



Canadian
Manufacturers &
Exporters
Nova Scotian Division

Hiring Immigrants

Opening Doors to New Opportunities

A GUIDE FOR NOVA SCOTIA EMPLOYERS






The purpose of this guide is to encourage you to include immigrants in your recruitment and selection strategies. As an employer, you want to hire the right person for the job. That person could be an immigrant. As well, depending on your business strategies, you may want to incorporate an immigrant's international perspective into your operations to gain a competitive edge.

Not only do immigrants contribute to our labour market supply, they can possess knowledge, expertise, and skills that are advantageous to your business. In today's highly competitive global environment, companies seek new markets and customers worldwide to grow and be profitable. Immigrants from different cultural backgrounds can provide valuable insights into doing business in other parts of the world and serving customers with diverse needs.

This project was made possible through the support of the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia.

Canada

NOVA SCOTIA



Dedicated to the memory of David Richard "Dick" Smyth, Vice President, Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, Nova Scotia Division (CME). Dick was passionate about immigration in Nova Scotia for many years and came up with the idea for this project.

From 1990 to 1992, Dick served on the Board of Directors for the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA) in Nova Scotia. He was President of MISA from 1992 to 1995. At CME, Dick continued to strive to enhance immigration to Nova Scotia, was a volunteer on committees and a mentor for immigrant entrepreneurs. Dick recognized the social, cultural, and economic contributions immigrants make to communities and business.

Leanne Bartlett
Project Coordinator






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1 Immigration Matters



Immigration has always played an important role in Canada's population and labour force growth. Between 1991 and 2001, 978,000 immigrants joined Canada's workforce, representing 70 percent of the decade's total labour force growth of 1.4 million people. By 2011, the Government of Canada predicts that immigration will account for all of Canada's labour force growth.

More and more, immigration is playing a central role in Nova Scotia, as the province faces both demographic and economic change. Our labour force is shrinking and we need to introduce new workers to take advantage of economic opportunities and competitive advantages for Nova Scotia business. We need to ensure we have enough people, with the right skills, to fill the jobs available in Nova Scotia so we can compete in the international marketplace.

Nova Scotia's population is getting older, with deaths projected to outnumber births, for the first time, by 2007. Over the next decade, baby boomers will be retiring from our workplaces. When this occurs, there will be more people leaving our workforce than entering it.

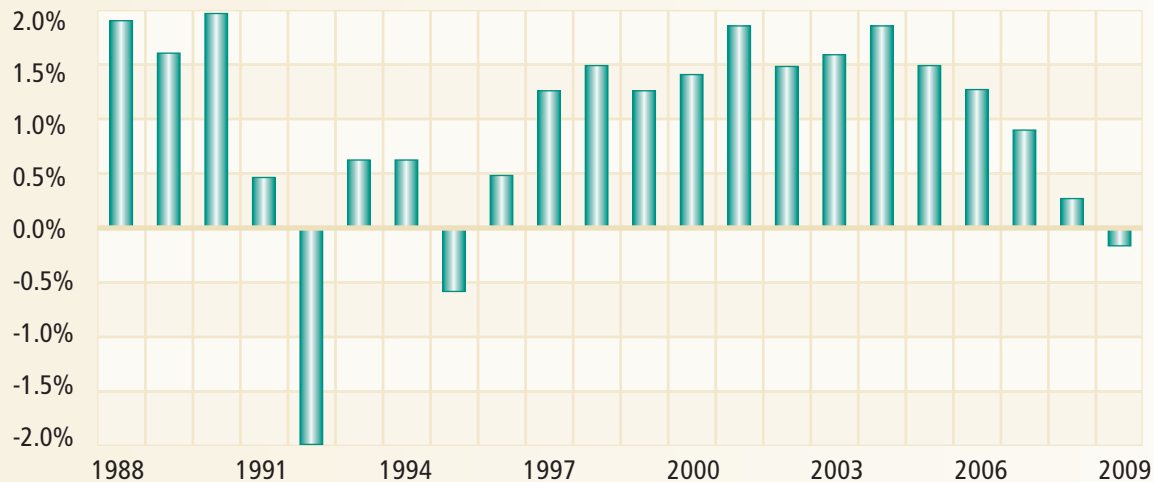


The effects of our aging population are not unique to Nova Scotia. Canada, as a whole, is experiencing the same demographic shift, as are other parts of the world. In Japan, for example, those aged 65 and older, past typical retirement age, account for 19.5 percent of the country's population. Workers over 65 account for 7.4 percent of the total workforce in that country, a figure expected to jump to 11 percent by 2015. We are facing a worldwide competition for a sufficient supply of skilled workers.


Is your organization prepared for demographic shifts?

Each year, Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) conducts a national survey that covers a variety of issues, including labour force requirements. In CME's 2004/2005 Management Issues Survey, members revealed that availability of skilled personnel is one of the three most pressing challenges that will reshape business operations within the next three to five years. Rising business costs and changing patterns of customer demand topped the list.

LABOUR FORCE GROWTH, Nova Scotia, 1987-2009



Nova Scotia's labour force growth is expected to drop below zero by 2009.



Availability of skilled personnel is one of the three most pressing challenges for business in the next three to five years.

In 2002, 46 percent (81,986) of all immigrants admitted to Canada had at least one post-secondary degree, compared to 22 percent of all Canadians.

Source: Citizenship & Immigration Canada (CIC), Facts and Figures 2002

Immigration is an obvious solution to the skills challenge, as most immigrants arriving in Canada are of working age, are highly skilled and educated, and are willing to adapt to the Canadian work environment. They also provide diversity of thought, culture and practices, which are beneficial in a global economy. A skilled and motivated labour force

contributes to economic growth and immigrants have the potential to make significant contributions to our workplaces and businesses.

Toronto, for example, has a robust economy, a large and diverse population, and lots of job opportunities. It is not a coincidence that Toronto also has the highest immigration level in Canada. It attracts about 42 percent of this country's immigrants and continued success in that city is, in many ways, tied to its immigrant population. Immigrant men and women bring new skills, business opportunities and innovative ideas, and they bring their families as well. Their husbands, wives, sons, and daughters add to a population's diversity, education system, and economy.

Vancouver and Montréal also attract a large portion of Canada's immigrants.

