

Consistent with our mission to serve the North, the University of Northern British Columbia is dedicated to education and research to help northern BC develop as a knowledge-based, resource economy connected to the world. Realizing the full value of our forests is vital to our region and requires social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental perspectives. This involves several related opportunities:

- Multi-story buildings and innovation in wood products
- Forest-based bioenergy, biochemicals, and biomaterials
- Economic diversification leading to new business opportunities and community vitality

The sustainable management of our forests for multiple values enables these opportunities. We embrace them in our research and teaching and in our service to communities.

ENGINEERING

Undergraduate – We are evaluating innovative approaches to educating engineers for northern/rural communities, in consultation with local engineering and forest companies. This may involve having students pursue their lab-based training in local industrial labs, while using the Northern Medical Program as a model for course delivery in partnership with UBC.

Graduate – We are exploring master's degree opportunities including engineering and forest product innovation in partnership with Linnaeus University in Sweden. That University and its home city, Växjö, are leaders in wood construction and forest-based bioenergy expertise.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Building on the success of our bioenergy project on the Prince George campus, which provides heat but not electricity to the campus, UNBC is exploring the addition of solar, wind, and various biomass technologies as renewable sources of electricity. We are pursuing sources of funding for this expansion, which would also support new teaching and research on renewable energy systems that would span disciplines in the pure and applied sciences and the social sciences. The research and graduates would produce integrated renewable energy solutions for our region's diverse communities.

RESEARCH

UNBC is currently advertising for a Canada Research Chair in Renewable Energy Systems and exploring other provincial and federal research programs for adding expertise in wood and forest products innovation. This will require private financial contributions in addition to investments from government. A Wood Knowledge Institute would serve as a vital link between researchers and industry to expose the local and regional industry to discoveries being made around the world.

We believe that developing expertise and curricula related to our forest resources will enable sustainable development for northern BC and prosperity for all of British Columbia.