



Business Plan

2019–20

*Department of Labour and
Advanced Education*



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Budget 2019-20: Business Plan
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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

We are pleased to present the 2019-20 Business Plan for the Department of Labour and Advanced Education. Our department's priorities range from post-secondary education and workplace safety to skills and learning and labour services.

LAE's top priority is to create a diverse and innovative workforce with a focus on fairness and safety. This includes ensuring Nova Scotians can learn, work and live in a creative and inclusive economy.

Over the next year, we will continue to focus on growing our workforce, connecting youth to learning and career opportunities and continually improving the overall health and safety of Nova Scotians. We will also continue to collaborate with the private sector to stimulate job growth, enhance skill development, and connect more Nova Scotians to the workforce.

By aligning our department's initiatives with government's key priorities, we will:

- Continue to invest and expand strategic growth sectors, and create the environment to build a skilled workforce across the province.
- Collaborate across departments to strengthen the innovation agenda to spur economic growth, expand exports, and create jobs for young Nova Scotians.
- Expand and implement programs that connect even more young people from underrepresented groups to the workforce.
- Keep our workplaces safe and healthy through our ongoing work related to labour standards, labour relations, worker's compensation, occupational health and safety, and technical safety.
- Continue to strengthen our partnerships with post-secondary institutions and work to maximize opportunities for young Nova Scotians.

We encourage you to visit novascotia.ca/lae to read our business plan and learn more about who we are and what we do.

Original signed by

Honourable Labi Kousoulis
Minister, Labour and Advanced Education

Original signed by

Duff Montgomerie
Deputy Minister, Labour and Advanced Education

DEPARTMENT MANDATE

The Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) works to contribute to a competitive workforce by making strategic investments in people, programs, services and partnerships.

Vision

Our vision is to foster Nova Scotians' belief in a bigger future - knowing where the jobs are and will be, building the skills to access those jobs, and working to their highest potential in fair, equitable, safe, productive, and inclusive workplaces.

Mission

The Department of LAE will work to ensure all Nova Scotians believe their future is here, with each person confident in their abilities to prosper. We will do this by maximizing our capacity to have more people learning, more people working and working safely, and more sustainable businesses in our province.

Mandate

Our mandate is to provide a fair, equitable, safe, productive, and inclusive environment in which to learn, work, and live. The broad mandate of the department includes:

- Regulatory responsibility for occupational health and safety, technical safety, the Workers' Advisers Program, labour relations, and labour standards.
- Improving access among Nova Scotians to labour market information, employment and career planning services, work experiences and quality learning programs that support their labour market attachment and growth.
- Strategic action to align the needs of employees with those of employers to help all Nova Scotians prepare for, find, and keep employment while creating more productive workplaces.
- Providing opportunities for individuals to advance in the community, or in the workplace through adult learning, literacy and essential skills, and skills development programs.
- Working closely with post-secondary institutions and post-secondary students to ensure Nova Scotia provides a quality post-secondary education and training experience, that is accessible and affordable.

To deliver on this mandate in 2019-20, LAE will continue to undertake the following actions:

- work on improving workplace and technical safety, while reducing unnecessary regulatory burden;
- strengthen the positive relationship with the Workers' Compensation Board within a renewed partnership framework;

- work across departments, and in partnership with the research community and particularly the universities and NSCC, to strengthen and expand the innovation agenda.
- focus attention on start-up supports, such as the Nova Scotia Sandboxes, to spur economic growth and create jobs for young Nova Scotians;
- collaborate with employers and industry sectors to improve the workforce and workplace;
- help recent graduates connect with jobs in Nova Scotia through the Graduate to Opportunity and Innovate to Opportunity programs;
- deliver consistent, timely, inclusive and accessible Nova Scotia Works Employment Assistance Services so that Nova Scotians can better understand, prepare for and fill the needs of the province's job market, and so that employers can find, hire, manage, develop, and retain the talent they need to be more productive in a global economy;
- collaborate with the province's post-secondary institutions in achieving the One Nova Scotia Commission's ten-year targets;
- take the lead on coordinating youth programming and supports that connect more young people, especially those from underrepresented groups, with jobs; and
- work collaboratively with the Minister and Ministerial Assistant on Youth to ensure a horizontal government approach.