Vancouver's population has surpassed two million and the city continues to gain prominence as a financial and industrial centre. The city's cultural mosaic is shifting as well, as more immigrants arrive from Asia and other non-European areas. This has had a positive effect on the economy, as a variety of new goods and services are introduced to meet the needs of an increasingly multicultural population.

Montréal is home to 1.8 million people, or a quarter of the population of Québec, and is the third most common destination for immigrants to Canada. Besides being an important scientific, intellectual and cultural centre, the city boasts major manufacturing and service sectors, which employ more than 900,000. The region has made a successful shift to a knowledge-based economy focusing on telecommunications, aerospace, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and information technology.

These three Canadian cities, attracting almost three quarters of Canada's immigrants, demonstrate a strong correlation between high levels of immigration and economic vitality.



Dispelling Myths and Facing Realities

Immigration to Nova Scotia has declined steadily since the mid-90s, and our retention rate is low. Only about 40 percent of immigrants stay to live and work in Nova Scotia. The primary reason they leave is lack of meaningful employment in the province, an irony considering that we face skills and worker shortages in Nova Scotia.

We have to work harder to attract, retain, and integrate immigrants if we want to reverse a shrinking population and labour force. The private sector has a role to play by creating appropriate conditions, including employment opportunities.

Immigrants come from different countries and cultures but, like the Canadian-born population, they are looking to satisfy fundamental human needs, one of which is meaningful long-term employment. Research conducted by the Public Policy Forum and the Canadian Labour and Business Centre suggests that Canadian employers have positive attitudes about immigrants and immigration. However, many overlook immigrants in their human resource planning or do not hire immigrants at the level at which they were trained. In the Greater Halifax region, research shows that, while 95 percent of businesses think we need to hire more immigrants, the same 95 percent have never done so. With Nova Scotia's shrinking labour force, this pool of untapped talent represents a significant opportunity.

One common myth is that immigrants "steal" jobs from local residents. Another is that immigrants drive local residents out of the labour market by offering to work at rock-bottom wages. Neither is true. In fact, there are not a "fixed" number of jobs for anyone to take and immigrants can actually create jobs by removing skills shortages and adding to the region's output, setting up their own businesses, and creating more demand for goods and services.

Many Canadian employers overlook immigrants in their human resource planning or do not hire immigrants at the level at which they were trained.

Does your organization have difficulty filling job vacancies?

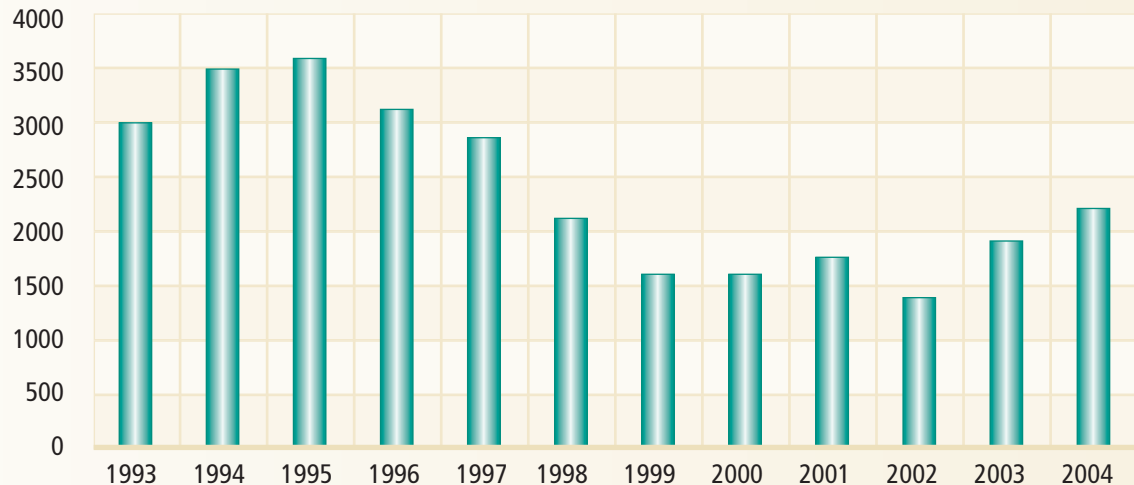
Are jobs left unfilled?

Are your recruitment practices barrier- and bias-free?

Do your recruitment practices need to be changed to tap the immigrant talent pool?

Immigration is part of the solution to ensuring a sufficient supply of skilled workers in Nova Scotia, however, higher levels of immigration alone will not be enough. Immigrants need to be more engaged in economic activity with employment that is suitable to their qualifications. If they are the most qualified candidates for job opportunities, they need to be given a chance to prove themselves in our workplaces.

NOVA SCOTIA IMMIGRATION TRENDS





Of the 707,000 immigrants to Canada from 2000 to 2002, 61% entered through the "economic class". This group includes skilled workers (and their dependents) who are selected on the basis of the knowledge, skills, and experience deemed necessary and appropriate for Canada's labour market. It also includes investors, entrepreneurs, and self-employed immigrants.

Source: Citizenship & Immigration Canada (CIC), Facts and Figures 2002

The intention of this booklet is to encourage you to consider hiring immigrants. Do not screen them out without even reviewing their job applications or interviewing them. If you restrict your recruitment and selection processes, you may be screening out the best candidate for the job and disqualifying someone who could otherwise become a valuable employee.





Why Hire Immigrants?

A 10 percent increase in immigration is correlated with a one percent increase in exports.

Immigrants develop export opportunities

Immigrants bring links to other countries that can be used to boost exports of goods and services. They can bring technical skills, linguistic diversity, international experience, and commercial contacts that can reduce the transaction costs of trade and expand the market.

Acadian Seaplants Limited (ASL), based in Nova Scotia, actively hires immigrants to expand its export markets. Located in Dartmouth, ASL is an entrepreneurial and technology-based company that specializes in the manufacturing of seaweed-based products and ingredients for food, botanical and agricultural markets worldwide.

"Since we export to 70 countries, we have a great need for employees with different languages and cultural backgrounds to assist us in entering overseas markets in an effective manner."

Linda Theriault, Acadian Seaplants Limited, Dartmouth

As part of the company's strategic plan, ASL identifies countries in which it wants to establish export markets and hires immigrants to assist with the sales and marketing aspects necessary to make in-roads into those countries. Immigrant workers' familiarity with business practices and knowledge of languages enables the company to enter new markets much faster and more efficiently than it otherwise could.



