UBC Robson Square Community Report
2016-17
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Welcome to UBC Robson Square

Thank you for your interest in UBC Robson Square! I invite you to explore our Annual Community Report 2016-17 as we present a snapshot of our broad ranging activities, our many community connections, and our organization’s commitment to values and purpose that support UBC’s mission and goals.

Throughout the year, we supported and serviced thousands of events, welcoming tens of thousands to the facility. Our prime location downtown continues to be used and valued by UBC clients for their educational extension programs, unique conferences, and for a wide range of meetings and conversations with business, government and community colleagues.

The achievements realized during the past twelve months are the result of exemplary client services and sound fiscal management from our dedicated team. I am very proud of their exceptional work and respectful support offered to our students and attendees.

I look forward to another interesting and successful story unfolding ahead!

Best regards,

Jane Hutton
Director, UBC Robson Square
our vision and mission guided our work

**Vision**
UBC Robson Square is the place of learning downtown where UBC and communities discover opportunities, share connections, open minds and inspire positive change.

**Mission**
To deliver remarkable experiences in our learning environment while building expanded capacity to meet growing UBC and community needs.

To position UBC Robson Square as a leader in society, developing successful community partnerships both locally and globally.
strategic context helped us stay focused

Our goal is to provide teaching and meeting space for both UBC and the external community. We support UBC faculties by providing space and services downtown, and offer the broader community a fully-serviced, flexible venue. The facility supports internal and external clients by providing event planning services through a one-stop shopping model. This allows our clients to focus on their expertise: developing and delivering content, while we focus on the organization and planning required to deliver exceptional events through timely and personalized service.

Downtown Vancouver is home to the campuses of several educational institutions. These include one other major research university, a technology institute, several community colleges, a film school, and dozens of ongoing learning facilities. UBC Robson Square exists and competes within this environment by offering quiet learning spaces and excellent customer service. Our business development focuses on continuing professional education organizations in various fields and on the continuing professional education opportunities that UBC Faculties offer.
2016/17 goals *guided our projects and initiatives*

We worked within our vision and mission statements and UBC’s Place and Promise Strategic Plan and developed seven areas of focus. These led to multiple initiatives which strengthened our offerings and our team.

- Strengthen Event Planning Services
- Monitor Continuous Business Improvement
- Support Staff Professional Development
- Upgrade Study and Teaching Spaces
- Improve Facilities and Physical Environment
- Develop Infrastructure Projects
- Inspire a Culture of Communication
measuring success kept us on track

There are three key areas we measure on an ongoing basis: our financial status, our customer service levels and our university-wide requirements.

As an ancillary unit, our financial stability is critical. We monitor our costs and expenses, and plan our sales to support our budget. We use weekly sales reports and quarterly forecasting, along with annual benchmarking to ensure we remain competitive with other facilities in the downtown core. We monitor salaries and soft costs closely throughout the year.

We measure customer satisfaction with our service levels through our post-event survey. We look for feedback on our front desk, event planning and concierge teams, as well as on our catering offerings. Results are shared with our team weekly, while in-depth analysis is reviewed bi-monthly allowing us to adjust and grow to match our client’s needs.

As part of our role within the broader organizational structure, we develop programs and submit information as required by various UBC groups. We prepare an annual risk registry, promote health and safety policies, update continuity plans, establish workplace violence prevention programs, submit UniForum data, among other items.
**our team at a glance**

- **Annual budget**: $3.9M
- **17.7 FTEs**, made up of:
  - 13 CUPE
  - 4 M&P
  - 0.7 Faculty
- **Our event planning staff’s rating as responsive & knowledgeable in our annual client survey**: 92%
- **2,746 bookings managed by our events team this year**
- **208 number of external clients who booked events in the facility**
- **Our team includes**
  - 10 UBC Alumni
  - and 3 current UBC students
our bookings at a glance

- UBC Continuing Studies: 28%
- UBC Meetings: 18%
- UBC Sauder Executive Education: 12%
- Meetings by Externals: 12%
- Exam Invigilations: 9%
- Classes by Externals: 7%
- Special Events: 5%
- Conferences: 2%
- Public Lectures: 2%

Percentages shown based on number of bookings (hours tracked separately)
our core partners are the heart of UBC Robson Square

UBC Sauder School of Business’ Executive Education and UBC Continuing Studies offered courses year round. From communication and negotiation classes for managers and leaders, to immigration law, languages and organizational coaching, downtown offerings addressed the learning needs of both professionals and lifelong learners.

Career Testing and Coaching  Project & Process Management  Test Preparation
Interpersonal Communications  Business Families Centre Programming
Real Estate  Translation & Interpretation  General Management  Marketing
Social Media and Community Management  Business Strategy  Project Management
Leadership  Professional and Creative Writing  Life and Career Planning
and more...
feedback from our clients

We touch base with all of our clients after their events. Below is a sample of what they shared with us this past year.

Thank you, you make my work easy. One of the significant factors contributing to the success of our event is having a knowledgeable and responsible personnel helping with the event planning.
Helen Ho, UBC - Sauder School of Business, Strategy & Business Economics (Research Centres)

I wanted to reach out and express our gratitude to your team for making yesterday’s UP Conference a huge success. [Your event coordinator] was an absolute pleasure to work with: extremely professional, very patient, a problem solver and timely communicator. I would highly recommend the venue and your services to anyone looking to host an event, it was top notch!
Annika Reinhardt, UP Conference. UBC Extended Learning & Talent Collective

Thank you for making our event a success. We had excellent service and your colleague was super helpful and welcoming. We will be back at UBC RS.
Tanya Yakovchuk, BC Play Therapy Association

Everything went well smoothly and we really appreciate all the help you and your team provided for us. One of the sole reasons why we host our workshop every year at Robson Square.
Shilpa Samji, UBC Psychiatry Undergraduate Workshop
Community is a key part of our external engagement

This year we welcomed 208 external groups who hosted a variety of events. The descriptions below are a small sample of what took place inside our doors:

**BC Provincial Eating Disorders Awareness Campaign** held a public, panel discussion on “Helping a Friend or Loved One Struggling with an Eating Disorder.”

**Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation** held a free, roundtable style workshop on “Social Science, Charter Litigation, and Policy Change. Event was targeted at lawyers and non-lawyers who use litigation as a policy change strategy and wish to better understand how to effectively use social science evidence in this process.

**Global Affairs Canada and the British Consulate Film** presented a screening of the documentary “The White Helmets”. Film was followed by a panel discussion with senior members from Syria Civil Defence, the primary implementing partner of Syria’s Civil Defence.

**Amnesty International** held a media event to present their “Out of Sight, Out of Mind” report. An investigation and recommendations addressing risks to Indigenous women and girls in Northeast BC brought on by energy development.

UBC programs make up the largest component of our bookings

Seventy-six percent of all of our short-term room bookings are by UBC units. The examples below show some of those programs:

**UBC Faculty of Medicine** offered a “Residents as Teachers Day” to ensure residents will be ready to teach students and patients. The course fulfills CanMEDS scholar and communicator roles for accreditation.

**UBC Graduate School of Journalism** presented a lecture by Visiting Journalist in Forestry Issues Chris Arsenault. A Brazil-based correspondent, Chris specializes in conservation in the Amazon rainforest.

**UBC Continuing Professional Development** presented a “UBC Care of the Elderly Intensive Review Course”. A four-day course for medical practitioners.

**UBC School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture** hosted the Urbanarium City Debates. Teams of experts argue competing visions for solving Metro Vancouver’s biggest urban planning challenges.

**UBC Allard Law** led the “Law Innocence Project” which engages the talents and enthusiasm of a group of law students to review claims of wrongful conviction in British Columbia.

**UBC Faculty of Education** hosted “Frankly Speaking: Mental Health Literacy” talk. An opportunity for alumni and students to hear from prominent speakers including Professor Santa J. Ono.
courses to build expertise

Our focus as a facility is to provide a space for learning. Our downtown location makes us a great fit for organizations seeking to expand the knowledge of their membership. Groups from several industries taught at UBC Robson Square, including:

Winning Advocacy Conference presented by Continuing Legal Education. Audience of civil and criminal counsel attended workshops to enhance courtroom confidence, and receive one-on-one feedback from seasoned counsel and judges.

LaFleur’s Global Lottery Forum held by LaFleur’s and BCLC on the theme of ‘Retail Transformation’. Topics focused on examples of innovation, the challenges facing the lottery distribution channel and new modalities in player engagement.

Canadian Payroll Association presented twenty-seven classes on accounting topics such as: Best Practices of Employee Group Benefits, Taxable Benefits, Introduction to Federal Year-end and Terminations.


The Nature of Real Estate offered by Re/Max Real Estate. Participants were trained by a team of coaches to build strong rapport and trust with clients, as well as exceptional sales and negotiation skills.
The PolyGlot Software Association held DevOps Days. A technical conference covering topics of automation, testing, security, and organizational culture.

The UBC International Centre for Criminal Law Reform held the conference “Follow the Money: Corruption, Money Laundering & Organized Crime”. The program included lessons learned from the Charbonneau Commission and presentations on reducing the risks of transnational money laundering, and organized crime with a focus on large urban centers in British Columbia.

C3 Korean Canadian Society held their Leadership Conference with the theme of “Own Your Identity”, on the appreciation of personal identity.

Global Girl Power Foundation held their conference on Human Rights Day in solidarity with the UN Secretary-General’s campaign UNiTE to End Gender-Based Violence. This initiative focused on the issue of sustainable financing for initiatives to prevent and end violence against women.

UBC’s Human Early Learning Partnership presented an expo focused on Wave 6 Early Development Instrument (EDI) results. HELP Faculty and research staff shared their findings from patterns and trends across 16 years of data.

UBC CPD presented their 10th Annual Pacific Psychopharmacology Conference themed as “Advances in the management of complex and comorbid disorders”. Event featured a range of talks covering topics in pharmacological interventions in complex areas that affect people with mental health problems.
our financial model focused on our long-term sustainability

UBC Robson Square Management Services operates as a self-funding ancillary, guided by business principles of accountability and sustainability, continually fine-tuning our organizational model to address the changing needs of our partners and clients. We recover facility and support service expenses through leases, short-term room bookings, and a percentage of catering and audio-visual rentals.

Our goal is to manage the business operations efficiently while sustaining long-term growth. We aim to offer affordable space to UBC Faculties that want to teach downtown. By keeping rental rates low, we generate a small profit margin used for facility upgrades as possible within our modest capital budget.

We monitor the trend of financial key performance indicators to ensure the financial results are in line with forecasts, budget and the university’s expectations.
plans ahead

We will focus on several initiatives this coming year, including:

Expanding the profile of Innovation UBC
As innovation gains momentum within the university environment, we will work with the Office of the Vice-President, Research to support their presence at the downtown campus. We will support facility renovations, coordinate planning and facilitate conversations with precinct and UBC stakeholders.

Expanding our target market
This past year we focused on exam invigilations, increasing the number of bookings by 35% and invigilating for 1,083 students. These services were offered to national and international universities and other designation-granting institutions. Looking ahead we will focus on professional organizations prioritizing those with existing relationships with UBC.

Supporting the restructuring of UBC Continuing Studies
As this core partner evolves into UBC Extended Learning, we will coordinate logistics for the use of teaching spaces, office relocations, and support public-facing communications.