NOVA SCOTIA APPRENTICESHIP AGENCY

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (NSAA), established July 2014, is responsible for stewarding and operating a relevant, accessible, and responsive industry-led trades training and certification system. It is an agent of the Crown and has developed its own Business Plan for 2019-20. While the Agency is separate, its actions that align with the mandate for LAE and Youth are reflected in the department's Business Plan for this year. More information about the Agency can be found at www.nsapprenticeship.ca.

KEY INITIATIVES FOR 2019-20

LAE continues to align our efforts with clear and measurable investments in innovation, education, training, skills development, as well as investments in our youth. These investments will directly support the prosperity of the province, where people will find good, sustainable jobs and are empowered to create, expand and strengthen Nova Scotian businesses. This is the foundation for a bright future.

We are committed to working collaboratively across government, with our federal, provincial and municipal partners, as well as with our stakeholders in the private sector.

In 2019-20, LAE's Key Initiatives will advance the following outcomes:

- Safe Workplaces and Campuses
- Strong Systems to Support Workforce
- Educational Attainment
- Employment Participation, Attachment, and Retention
- Strategic Sector Growth – Research & Development and Innovation

Safe Workplaces and Campuses

LAE will demonstrate a commitment to health and safety in Nova Scotia workplaces and campuses by ensuring all work and study places have access to the services and resources they need to assist them in achieving safe workplaces and campuses. This will be achieved through the exercise of our regulatory mandates in the areas of technical and workplace safety and through the advancement of the following key priorities:

Support E-Mental Health tools

LAE will continue to support the HealthyMindsNS suite of e-mental health products which was launched in October 2018, through the Association of Atlantic Universities to benefit post-secondary education students at Nova Scotia's 10 universities and the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC). The primary goal of implementing the HealthyMindsNS suite of e-mental health products is to increase service capacity using technology. Technology-based interventions will increase accessibility to mental health support services, particularly for individuals experiencing mild to moderate symptoms.

Finalize report on the NSCC Marconi Campus Relocation

Government has undertaken a study to explore how best to relocate the NSCC Marconi campus to the Sydney downtown core to help revitalize the area. A draft report has been completed by the consultant and is being reviewed. Government will continue to work with partners to explore the relocation further.

Continue to support and advance recommendations from Sexual Violence Prevention Committee's report

The Sexual Violence Prevention Committee's (SVPC's) report, *Changing the culture of acceptance: Recommendations to address sexual violence on university campuses*, outlines 10 comprehensive and strategic recommendations meant to reflect primary prevention initiatives, reduce victim blaming and change the culture in which sexual violence exists to prevent its occurrence on university campuses. With support from LAE, the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents hired a Sexual Violence Prevention (SVP) Coordinator. The Coordinator will work with university and NSCC representatives to support implementation of the report's recommendations, utilizing best practices and avoiding duplication of effort.

In 2019-20, LAE will continue to support the advancement of recommendations outlined in the SVPC's report by supporting the SVP Coordinator position for a second year as well as initiatives related to sexual violence prevention on campuses. This work complements other provincial efforts to move toward a shared vision of a Nova Scotia free from sexual violence. The Provincial Sexual Violence Prevention Committee (PSVPC) was established in April 2018 as the result of Recommendation #9 in the SVPC's report. It's mandate is to share expertise and resources in the area of sexual violence prevention on Nova Scotia university and NSCC campuses, and to develop policy guidelines to guide the development of survivor-centric stand-alone sexual violence policies for Nova Scotia universities and the NSCC.

Support the Health Workplace Safety Action Plan

LAE will continue to engage with and support partner departments and organizations in advancing the Workplace Safety Action Plan for Health and Community Services, building on the recommendations provided in the June 2018 report, *Charting the Course: Workplace Safety for Nova Scotia's Home Care, Long term Care and Disability Support Services*.