Immigrants enhance customer relations

Companies can also capitalize on immigrants' cultural knowledge to develop and strengthen customer relationships.



Developing personal relationships is often critical to establishing and building lucrative opportunities in emerging international markets. Organizations with knowledge of different cultures, languages and ways of doing business have a real advantage. Employees who share similar cultural backgrounds with potential customers can establish understanding, build trust and solidify important business relationships.

Read more about how organizations in Nova Scotia have benefited from immigration. See "Success Stories" on page 34.



Immigrants fill skills and labour force gaps

While industry worries about worker shortages, many immigrants already have the skills for the job in the same areas. We need to welcome internationally-trained university professors, machinists, construction workers, and other groups into our workplaces.

SKILLS MOST IN SHORT SUPPLY, according to CME's 2004-2005 Management Issues Survey, are as follows:

• Craft Workers	• Plant Managers
• Electricians	• Product Designers
• Engineers	• Sales & Marketing
• Entry-level employees	• Tool & Die Makers
• Equipment Operators	• Welders
• Machinists	

Some sector-governing bodies, like the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, have already recognized the potential effects of demographic change in this province and are taking innovative measures to attract and integrate internationally-trained medical professionals. The College is using immigration to meet labour force needs in the health care sector.



Immigration can be a solution for business as well. For example, Nova Scotia's forestry industry will undoubtedly suffer a worker shortage if current trends continue. Job availability has increased from 8,600 to 13,000 over the last 10 years, while the pool of available workers has decreased.

As a \$1.4 billion industry, forestry makes a significant contribution to Nova Scotia's economy. If the industry suffers from a worker shortage, then the province, as a whole, suffers.

CAPP ADDRESSES NOVA SCOTIA PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE

With a physician shortage already present and 47,000 Nova Scotians without a family physician, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia has recognized the need to tap into a pool of talent that has been sadly underutilized in Canada.

In May 2005, the College launched a new program that will assess the clinical skills of internationally-trained doctors who wish to become licensed in Nova Scotia. The Clinical Assessment for Practice Program (CAPP) also includes monitoring and mentoring components to help those who pass the assessment become familiar and comfortable with practicing in this province.

CAPP will lead to improved access to medical care, especially in rural areas of Nova Scotia where the need is greatest.

www.cpsns.ns.ca





Immigrants possess qualities that are needed to compete in the global marketplace

Aside from the experience and knowledge they bring, immigrants have other characteristics and traits that are needed to compete in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

It goes without saying that immigrants are adaptable and take risks. Immigration is by definition a large-scale change. Immigrants decide to leave the familiar surroundings of their homeland, weigh their options and ask themselves questions like "why do I want to leave, what am I looking for, and where can I find it". Then they leave for an uncertain future in a new country, with different people, customs, and systems. Once they have landed in their new country, they start a new life. They have to find employment, housing, health care services, transportation, social connections, as well as adjust to new systems and customs.

By necessity, immigrants are resilient, open to change, and willing to learn.

Immigration is an enormous process that requires tremendous strength, courage, and ability to adapt to change. In today's global environment, where business has to adapt and take risks to be competitive and move forward, having employees who are open to change and learning is a competitive advantage.



Immigrants expand the economy

Immigrants can create jobs directly by setting up their own businesses and employing Nova Scotians.

Indirectly, immigrants expand the economy by increasing demand for goods and services in this province. They become consumers who pay taxes, buy houses and shop, like everyone else.

A growing population and labour market is far more attractive to new industries and young professionals than a declining population. The bigger and better-educated the population, the more importance it will be given by others. It will create and attract more capital, and more funds will become available for health, education, and research.



Wadih Fares


WADIH FARES: Employing Nova Scotians

When Wadih Fares finished high school in 1975, he left Lebanon and headed to Halifax. He attended Dalhousie University, obtained an engineering degree, and today is becoming one of the biggest residential and commercial developers and managers in Nova Scotia. His company, W.M. Fares and Associates, has 19 permanent employees, and has designed and built thousands of townhouses and condominiums throughout Halifax and Atlantic Canada, including most of the commercial space in the Bayers Lake shopping development.

Mr. Fares' building design, development and management business creates many jobs, putting everyone from architects and lawyers to plumbers and labourers to work on projects.



2 Hiring Immigrants



There is no special process for hiring immigrants who are already in Nova Scotia. They are permanent residents of Canada and are entitled to work in the country. You review their job applications and conduct interviews with them as you would with Canadian-born residents.

If you want to verify an individual's international academic credentials or assess a person's English ability, you can incorporate these steps into your hiring process like other "optional" steps that already exist. That way, the process becomes familiar to your human resource people and immigrants are not overlooked for job opportunities.

To access a broader pool of qualified applicants and make more effective use of your human resources, you should ensure that your employment policies and practices are clear, consistent, and fair. The basic process is to ask if a particular practice promotes or hinders equality.



For example, your recruitment process may not attract applications from immigrants. This may be because of the recruitment methods being used. It may be necessary to go where the designated groups are to ensure they are aware of opportunities and feel welcome and are encouraged to apply.

Casting a wider net for talented people does not mean that competency standards should be or need be compromised.

RECRUITING DIVERSE CANDIDATES REQUIRES USING DIVERSE RECRUITING PRACTICES.

- Does your organization advertise in ethnic media?
- Has your organization ever contacted the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA) for candidate referrals?
- Do your organization's executives or managers participate in networking sessions, committees, community groups, or cultural events that involve immigrants?
- Does your organization's recruitment strategies include targeting international students at local universities and community colleges?
- Has your organization connected with regional development agencies in Nova Scotia that are active in immigration?
- Has your organization sponsored events with immigrant community groups or associations?

Would you rely on a single vendor for a critical commodity for your business?

Then why would you rely on a single source for recruiting employees?



For regulated professions (either by government or self-regulating), you or the candidate must first contact the professional agencies or regulatory bodies to have the candidate's credentials reviewed.

You can search for professional associations in Nova Scotia at: www.cicic.ca/professions/indexe.stm

Assessing International Qualifications

Recent skilled immigrants to Canada face two major hurdles to continuing their professional careers in this country: difficulty transferring their international credentials and lack of Canadian work experience. As a result, government and other organizations have implemented initiatives and programs to help immigrants overcome barriers to obtaining employment in their fields.

