



**Office of Gaelic Affairs  
Oifis Iomairtean na Gàidhlig**

**Plana-Iomairt  
Business Plan**

**2009 - 10**

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## **I. Teachdaireachd o ’n Mhinistear agus o ’n Fhear-Stiùiridh Message from the Minister and CEO**

Nova Scotia is a province of great cultural diversity, which strengthens us both socially and economically. The Office of Gaelic Affairs contributes to our sustainable competitiveness by supporting and investing in a unique provincial resource, our Gaelic language and culture.

In 2008 we worked closely with organizations and individuals in the Gaelic community to research, collaborate and plan for the careful development of our Gaelic resource. We continued to strengthen our collaboration with other government departments and our international partners.

Throughout 2008, the OGA focused on three core areas:

- Community engagement, collaboration and program development
- Communication, dialogue and partnership with other provincial government departments and agencies
- Further strengthening and developing relationships with international partners in Scotland and Ireland

Gaelic language and culture contributes \$23.5 million each year to our provincial economy. It brings repeat visitors back to Nova Scotia who are part of our community of Gaelic learners, musicians, singers and dancers. It is a cultural well for products and services and is a glue that binds the generations and builds community in our urban and rural areas. It is a language and culture we share with our international partners in Scotland and Ireland, and with many of Gaelic heritage throughout North America.

In 2008-09 we focused on how to better build this resource. Drawing inspiration from the Community Development Policy and the guiding principles for Community Development in Nova Scotia, we held several meetings and two collaborative “Ceilidh House Meetings” in which we had hundreds of conversations on our vision and shared responsibility for the Gaelic resource. Action items from the discussion are on-going and led by community organizations and individuals, with support from the Office of Gaelic Affairs.

In partnership with the Department of Education, we developed a bilingual place map of Nova Scotia. A booklet will also be produced that will tell the story of Gaelic in Nova Scotia, which will be a tremendous resource for schools and community learning groups.

In 2008-09 the Office of Gaelic Affairs assisted 20 organizations with 23 community Gaelic projects. It also supported Comhairle na Gàidhlig (The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia), Gaelic consultation for the international festival Celtic Colours, Irish language instruction, Gaelic teacher training and the conferences Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig at St. F.X. University. Through the Memorandum of

Understanding with Highland Council, Scotland, the Office of Gaelic Affairs supported the placement of a young Gaelic speaker at Nova Scotia Highland Village, the first-ever Gaelic film festival in Nova Scotia and a craft residency exchange between Dalbrae Academy and Ardnamurchan High School in Scotland.

The Office of Gaelic Affairs has worked with other government departments to raise awareness of Gaelic language and culture, including the Department of Rural and Economic Development, Department of Education, Tourism, Culture and Heritage and Intergovernmental Affairs. In 2008-9 the OGA has worked to extend customary language status to Gaelic and Mi'kmaw language. The Heritage Strategy included the first ever Executive Summary in Gaelic. The OGA provided consultation to the Department of Education on their Gaelic Cultural Studies program, teacher training and Gaelic language program grants. The OGA has adapted Economic Development's Collaborative Strategies process to a Ceildh House Meeting format as a way for our office to consult with community groups and are working with Intergovernmental Affairs on the development of the MOU with Highland Council and strengthening the Provinces ties with Scotland. Most recently, the OGA worked with community based language tutors to put on a Gaelic language training workshop. Twenty three tutors and/or instructors gathered at the Gaelic College to review approaches to language teaching. This was perhaps the first time that such a training/sharing session occurred, certainly in Nova Scotia, through the medium of Gaelic.

It is the belief of the OGA that linguistically, culturally, socially and economically, Gaelic makes significant contributions to the fabric of what constitutes Nova Scotia.

This document represents a work plan that encourages transparency and openness, so that Nova Scotians may assess and hold accountable the work of this Office over the next year.

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Honourable Maureen MacDonald  
Minister

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Lewis MacKinnon  
CEO

## **II. Dùil/Aithris-Rùin/Òrdugh Vision/Mission/Mandate**

### **Dùil/Vision**

Nova Scotia acknowledges values and invests in Gaelic language and culture which contribute to the diversity, vibrancy and continued growth and development of the province.

### **Aithris-Rùin/Mission**

The mission of the OGA is to work with Nova Scotians in the development and promotion of Gaelic language and culture in the Province.

### **Amasan/Mandate**

The Governor in Council on the report and recommendation of the President of the Executive Council dated August 15, 2006, pursuant to Section 4B of Chapter 376 of the Revised Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1989, the Public Service Act, and to all other authority in her vested, effective December 4, 2006, is pleased, to:

- (a) create the office of the public service and prescribe the name of the office to be the Office of Gaelic Affairs;
- (b) direct that the Office of Gaelic Affairs be presided over by the Minister responsible for Gaelic Affairs who shall be appointed by the Governor in Council, and who may be described as the Minister of Gaelic Affairs;
- (c) direct that the Minister of Gaelic Affairs shall have the supervision, direction and control of all offices and matters relating to the Office of Gaelic Affairs and shall supervise the performance of the functions of the Office of Gaelic Affairs;
- (d) appoint a Minister of Gaelic Affairs;
- (e) direct that such other officers and employees as are required for the purpose of the Office may be appointed pursuant to the Civil Service Act, and that Act applies to those employees.