Strong Systems to Support Workforce

LAE will identify opportunities for partnership, training and investment with business and industry to build adaptable, efficient, and effective planning processes and learning cultures that meet current workforce needs and the anticipated demands of the future. This outcome will be achieved by strengthening the partnerships and investing in the following key priorities:

Implement the Atlantic Student Tracking System (ASTS)

This initiative will improve Governments' ability to track and evaluate student pathways and transitions from K-12 to post-secondary education to work, allowing for identification of better ways to support success. This project will be implemented in stages (2017-22) with benefits realised at each incremental stage. A key outcome of the fully implemented ASTS is access to standardized statistics that are responsive to government needs, accurate, timely, region-and-province customized, useful to various stakeholders, and comparable.

Harmonize trades training

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will work nationally and across the Atlantic Region with its interprovincial colleagues to continue to harmonize trades training, improve relevant processes and build a shared apprenticeship management system.

Continue strengthening our relationship with the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB)

LAE will continue to work closely and cooperatively with the WCB in the context of a three-year Partnership Plan for 2019-21. Initiatives for 2019-20 include ongoing alignment and coordination of social marketing, joint stakeholder engagements and support for safety conferences, support for implementation of the Health Workplace Safety Action Plan, and collaborative support for individual firms through Joint Workplace Initiatives. LAE and WCB will work collaboratively to develop partnerships and relationships within various sectors to enhance industry-led initiatives to improve overall prevention and safety.

Amendments to the *Workers' Compensation Act* and *General Regulations* introducing a presumption regarding Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) came into force in October 2018. LAE and WCB will work together on follow-up initiatives such as the development of PTSD prevention tools and programs.

Continue to minimize regulatory barriers

LAE will continue to work with the other Atlantic Provinces to minimize regulatory barriers that impede competitiveness, productivity, labour mobility and interprovincial trade for businesses and individuals that perform work related to elevators and lifts, boilers and pressure vessels, electrical installations, fuels, cranes and amusement devices. The four provinces have agreed to work toward providing more efficient and cost-effective services, reduce duplication of licensing requirements and qualifications, enhance mobility and strengthen safety. Collaborative work in 2019-20 will focus on the following:

- Harmonized Technical Safety legislation for the Atlantic region is planned for the spring of 2019 with supporting regulatory harmonization by December 2020.
- Harmonization of the processes for approving and registering pressure equipment across Canada by the end of 2019.

In the field of occupational health and safety, collaborative work will continue to harmonize or mutually recognize requirements in areas such as workplace personal protection equipment and training. Regional collaboration will be guided by a Memorandum of Understanding between the Atlantic provinces that was signed in 2018. National collaboration will include implementation of the National Occupational Health and Safety Reconciliation Agreement.

Educational Attainment

LAE will ensure access to quality education and training by investing in the skills and knowledge needed to build the workforce now and in the future. LAE will advance this outcome through the work of the following key priorities:

Implement recommendations from Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) Review

The objective for the NSSAL Review is to enhance the opportunity for adult learners to achieve their learning and employment objectives, contribute to the social and economic goals of the province, and better respond to labour market needs. This review will enable an effective and efficient adult education delivery system that is sustained through a cycle of continuous improvement.

An updated program model is also being developed that will consider the best way to support adults in achieving their academic and employment goals. A human-centred design approach will be used to review existing curriculum, identify gaps, and develop, update or retire curriculum to support the updated program model. A professional development plan for instructors will be developed to support the delivery of new curriculum, a NSSAL promotional plan will be developed and implemented, and a new sustainable funding model will be introduced along with agreement management and evaluation processes to support the updated funding and program models.

Create additional Nurse Practitioner Education Seats at Dalhousie

LAE will temporarily increase the number of nurse practitioner (NP) education seats at Dalhousie University to support new investments in collaborative primary health care teams at the Nova Scotia Health Authority under the direction of the Department of Health and Wellness. Current flows into the provincial NP supply are insufficient to meet demand. Temporarily increasing the number of NP education seats for Nova Scotia students at Dalhousie University will address the forecasted increased demand for NPs required to support the enhancement and expansion of 70 collaborative care teams across Nova Scotia.