There are a number of ways you can determine whether an immigrant meets your needs.

Assessing International Academic Credentials

If you are interested in knowing more about a particular immigrant's educational background, you can start by having the person's international academic credentials verified and compared with the Canadian equivalent. World Education Services (WES), located in Ontario, performs evaluations of certificates, diplomas and degrees earned by skilled immigrants and its services are accessible to employers and job seekers across Canada. This service is an important tool to help you understand the academic credentials listed on the application in front of you.

The average processing time for an evaluation by WES is seven business days and the cost for a basic assessment is \$115 per application. You can visit www.wes.org or call 1-866-343-0070 for more information.

Other credential assessment services are listed in the Resources section.



Asking for Certification Documents

You can ask for certification or journeyman papers where applicable.

When hiring trades people, ask to see a Certificate of Qualification. The following trades require certification to work legally in Nova Scotia:

• Automotive Service Technician
• Automotive Service Technician (Service Station Mechanic)
• Bricklayer
• Construction Electrician
• Gas Fitter
• Oil Burner Mechanic
• Plumber
• Power Engineer
• Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic
• Sprinkler System Installer
• Truck and Transport Mechanic

For assistance with qualification assessment, skills upgrading and certification, contact the Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development Division, Nova Scotia Department of Education, at 1-800-494-5651.



Interviewing Immigrants

Through the interview process, you can evaluate whether the immigrant's skills and experience meet the requirements of a particular position.

To avoid misunderstandings during the interview process and ensure you do not eliminate the best candidate for the job, you should learn about differences in cross-cultural communication. For example, what would you think if someone entered your office for an interview but does not make eye contact with you? You may question the person's trustworthiness or interest in the job. However, in some countries, not making eye contact is a sign of respect. In this situation, not knowing about cultural differences may create bias in the selection process.

When you interview immigrants, an understanding of cultural differences allows you to make a better assessment of their behaviours and answers, and gives them an equal chance to show their skills and capabilities.

WHAT TO DO AND WHAT TO AVOID – When speaking with someone who speaks English as a second language

DO

Use clear language, pronounce words with care, and finish your sentences.

Speak more slowly (not more loudly)!

Encourage the person to ask questions or seek clarification. Explain that asking questions is O.K.

Use visual aids to assist with communicating your information (e.g. reports, maps, diagrams, etc.)

AVOID

Assuming that every communication issue is because of English not being the person's first language.

Using idioms, slang, jargon and acronyms (unless you check for comprehension and explain).

Assuming that, if there are no questions, then the person understands what you have said or explained. Check up on comprehension.

Making assumptions or generalizations. Treat each person as an individual.

Assuming the person will know Halifax Regional Municipality and Nova Scotia really well. Areas that may be new to the person could include: provincial history, politics, geography, holidays, popular culture.

Conducting Skills Tests

Your screening process can include skills tests for all job applicants to assess technical and other competencies.

Other Assessment Strategies

Other strategies you could use to assess international qualifications include:

- Referring candidates who require formal certification and licensing to provincial certifying or licensing agencies;
- Taking credentials at face value and focus on relevant experience and on-the-job demonstration of skills and competencies (instead of checking paper credentials); and
- Developing your own clearly defined occupational standards against which any prospective employee can be assessed.





Assessing English Ability

You may have an immigrant's English skills assessed through the Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment (CLBA). Eligibility requirements apply.

The CLBA was introduced in 1996 and is the nationally recognized standard for assessment of Adult English as a Second Language in Canada. It measures skills in four areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The CLBA:

- Is a task-based assessment;
- Assesses English proficiency from literacy to TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language);
- Tests English listening and speaking through a one-on-one interview;
- Tests reading through short answer and multiple choice questions;
- Tests writing by means of authentic life-related tasks.

For more information, contact the CLBA office at MISA in Halifax at (902) 423-3607 or info@misa.ns.ca



Developing a Culturally-friendly Organization

As with any employee, you want your immigrant employees to feel welcome in your organization. Immigrants have cultural differences from the mainstream norms and your current staff should accept and be open to these differences. This diversity can even be recognized and celebrated for the value it adds to your organization's culture. An atmosphere of acceptance and openness, in turn, further enriches and promotes your organization as one that is culturally friendly.

Diversity Training

You can provide training for existing employees to enhance understanding of different cultures. A common theme in diversity training is awareness - awareness of stereotypes, awareness of oneself, awareness of those different from you, and awareness of the commonalities that bind people together. A focus on cultural and other similarities must be included in any training to help employees build an area of common understanding and develop strategies for working together effectively.

Corporate Events

You can have corporate events or social activities for staff and encourage all employees and their families to attend. This interaction promotes increased awareness of cultural diversity and fosters a team atmosphere. For example, you could have a multi-cultural dinner for your employees to celebrate different foods and cultures from around the world.

MISA's Employment Services Unit (ESU) can assist with educating your organization about diversity in the workplace.

Call ESU at (902) 423-3607 to discuss your needs.





Developing Immigrant Employees

To develop your employees, including immigrant employees, and better reach organizational goals, you can offer various initiatives as part of your organization's human resource management strategy. You may need to develop and implement new initiatives, or modify existing ones, to help the immigrant employees individually and to embrace their diversity. Many of the following programs could and should be applicable to all employees.

Orientation Program

As part of your organization's human resource strategy, you should have an effective orientation program for all employees. This training period helps create awareness of the organizational and expected norms and practices across the organization.

Cultural Training

You can offer training to help immigrant workers understand the culture and communications in a Canadian workplace.



ARE YOU AWARE THAT CERTAIN BEHAVIORS MAY BE ROOTED IN CULTURE?

For example, time in Western cultures is a commodity to be used, spent and divided. Time is linear and finite. Cultures in other parts of the world, such as Africa or the Middle East, see time as more elastic or relative.

Mentoring Program

Mentoring is a valuable development tool for employees. It facilitates the transfer of information, the enhancement of skills and productivity, and the development of relationships. You can develop a program to match existing staff members with immigrant workers.

Mentors can:

- explain local business practices;
- facilitate skills enhancement and professional development;
- gain information about business practices in other countries;
- develop potential links to global markets;
- learn creative new ways of approaching professional challenges;
- gain better understanding of obstacles facing immigrants.

