douglas Street,

Victoria, BC V8W 2E7



Sockeye Salmon jumping by RKP Images - Dreamstime.

COVER PHOTO: Furry Creek, Howe Sound, BC by Lijuan Guo - Shutterstock.

Graphic design template by Rocketday Arts