Enhancing the Student Assistance Loan Forgiveness Program

LAE will enhance the program by removing the \$28,560 debt threshold for eligibility for Loan Forgiveness for students who graduate from an eligible program after August 1, 2019. The enhancement will encourage more of our young people to pursue a post-secondary education in Nova Scotia, and make it easier for them to stay and build a life here

Develop a new five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with province's universities

The current MOU between the Province and the province's ten universities expires on March 31, 2019. LAE will continue to work with the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP) in the development of a new five-year MOU (2019-20 to 2023-24) that will build on the efforts of the previous 2015-19 MOU. A new MOU will establish the framework for the Province and CONSUP

to continue to work collaboratively and strategically to support the Nova Scotia university sector and its contribution to quality education and inclusive economic growth.

Employment Participation, Attachment and Retention

To achieve inclusive economic growth for Nova Scotia, LAE will continue building a more responsive system of learning and training through partnerships with businesses, labour, institutions, and service providers, to increase participation, attachment, and retention of Nova Scotians to the labour market. This outcome will be advanced through the delivery of the following key priorities:

Advancing LAE's interests nationally and regionally

LAE will continue to engage the Government of Canada and Provincial / Territorial colleagues to improve labour market systems and outcomes for Nova Scotians through active participation in Federal / Provincial / Territorial forums, including but not limited to the Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation, the Forum of Labour Market Ministers, the Council of Ministers of Education Canada, the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training and the Atlantic Workforce Partnership.

Continued youth horizontal collaboration

A Corporate Youth Structure, involving 13 provincial departments and offices, remains in place to support horizontal collaboration for youth. Senior Officials are working on priority areas to achieve greater results with focused joint efforts and resources: Youth Engagement, Communications, Underrepresented Groups, Program Framework, Children in Care, and Mentorship. LAE will continue to support horizontal collaboration initiatives which include a youth engagement plan, improving the long-term outcomes of children in care supporting the social innovation lab to improve workforce participation among African Nova Scotian youth, and an evaluation of the horizontal initiatives.

Continue to improve the Nova Scotia Works Employment Services System

Nova Scotia will improve its delivery of Nova Scotia Works programs and services through:

- Continued investment in the development and operation of the system priorities of client-focused service delivery, service excellence, and maximum reach and access.
- Implementing a cutting-edge, user-focused digital service delivery channel in support of both web-based and in-person delivery of employment and labour market services through the Nova Scotia Works Employment Assistance Services System. This channel, which includes digital, web-based platforms, will enable Nova Scotians to have maximum access to employment services and career planning tools.
- Developing a Diversity and Inclusion Plan that incorporates accessibility so that the system meets the employment services needs of Nova Scotians.

Expand Nova Scotians awareness of training and attachment programs

Nova Scotia supports employment training programs that assist Nova Scotians in participating and attaching to the labour market as well as providing employers access to training and the skilled workforce that they need. LAE will continue to promote the merits of these programs to all Nova Scotians including those who are under-represented in the labour market or face barriers to employment.

Invest in employment innovations and research

LAE will foster the development of innovative approaches to employment support programs and service delivery systems in the province through continued investment in the department's Centre for Employment Innovation (CEI), led by St Francis Xavier University.

Support SHIFT Action Plan

The SHIFT Action Plan is a government-wide initiative, launched in March 2017 by the Department of Seniors and is intended to enable and enhance the social and economic participation and contribution of older adults in Nova Scotia. LAE will collaborate with the Department of Seniors to launch the newly developed SkillsOnlineNS course, targeted to employers, about the benefits of hiring older workers and continue conducting research, providing career practitioner training, and assisting older workers in attaching to the workforce.

Improving processes and programs under the Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI)

WIPSI is a funding incentive program for employers and industry associations to invest in training employees to increase their skills. This will improve the productivity and innovation of businesses to increase their ability to be internationally competitive. LAE will implement improved processes and programming in 2019-20 after engaging in a wide-ranging program evaluation and process improvement in 2018.

Fair Registration Practices Act (FRPA) legislative review and program evaluation

The FRPA Review Office works with regulatory authorities to improve the way they register people who apply for licenses to practice professions or trades in Nova Scotia. Its mandate is to facilitate the improvement of registration practices, foster a culture of continuous improvement, and monitor the implementation of the province's fair-access legislation.