In return, the immigrant workers will:

- better understand the systems and culture of the workplace;
- receive moral support and encouragement;
- enhance their skills;
- be more productive.



Read about workplace diversification strategies used by organizations in Nova Scotia in "Success Stories" on page 34.



Language Training

You can help the immigrant enhance his or her English skills, if necessary.

LINC Training

If eligible, the immigrant can enroll in an English language-training program called Language Instruction for Newcomers in Canada (LINC), a program funded by the Government of Canada. Eligibility requires a Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment (CLBA), among other requirements. Immigrants interested in LINC should contact MISA at (902) 423-3607 to make an appointment for a CLBA. MISA will also provide referrals to one of the LINC schools in the Halifax Regional Municipality, where additional programs, including programs specifically designed for the workplace, have been developed to supplement the LINC training.

ESL (English as a Second Language) Tutoring Programs

If an immigrant does not qualify for LINC training, there are ESL tutoring programs that rely on volunteer tutors to assist immigrants in developing their language skills. The tutor is someone with whom to talk, share, and learn. Such ESL tutoring programs are offered by MISA, the Halifax Regional Library, and the Centre for Diverse Visible Cultures.

English in the Workplace Program

The Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC) offers an English in the Workplace program for employees requiring additional English training at your workplace. This is an initiative funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Education. An instructor conducts a needs assessment, develops a language-training plan, and delivers customized training to employees at the workplace. HILC also offers profession-specific language training. While there is no cost to employers, the program is delivered at the workplace and employees are expected to attend the sessions during regular working hours. For more information, call HILC at (902) 443-2937.

On-site ESL Program

If there is interest at your workplace, you can develop an on-site ESL program to help immigrant workers enhance their English skills.



Professional Development

You should offer professional development opportunities to all employees. Formal learning opportunities could include classroom-based or on-line courses, conferences and workshops, or special assignments.

Introduction to the Community

You can introduce an immigrant worker to various community groups, such as the town council and the lion's club. This would help make the immigrant feel comfortable, welcome, and appreciated.



"Trying Out" Immigrant Workers

MISA coordinates work placements through the New Beginnings Program (NBP). An immigrant is placed with a Nova Scotia employer for a 6-week unpaid work placement. The placement will give you an opportunity to try out a potential employee, with no obligation to pay or hire. There is no cost to employers, but the Canadian work experience that the immigrants gain is invaluable.

The NBP recognizes each "Host Employer" by presenting the organization with a plaque during a bi-annual event and by identifying the employer on MISA's website and in newsletters.

To get involved in the New Beginnings Program, call MISA's Work Placement Coordinator at (902) 423-3607. You can also visit MISA's website at www.misa.ns.ca



Hiring International Students

An international student is an individual who was born in another country and is currently living in Nova Scotia to study at a post-secondary institution in the province. An international student is neither an immigrant nor a permanent resident, but is certainly a "potential" immigrant.

International students have knowledge of foreign countries, cultures, and business practices that would undoubtedly benefit local business. As well, they are educated in Nova Scotia, are familiar with local culture, and have integrated into society through their university careers. Consequently, barriers that might otherwise present themselves as challenges to immigrants are minimized.

International students can apply for a work permit in Canada for two years after graduation, during which time they can submit an application for permanent residency. Some students may be required to return to their country of origin after their studies, such as students here on Commonwealth or Canadian International Development Agency scholarships, but others are not as restricted.

With numerous universities and a top-notch community college system, Nova Scotia attracts students from around the world. Research shows that, since 2001, the increase in number of international students coming to the province has been soaring at a rate of 24 percent a year and this represents a tremendous opportunity.

The province has recognized this opportunity and has a website for attracting international students to Nova Scotia, to both the post-secondary and public school levels. www.novascotiaeducation.com

Our post-secondary institutions are a rich source of skilled workers and future immigrants. Targeting international students and facilitating economic ties through employment opportunities would help keep them in the province. Gaining practical, hands-on work experience in Nova Scotia would not only help to start and advance their careers, it would boost their chances of obtaining permanent resident status and give them incentive to stay here instead of migrating elsewhere. This would, in turn, contribute to increased numbers of skilled immigrants in the province.

Steps to hire an International Student

1. Inform the student that (s)he has been chosen for the position.

This will allow the student to compile the necessary paperwork and fees to apply for a work permit once a formal job offer has been issued, as per Step 2.

If the student is unsure of what to do, (s)he can visit the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website at www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/offcampus-work.html

2. Prepare the job offer letter and include the following information:

The job title with a job description (duties and responsibilities);

The education, skills and experience required for the job;

A specific start date and the expected end date for employment;

The salary or wages that the worker will be paid, and other job benefits;


The name and address of the employer, the address of the work site, and the supervisor's contact information so that the job offer can be confirmed.



To help with launching and marketing its seaweed extract product in Asia, Acadian Seaplants Limited (ASL) hired an individual who graduated from a Nova Scotia university and is originally from Asia.

This person's language abilities and business contacts will provide the company with tremendous insight and help ASL realize continued export success.

Read more about ASL in "Success Stories" on page 38.

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3. A work permit can take up to 51 days to process because applications are mailed to the Case Processing Centre (CPC) in Vegreville, Alberta. However, if you need the student to start as soon as possible, you can do the following:

Ensure that you have a specific start date identified in the job offer and explain why is it necessary to start on that date (i.e. project deadlines, seasonal demands for staff, fixed training and orientation dates, strong need for position to be filled ASAP, etc.).

Encourage the student to visit the nearest immigration office and arrange an appointment with a Citizenship and Immigration Officer instead of mailing the application and paperwork.

- In Halifax, the address is: 1741 Brunswick Street, Suite B110.
- Meeting with an officer and having the paperwork processed in the city is faster than having it mailed to Alberta for processing.
- Inform the student that (s)he will have to pay the fees (cash or credit) at the immigration office if approved for the work permit by the Officer.
- If the application is being mailed to the CPC in Vegreville, the student should pay the fees at a bank.

For more information, visit the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website:
www.cic.gc.ca/english/work/employer-1.html

VARIOUS POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS IN NOVA SCOTIA

have services for international students and you can contact these schools with questions on hiring international students.