## **VI. Dealbhadh an t-Suidheachaidh Planning Context**

The creation of a Ministry of Gaelic Initiatives and subsequent establishment of the Office of Gaelic Affairs by Government Order in Council, December 4, 2006 indicates government's sensitivity and commitment to the Nova Scotia Gaelic community. The OGA works with the Nova Scotia Gaelic community, government departments, agencies, organizations and other local and international partners to assist in the development of strategies and initiatives to expand and enhance government's support of Gaelic language and culture in the Province.

Gaelic language and culture have been a part of the Province's diversity since at least the late 1700s. Gaelic speakers from the Islands and Highlands of Scotland settled and developed communities in the eastern mainland and on the Island of Cape Breton. In the early stages of settlement, Gaelic was passed on from generation to generation through the institution of the "taigh céilidh" or the "visiting house". It was here that local news, songs, stories, music and dance were disseminated. Major socio-economic change in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the collapse of this societal structure that organically supported the transmission of language and associated traditions that were on the whole oral in nature. Institutionally, Gaelic language was not reflected in concrete or meaningful ways that resonated with Gaelic speaking communities. Major language shift and cultural decline was the ensuing result.

Since the early 1920s, Gaelic speakers across the Province have been advocating government for official recognition and support in an attempt to maintain and develop Gaelic language and culture as part of the province's unique diversity. Many individuals over subsequent generations have been involved in this effort. In 1997, the Department of Education initiated the first ever Gaelic Studies Curriculum for High School grades. In the Spring of 2002, a study titled, Gaelic Nova Scotia: An Economic, Cultural and Social Impact Study was tabled as a curatorial report by the Museum of Nova Scotia. In November - December 2002, 10 community consultation meetings were held across the Province. Consultations focused on what community members valued as important to the development and advancement of Gaelic in Nova Scotia. As a result a strategy document, titled, Leasachadh agus Gléidheadh na Gàidhlig ann an Albainn Nuaidh (Developing and Preserving Gaelic in Nova Scotia) was created and adapted as part of the ongoing work plan for Comhairle na Gàidhlig (The Gaelic Council of Nova Scotia).

In 2002, under the auspices of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, the province signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd (The Highland Council of Scotland). In 2004, a position of Gaelic Cultural Officer was established and located in Cape Breton. Also in 2004, the province committed to the GAP (Gaelic Activities Program) fund for Gaelic language based

learning initiatives. In February 2006, a Ministry for Gaelic Initiatives was created. In June 2006 a bilingual boundary sign policy was developed and implemented by the Department of Transportation and Public Works for the traditional Gaelic areas of the Province. In December 2006 an Office of Gaelic Affairs was formally announced.

It is difficult to determine the total number of Gaelic speakers in the province because no formal census specific to the Gaelic community has ever been done. Estimates from the community indicate that there are approximately 2000 speakers of Gaelic. While the numbers of speakers indicates a perilous position for the language, some 227,000 Nova Scotians claim to be descent from Gaelic speaking settlers and a much larger number of Nova Scotians are involved in cultural activities, i.e. music, song, dance, which stem from the Gaelic language. The Gaelic Nova Scotia study links a \$23 million economy with Gaelic and Gaelic-related events, business and activities in the province.

There are 28 Gaelic-related societies, organizations and institutions in the Province. Gaelic language instruction and cultural studies is offered in 9 schools in the province at varying levels. Gaelic Studies is offered in 9 schools and is expanding. There are 13 communities across the province where adult immersion learning programs are ongoing.

It is in the context of responding to community initiative and identifying the valuable contributions that Gaelic language and culture make to the life of the Province that the Office of Gaelic Affairs was established. The Office will work to assist in building greater awareness and understanding of Gaelic to the benefit of Nova Scotians and visitors, acting as an advocate and supporter so that the Gaelic Community will realize its full potential in a diverse, multi-lingually and multi-culturally sensitive society.

## **VII. Amasan Roi-innleachd, Roinntean Mheadhoin a' Ghìomhachais Strategic Goals, Core Business Areas**

### **Strategic Goals**

The strategic goals of the Office of Gaelic Affairs are to continue to support and advance government priorities and objectives. To assist in achieving this, the following will be focused on:

1. Public Relations – develop greater awareness in community of Gaelic's contributions to community development
2. Community Development - work with Gaelic community of Nova Scotia to foster language learning opportunities, skill development and capacity building
3. Partnerships – build upon intergovernmental, institution and organization partnerships in an effort to support Gaelic community and Gaelic language acquisition and usage

### **Core Business Areas**

Under Strategic Goals the OGA will focus on the following Core Business Areas:

#### **Core Business Area 1 – Liaison & Communication**

1. Developing liaison relationships within both provincial and federal governments
2. Expand and further development Communication vehicles that link and connect OGA with constituency, stakeholders and partners

#### **Core Business Area 2 – Program Grants, Languages Initiatives and Facilitation**

1. continuation and assessment of Gaelic Activities Program grant funding
2. further development and expansion of community-based Gaelic language support programs
3. work in facilitation capacity with community groups involved in Gaelic development
4. continue to further quantify research to assist in strengthening foundation and strategic allocation of resources

#### **Core Business Area 3 – Partnerships and Networks**

1. further strengthen and development partnerships networks at community level, government and internationally that focus on community based Gaelic language development, educational initiatives and broader community appreciation and support for Gaelic language and culture

## VIII. Tomhaisean na h-Obrach agus Prìomh-Amasan Performance Measures and Priorities

### Strategic Goal 1 – Public Relations

**Priority** – Build greater awareness in broader community of Gaelic’s contributions to community development via liaising, advisory-type collaboration, enhanced communications and marketing of Gaelic

Measure	Year	Target	Strategic Activity
Advisors & liaison to gov’t partners	2009 – 10	Intent is to create stronger liaisons and working partnerships with provincial gov’t Depts such as Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Economic Development, Education, and the Department of Canadian Heritage, Gov’t of Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- contact Tourism, Culture and Heritage and request a Liaison person be assigned to the OGA</li> <li>- establish an advisory person for Dept of Education from OGA</li> <li>- request meeting to explore collaboration opportunities b/w OGA &amp; Dept of Canadian Heritage</li> </ul>
Communications	2009 – 10	Expand OGA communications network via weekly Media Monitoring report, quarterly newsletter, monthly Lunch & Learn Gaelic educational sessions & promotion of Gaelic image as representative of the Gaelic Community in the province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- utilize OGA presentations as opportunity to expand Media Monitoring e-mail contact list</li> </ul>

Marketing	2009 - 10	Promote the work of the Office via newspaper articles in local periodicals and promote the Gaelic image for the province via collateral, i.e. pins, mugs, t-shirts, flags, banners, etc.	- include articles in periodicals such as The Casket, The Oran and the Victoria Standard
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## Strategic Goal 2 - Community Development

**Priority** – Assess programs to better support and foster Gaelic language learning via community programs

Measure	Year	Target	Strategic Activity
Review Gaelic Activities Program Grant Funding program	2009 – 10	Review Gaelic Activities Program funding to ensure program better reflects Gaelic language acquisition and usage - facilitate the development of Gaelic teaching aids and materials for Gàidhlig aig Baile - Bun is Bàrr review and continuation	- review revisions with community stakeholders and groups to ensure program is focused on what is happening at the community level - set up a working committee of Gaelic instructors and resource persons to assist with development of Gaelic materials - call for expression of interest for Gaelic apprentices
Social Networking	2009 – 10	Expand e-mail contact list to ensure wider communication	- add to e-mail contact list throughout year via presentations to groups, organizations, individuals, etc.

Facilitation & Research	2009 - 10	Effect survey to determine numbers of speakers of Gaelic spoken in province, participation levels in cultural expression, attitudes, impacts on community	- hire Researcher and Statistical Officer by July 1, 2009
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### Strategic Goal 3 - Partnerships

**Priority** – develop partnerships within government, organizations and institutions and international partners that will support Gaelic community and assist in Gaelic language acquisition and usage

Measure	Year	Target	Strategic Activity
Further strengthen key partnerships	2009 – 10	- focus on key partnerships in gov't: Economic Development, TCH, Education and Seniors	- bring stakeholders together to discuss a Gaelic education plan - through liaison explore areas where Gaelic can be reflected through TCH initiatives - work in partnership with Economic Development to assist Gaelic community capacity building
Relationships with organization and institutions	2009 – 10	- continue to maintain good working relations and cooperative initiatives with provincial Gaelic organizations	

<p>Memorandum of Understanding (Nova Scotia &amp; Highland Council, Scotland)</p>	<p>2009 - 10</p>	<p>- further strengthen this relationship</p>	<p>- work in collaboration with IGA (Intergovernmental Affairs) to review MOU and draft go forward plan to present Highland Council counterparts</p>
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## **VIII. Roi-innleachd Comasan an Luchd-obrach Human Resource Strategy**

The OGA meets the objectives of the Corporate Human Resource Strategy of government in the following ways:

1. a talent management approach is used within the OGA to manage such areas as absences to due travel, sickness, cross training and support for initiatives
2. orientation, support and training for employees is determined at fiscal year outset and a plan and budget for this is developed
3. community being served by the OGA is reflected in the requirement that office hires promote and use Gaelic language during and throughout their work

## **IX.Suidheachadh a' Bhuidseid Budget Context**

### **Office of Gaelic Affairs**

	<b>Estimate 2008 - 2009</b>	<b>Actual 2008 - 2009</b>	<b>Estimates 2009 - 2010</b>
Gross Expenses	562	549	544
Funded Staff (FTEs)	4.5	3.3	5