The legislative review of the FRPA and evaluation of the policies, processes and programs that support its implementation will determine whether the Act has fulfilled its intended purpose, which is to ensure regulatory bodies have registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and procedurally fair. The review will also enable us to assess whether the FRPA program has achieved its longer-term objective of improving employment attachment, retention and participation of highly skilled workers in Nova Scotia.

Strengthen partnership with Mitacs

Mitacs is one of Canada's leading organizations linking business and academia through unique research and training programs. Working with 60 universities, thousands of companies, and both federal and provincial governments, Mitacs has built partnerships that support industrial and social innovation in Canada. The focus is on attracting and retaining skilled talent to support the growth of the knowledge-based economy across the country. LAE will continue to work with Mitacs to identify placements for post-secondary students to gain valuable experiential learning opportunities, working with private sector organizations right here in Nova Scotia.

Continue support for Post-Secondary Education Sandboxes

Post-Secondary Education Sandboxes are hosted by universities and the NSCC which brings together students, mentors, faculty and advisers to support the development of business and social concepts from idea to execution. There are now ten Sandboxes, including the new Science Unleashed: Research Growing the Economy (SURGE) Sandbox, that receive funding to support entrepreneurship-related activities and programming. LAE will continue to maintain and strengthen early stage innovation through Nova Scotia's sandboxes.

Implement experiential learning opportunities

The NSAA will introduce youth to careers in the skilled trades by working with industry and community organizations to provide experiential learning opportunities as part of the government's Building Vibrant Communities Initiative and other partnerships.

Increase participation in the apprenticeship system of underrepresented groups

The NSAA will develop and support initiatives to increase the participation of women, indigenous peoples, African-Nova Scotians and other currently underrepresented groups in the apprenticeship system.

Strategic Sector Growth – Research & Development and Innovation

LAE will develop programs that are focused on growing research and development, and innovation in Nova Scotia, to support inclusive economic growth. This outcome will be advanced through the delivery of the following key priorities:

Continued support for Post-Secondary Innovation Team/Working Groups

The Innovation Team consists of the 10 university presidents and the NSCC president, 6 government Deputy Ministers, and the Vice-President of Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Nova Scotia. The mandate of the Innovation Team is to identify ways post-secondary institutions can support and advance provincial priorities. The Innovation Team's first round of projects had measurable and successful outcomes that led to an expressed interest from the Province and the post-secondary institutions to continue collaboration through the Innovation Team. LAE will invest

in a new round of projects which will focus on supporting the Province's strategic priority - inclusive economic growth, as well as identify areas where efficiencies and benefits for the broader public can be achieved.

Support Research Nova Scotia (RNS)

In December 2018, RNS was created through provincial legislation. RNS will provide a coordinated approach to provincial research funding that will help Nova Scotia increase research capacity, develop a strategic approach to support the Nova Scotia research community and align funded research activity with Provincial priorities. RNS will work collaboratively with universities, the NSCC, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, businesses, and the not-for-profit sector to attract, retain, and attach highly educated and skilled people to research activity in the province, which supports government's inclusive economic growth priority.

DEPARTMENTAL EXPENSES SUMMARY

(\$ thousands)

	2018-2019	2018-2019	2019-2020
<u>Programs and Services</u>	Estimate	Forecast	Estimate
	(\$000's)	(\$000's)	(\$000's)
Administration	802	712	734
Corporate Policy and Services	4,134	3,970	3,914
Safety	15,569	15,006	15,661
Labour Services	7,595	7,358	8,118
Skills and Learning	141,350	140,279	143,105
NS Apprenticeship Agency	17,988	17,145	18,389
Higher Education	57,515	44,116	55,332
School Cap Amortization	5,572	5,572	5,280
Community College Grants	138,848	138,848	145,676
Total – Departmental Expenses	389,373	373,006	396,209
Assistance to Universities	425,272	430,862	427,782
Total LAE and Assistance to Universities	814,645	803,868	823,991
Ordinary Recoveries	-141,262	-140,701	-142,863
Ordinary Recoveries – ATU	-20,217	-15,107	-9,508
<u>Funded Staff (# of FTEs)</u>			
Department Funded Staff	266.2	247.7	266.2

Note:

For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2

For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1