International Centre

Saint Mary's University

Halifax, Nova Scotia

Tel: (902) 491-8692

international.centre@smu.ca

International Student Advisor

Acadia University

Wolfville, Nova Scotia

Tel: (902) 585-1690

international@acadiau.ca

International Student Advisor

Mount Saint Vincent University

Bedford, Nova Scotia

Tel: (902) 457-6130

Paula.Barry@msvu.ca

Student Employment Centre

Dalhousie University

Halifax, Nova Scotia

Tel: (902) 494-3537

student.employment@dal.ca



Recruiting Abroad

If you have specific human resource needs that cannot be filled by a Canadian, then you could recruit from abroad. You can do this either through the Temporary Foreign Worker program administered by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), or through the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP), which is the primary vehicle for recruiting immigrants to this province. In both cases, you must advertise provincially and nationally to prove and substantiate that there is no appropriate candidate in Canada to meet your needs.

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

This program is a vehicle through which you can fill skills and labour force shortages. As an employer, you are required to submit specific documentation to HRSDC for assessment, including proof of an unsuccessful job search in Canada for a worker to do the job at a fair salary, and the job offer to the potential foreign worker. To find out more about the application process, call HRSDC in Halifax at (902) 426-8229 or visit www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/program/fw.shtml

Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP)

In 2002, Nova Scotia signed an agreement with CIC to allow the province to have a more active role in selecting immigrants who wish to live in the province. The program is designed to help Nova Scotia employers fill skills shortages in the permanent workforce and to create economic benefit for the provincial economy. This program became operational in July 2003 and allows the province to nominate up to 1,000 immigrant candidates over 5 years. Nominees accepted under NSNP will become permanent residents of Canada.

There are currently two categories or "streams" through which the province can nominate candidates directly related to employment. The economic stream and the skilled worker stream are described in detail on the next page.

NOVA SCOTIA NOMINEE PROGRAM: ECONOMIC STREAM

Description	Requirements	
<p>The Economic Category was established to welcome experienced managers and business owners, who do not qualify under the federal immigration entrepreneurial category and wish to settle in Nova Scotia. This will assist in creating economic benefit for the provincial economy.</p> <p>The advantage of this category for the applicant is the orientation in basic Nova Scotia business practices, the contacts made, and in return the business gains the knowledge and international connections that the applicant brings with them.</p>	<p>Nominee must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have owned or operated a business, solely or in partnership, or have had two years of management experience during the last five years and managed five or more people; ■ Have a net worth of \$300,000 Canadian, legally accumulated; ■ Have basic literacy skills in English, or French and English, to be able to function in a job situation; ■ Be of legal working age; ■ Have a minimum education of Nova Scotia grade 12 equivalent; ■ Pay \$100,000 to cover employment and mentorship costs; ■ Be willing to accept a six-month, middle management, employment contract with an approved Nova Scotia business. 	<p>Business must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be a privately owned (not publicly listed) company, operating in the Province of Nova Scotia; ■ Have at least five full-time employees; ■ Complete the Business Application Form for the Nova Scotia Nominee Program; ■ Offer a Nominee employment, in a middle management position, for a minimum period of six months with a minimum salary of \$20,000; ■ Pay a fee of \$2,500 at time of application or \$3,250 once a Nominee is matched with your business. <p>Each business location may qualify for one Nominee at a time and may apply for a second Nominee 12 months after the completion of the employment contract from the previous Nominee.</p>



NOVA SCOTIA NOMINEE PROGRAM: SKILLED WORKER STREAM

Description	Requirements
<p>The advantage of this category is to nominate skilled individuals, who can assist our Nova Scotia companies to expand their businesses and continue to positively affect our economy. This is especially true when the business has been unable to find workers to do the jobs that are needed to enable the business to grow.</p>	<p>Nominee must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Have a guaranteed permanent, full-time job offer in a skill area where a Nova Scotia employer has identified a skill shortage;■ Have the ability to do the job (i.e. ability to be licensed where required);■ Have basic literacy skills in English, or French and English to be able to function in a job situation;■ Be of legal working age;■ Have a minimum education of Nova Scotia grade 12 equivalent.


Applications for the NSNP can be obtained from Cornwallis Financial, the contracted file preparer at www.cornwallis.com

For more information on the NSNP, visit www.novascotiaimmigration.com





3 Success Stories



Many organizations in Atlantic Canada have been successful in hiring immigrants and recognizing the strengths and benefits these workers bring. Here are success stories from which we can all learn in search of our own similar successes.



HMJ Consulting

When recruiting new employees, HMJ Consulting hires the most qualified person for the job. With eight employees in Nova Scotia, the company has hired immigrants in the areas of science and engineering.

Initial contact for immigrant job candidates is made through MISA. HMJ's interview process involves a formal interview with two partners, with reference checks and credential verifications to follow. If an interviewee does not speak fluent English, the interviewers are patient and reassure the job applicant that having less proficient English skills is acceptable. The employer realizes that practice in the workplace, and heightening self-confidence, quickly advances this skill level.

To help an immigrant worker adjust to the workplace, HMJ has a mentoring and close supervision program that aims to ensure the employee is not left adrift and frustrated. The mentor can explain local business practices, and provide encouragement and moral support. Since the company needs to demonstrate staff's credentials to potential clients and comply with legal requirements in its engineering practice (a regulated profession), the employee is counseled and assisted through the process of securing the relevant licenses to practice.

In addition, HMJ Consulting organizes social activities on occasion and encourages all employees and their families to attend. Maintaining a fairly informal atmosphere of collegial communication and teamwork in the workplace fosters comfort for all to take part in discussions and problem solving. This builds mutual respect among all employees and provides a sense of pride and participation in the company's successes.

The company recognizes the benefits of having immigrants on its staff. For HMJ Consulting, these individuals bring excellent professional skills, a strong work ethic, and high productivity.

Provides clients with access to a full spectrum of engineering, environmental, and planning consulting services.

Halifax, NS
Tel: (902) 444-4650
hmj@hmjconsulting.ca

www.hmjconsulting.ca

"We hire from suitably qualified people to fill a position, and status as an immigrant is not relevant."



A customer contact center that provides customer care, human resources, and billing services to its clients, customers and employees.

Convergys markets its services in nearly 60 countries and serves companies in various industries, including telecommunications, Internet, financial services, and retail and e-commerce.

Dartmouth, NS
Tel: (902) 491-5980

www.convergys.com

"Our goal is to reach the best candidates. This requires the use of traditional and non-traditional recruitment techniques."

Convergys

In Nova Scotia, Convergys employs just over 4,000 people and, when hiring new employees, the goal is to reach the best candidates. In doing so, the company uses a combination of traditional and non-traditional recruitment techniques. Most methods fall into two categories: traditional and automated.

Traditional methods include: referrals; advertising; job fairs; and networking with community partners, such as MISA and YMCA Enterprise.

Automated methods of recruitment include: Convergys' website www.convergys.com; Careerbeacon.com; and HRSDC's online job bank.

Convergys hires immigrants on a regular basis in the role of Customer Service Associate and immigrant job applicants are often referred to the organization through MISA, university career fairs, or current employees. Partnering with community groups, like MISA, has been a vital part of Convergys' strategy to create a diversified workplace.




Diversity in the workplace is one of Convergys' seven core values and, as a result, the organization has implemented various initiatives into its operations.

- Each Convergys location has a Diversity Action Team that is responsible for fostering an inclusive work environment. The team promotes and brings awareness to individual and cultural differences.
- The organization offers diversity training to all employees during orientation and formal training is actually mandatory for all managers.
- On an annual basis, the company hosts a multi-cultural dinner for its employees to celebrate different foods and cultures from around the world.
- Convergys has dedicated the month of October as Diversity Month. There is a quiet room on site that can be used for prayer or reflection, and work schedules can be changed to accommodate employees' religious beliefs, like celebrating Ramadan.



Convergys believes in an environment where differences are valued and integrated into every part of the organization. Diversity in experiences, skills, and talents bring a broad range of perspectives to the task of understanding clients' needs. Having a diverse workforce, and managing it well, is a competitive strategy that not only helps to attract diverse clients but also contributes to the overall creativity of the organization.

Convergys values the unique combination of qualities and contributions that each individual brings to the workplace.



A manufacturer of marine, plant-derived products for global agricultural, health, beauty, brewery, and food industries.

Dartmouth, NS
Tel: (902) 468-2840
info@acadian.ca

www.acadianseaplants.ca

"These workers provide invaluable links to export markets, bring new and innovative ideas, and help other employees understand business practices in different countries around the world."



Acadian Seaplants Limited (ASL)

Acadian Seaplants Limited exports to 70 countries and is recognized globally as a leader in its diverse niche markets. The company employs 310 people in Nova Scotia and has hired immigrants in the areas of sales, marketing, research and development, and administration.

As part of the company's strategic plan, senior management identified several countries in which to establish export markets and, as a result, hired immigrants to assist with sales and marketing to make in-roads into those countries. These workers have knowledge of business practices in different countries and are able to communicate in different languages, to enable the company to enter new markets faster and more efficiently.

At ASL, various programs are offered to all staff, regardless of nationality.

- Industry-specific language skills are developed through on-the-job training. The company offers technical training sessions on a regular basis, involving plant science and animal science lectures that all staff are encouraged to attend.
- There is a New Employee Orientation Program that covers: an overview of the company; how ASL conducts business; the corporate culture of the company; the company's Guiding Principles; and the company's expectations pertaining to local and international business practices.
- Workers at Acadian Seaplants can also benefit from on-site ESL (English as a Second Language) training and a mentoring program.



Dalhousie University

Located in Halifax, Dalhousie University has 3,600 employees and has hired immigrants for teaching, research, managerial, clerical, and computer-related positions.

The university is committed to the inclusion of all groups, including immigrants, on its faculty and staff. Included in this commitment is the encouragement and celebration of diversity in the workplace. For example, a diversity education program has been developed with the Maritime School of Social Work to accomplish specific goals with respect to diversity. All employees are encouraged to attend.

Benefits of participating in the program include: an increased awareness of diversity issues, initiatives, and responsibilities; exploration of individual and group experiences and attitudes; and an opportunity to develop strategies for implementing improvements with respect to diversity. The university also offers on-going Staff Training and Development programs, many of which include a diversity component.

The University encourages ongoing professional development, and a tuition waiver program is available for all faculty, staff and dependents. Dalhousie has resources for consulting with Departments on workplace issues that may arise and these resources are available through the Human Resource Development department.

□□■□ Success Stories



A research and teaching university with over 15,000 students who can choose from over 3600 courses from undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs.

Halifax, NS
Tel: (902) 494-8886
staffing@dal.ca

www.dal.ca

"Immigrants bring training, experience, and new ideas that can be built on."



A group of engineering and construction companies that provide engineering, procurement, construction, project management, and project financing services to a variety of industry sectors, including agrifood, heavy construction, mass transit, and power and water management.

Halifax, NS
Tel: (902) 492-4544

www.snc-lavalin.com

SNC-Lavalin

SNC-Lavalin companies employ hundreds of people in Nova Scotia and have hired immigrants for engineering, technical services, ship repair and maintenance, and purchasing. The organization has actually experienced a shortage of technical and engineering personnel in the province in specific fields of expertise and has hired immigrants to meet its needs.

In addition to a mentoring program, the company has a tuition reimbursement program for immigrant workers so these individuals can pursue professional development opportunities and enhance their skills.





RBC Financial Group

Like Dalhousie University, RBC Financial Group is committed to diversity and the inclusion of all groups, including immigrants, to the organization. Across Atlantic Canada, RBC employs approximately 3000 employees and, in Nova Scotia, has hired immigrants for various roles, from sales and service roles to management.

When an immigrant is hired at RBC, continuing education is very important, and many upgrade and certification courses are supported and paid for by the organization. These programs include courses like English as Second Language, financial planning programs and, in some cases, even MBA completion. There is also an Employee Care Program for employees and their families to help with both work-related and non-work-related issues.

Diversity is one of RBC's five core values. To promote greater understanding and awareness of diversity, the company has resources and ongoing training for all employees, including: online diversity and sensitivity training; an e-course on creating an inclusive environment; an internal website devoted to diversity; and local diversity representatives and councils.

From RBC's perspective, hiring immigrants will enable the organization to become more competitive and dynamic. In the old economy, competitive advantage was driven by capital assets like plants, equipment, and machinery. In the 21st century, competitiveness will derive from human capital and RBC believes the more diverse it is as an organization, the more intellectual capital it will have to draw upon. Immigration gives RBC a unique opportunity to welcome new ideas, approaches and energy to the organization.

A diversified financial services company that serves personal, business, and public sector clients worldwide from offices in more than 30 countries.

Halifax, NS
Tel: (902) 421-8330

www.rbc.com

"A diverse workforce helps to develop better products and services for an increasingly multi-ethnic, multi-lingual customer base."



4 Resources

Credential Assessment Services

Canadian Council of Professional Engineers (CCPE)

CCPE is the national organization of the 12 provincial and territorial associations that regulate the practice of engineering in Canada and license professional engineers. CCPE offers an Engineering International-Education Assessment Program (EIEAP).

180 Elgin St., Suite 1100, Ottawa, ON K2P 2K3
Tel: (613) 232-2474
evaluation@ccpe.ca
www.ccpe.ca

Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC)

CICIC collects, organizes and distributes information, and acts as a national clearing house and referral service to support the recognition and portability of Canadian and international educational and occupational qualifications.

95 St. Clair Avenue West, Suite 1106
Toronto, ON M4V 1N6
Tel: (416) 962-9725
info@cicic.ca
www.cicic.ca



College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia

The College offers a program to assess the clinical skills of internationally-trained doctors who wish to become licensed in Nova Scotia.

Clinician Assessment for Practice Program (CAPP)
Suite 200, 1559 Brunswick St.
Halifax, NS B3J 2G1
Tel: (902) 482-2917
www.capprogram.ca

International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS)

ICAS' credential assessment services are used by employers and organizations across Canada.

147 Wyndham Street North
Guelph, ON N1H 4E9
Tel: (519) 763-7282 or 800-321-6021
info@icascanada.ca
www.icascanada.ca

TechNova

An association representing certified technology professionals in Nova Scotia.

33 Alderney Drive, Suite 425
Dartmouth, NS B2Y 2N4
Tel: (902) 463-3236
info@technova.ca
www.technova.ca

World Education Services (WES)

WES provides foreign credential assessment services to immigrants, employers, academic institutions and occupational regulatory bodies across Canada.

CANADIAN OFFICE
45 Charles Street East, Suite 700
Toronto, ON M4Y 1S2
Tel: (416) 972-0070 or 866-343-0070
canada@wes.org
www.wes.org/ca



Recruiting

Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA)

MISA can provide candidate referrals for job openings. MISA also coordinates work placements through the New Beginnings Program (NBP). An immigrant is placed with a Nova Scotia employer for a 6-week unpaid work placement. The placement gives you an opportunity to try out a potential employer, with no obligation to pay or hire.

7105 Chebucto Road, Suite 201
Halifax, NS B3L 4W8
Tel: (902) 423-3607
info@misa.ns.ca
www.misa.ns.ca

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

This program, administered by HRSDC and CIC, is a vehicle through which you can fill labour shortages. As an employer, you are required to submit specific documentation to HRSDC, including the job offer to the foreign worker. To find out more about the application process, call HRSDC in Halifax at (902) 426-8229 or visit www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/program/fw.shtml

Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP)

This program is designed to help Nova Scotia employers fill skills shortages in the permanent workforce and to create economic benefit for the provincial economy.

For more information on the NSNP, visit www.novascotiaimmigration.com

Applications for the NSNP can be obtained from the contracted file preparer:

Cornwallis Financial Corporation
5475 Spring Garden Road, Suite 304
Halifax, NS B3J 3T2
Tel: (902) 429-3800
www.cornwallis.com



Immigrant-Serving Agencies

Centre for Diverse Visible Cultures

2786 Agricola Street
Bloomfield Centre, Room 213
Halifax, NS B3K 4E1
Tel: (902) 445-0946
cdvc@immigrants.ca
www.immigrants.ca

Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA)

7105 Chebucto Road, Suite 201
Halifax, NS B3L 4W8
Tel: (902) 423-3607
info@misa.ns.ca
www.misa.ns.ca

Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia

1113 Marginal Road
Halifax, NS B3H 4P7
Tel: (902) 423-6534
admin@mans.ns.ca
www.mans.ns.ca

Newcomer's Resource Centre

C/o Colchester Regional Development Agency
966 Prince Street
Truro, NS B2N 5C1
Tel: (902) 893-0140 or 866-227-6182
Contact@CoRDA.ca
www.corda.ca

YMCA Newcomer Services

3663 Dutch Village Road
Halifax, NS B3N 2T1
Tel: (902) 457-9622
www.ymcahrm.ns.ca



English as a Second Language (ESL) Training

ADULT ESL SCHOOLS

Eligibility requirements apply for the services offered through these ESL schools.

Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC)

HILC provides many different types of language training services, such as: Computer Assisted Language Training; English in the Workplace; Sector-specific language training (eg. English for Financial Workers, English for the Health Sector); English for Work and Business.

7105 Chebucto Place, Suite 201
Halifax, NS B3L 4W8
Tel: (902) 443-2737 or (902) 423-3607
www.hilc.ns.ca

Metro-Region Immigrant Language Services

The Metro-Region Immigrant Language Services (MILS) offers English as a Second Language to eligible landed immigrants. MILS is located in Dartmouth, but offers community outreach English language instruction to people in rural communities in Nova Scotia.

Forsyth Centre
136 Pinecrest Drive
Dartmouth, NS B3A 2J9
Tel: (902) 464-2868
contact@mils.ca
www.mils.ca

Queen Elizabeth High School

Offers language training levels 1-5 (beginner to advanced).

1929 Robie Street, Halifax, NS
Tel: (902) 421-7779

St. Agnes Multipurpose Centre

Offers language training at more advanced levels.

6903 Mumford Road, Halifax, NS
Tel: (902) 455-3681



ESL PROGRAMS IN LIBRARIES

For those who do not qualify for the language training through the ESL schools, branches of Halifax regional library offer ESL training programs. These programs provide one-on-one instruction with a volunteer tutor, in reading, writing, conversation, and basic life skills.

www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca

Bedford Branch

Tel: (902) 490-5757

Captain William Spry (Spryfield) Branch

Tel: (902) 490-5818

Halifax North (Gottingen St.)

Tel: (902) 490-5723

Keshen Goodman (Clayton Park) Branch

Tel: (902) 490- 6410

Spring Garden Road Branch

Tel: (902) 490-5706



Canadian
Manufacturers &
Exporters
Nova Scotian Division

Hiring Immigrants

Opening Doors to New Opportunities

A GUIDE FOR NOVA SCOTIA EMPLOYERS

