

START Guidelines

Department of Labour and Advanced Education /
Employment Nova Scotia LAE/ENS

Version 1.1
Effective: January 2013

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1.0 START Program Introduction

The START Program is administered by Employment Nova Scotia through the Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS). LaMPSS is a common method for administering Labour Market Program in Nova Scotia focused on providing consistency in processes and improving services to labour market agreement holders.

LaMPSS provides organizations with self-serve capability, enabling you to apply for funding online for some labour market programs as well as submitting required financial and activity reports online.

All organizations entering into an agreement for delivering Labour Market Programs in Nova Scotia must first be **registered as a LaMPSS organization**. This is a one-time registration process. Once registered, we will provide you with the ability to utilize the LaMPSS self service capabilities. If your organization has not previously registered with LaMPSS, you can request a LaMPSS registration form from the Provincial contact identified in these guidelines.

Please read this entire Program Guidelines Document. The information contained in this Program Guideline document will become part of an agreement with the Province for delivery of Labour Market Programs. If you require any assistance completing your application, please contact Employment Nova Scotia at **1-877-223-0888** and ask to be directed to a program officer for assistance. **On site application assistance is available to employers for this program.**

START

The START program will encourage employers to hire Nova Scotians requiring work experience and to register and employ apprentices.

Financial incentives will be provided to employers with a labour need willing to support ready-to-work Nova Scotians. Incentives will vary depending on the type of employment offered, the skill level of the employee and may include a retention bonus of \$500 per job opportunity.

The initial year will be a pilot project overseen by three divisions within the Skills and Learning Branch of Labour and Advanced Education: Employment Nova Scotia, Apprenticeship Training Division and Workplace Initiatives. In 2012/13, the pilot will be administered by Employment Nova Scotia staff around the Province, and a review of the pilot will determine the appropriate delivery method for the program in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and beyond.

Expected Results

- Successful matches made between employers and employees, resulting in ongoing employment and/or gained work experience.
- Potential Apprentices are matched with appropriate employers and progress through to achieving certification.
- Eligible Nova Scotians will acquire work experience needed for the benefit of both the employer and the employee, resulting in sustainable labour market attachment for Nova Scotians and appropriate labour market supply for Employers

1.1 Guiding Principles

- Both employers and participants benefit from this program
- Participants should be hired in positions that are part of the employer's normal business operations and not in specially created jobs or projects that would not be sustained without the financial assistance. (Exceptions will be made if the purpose for creating a specific job or project is to provide a short term on the job training experience to an unemployed Nova Scotians who will then transfer those skills to another employment situation)
- The subsidy should ideally lead to a permanent job with the funded employer or at minimum, a subsequent one with another employer, and should be provided to a client who will benefit from the work experience
- Employment must comply with provincial employment standards legislation
- The wage must meet the provincial minimum wage legislation as well as the market wage rate for the proposed employment
- Support to employers will enable them to take the time they need to develop the skills and abilities of a new employee thereby maximizing the employee's potential and contributing to the ongoing success of the enterprise
- Will not be used to fund municipal, provincial or federal positions that would normally be considered part of the public service;
- Will not be used for positions funded by any monies received through the provincial or federal government.

1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

1.2.1 Employment Nova Scotia (ENS):

Defines the program, sets baseline standards for service delivery and quality. This includes:

- Designing the program and setting program policy
- Developing reporting requirements and tools
- Assess applications and determine funding eligibility amounts
- Providing advice and guidance that clarifies ENS expectations
- Ensuring transparency and accountability by monitoring and evaluating delivery performance against agreement commitments and guideline compliance
- Issuing funds and recovering overpayments where required
- Providing employers with appropriate program guidelines
- Work with employers and applicants on application and report submission

Employers:

Employers are responsible for:

- Developing, supervising and providing a valuable work experience;
- Providing ongoing employment; except in exceptional cases (See Employment NS for details)
- Paying a full wage to the participant including the payment of mandatory employer related costs
- Provide feedback to the Branch on the program including how participants are progressing and the impact of the program on the business

1.2.2 Organization Eligibility Requirements

START is available to all businesses, organizations (Not for profit and Social Enterprises*) that have business locations and jobs in Nova Scotia.

Companies with headquarters outside of Nova Scotia are eligible to apply **only** if they also have a physical location in Nova Scotia. There will be a focus on Small to Medium sized enterprises.

*Social Enterprise – A business or organization operated for the purpose of addressing social, economic or environmental challenges.

1.2.3 Participant Eligibility Requirements

The START program will be available for residents of Nova Scotia who are:

- Canadian citizens, and permanent residents who are legally entitled to work in Canada
- Unemployed ("insured participant") as defined by Section 58 of the Employment Insurance Act.

START is also open to:

- Unemployed Nova Scotians who are not eligible for Employment Insurance benefits, particularly but not limited to the following groups.
 - These groups include: Aboriginal people; recent graduates (within the last 3 years), persons with disabilities; recent immigrants (within the last 3 years); African Nova Scotians; Acadian and francophone Nova Scotians; workers over 55 years of age; youth; women; income assistance recipients; people who were formerly self-employed; people who have been out of the labour market for a length of time, recent graduates or are entering the labour market for the first time, or who have low levels of literacy and essential skills.
- Potential Apprentices who are from a recognized under represented group (Woman, African Nova Scotians, Aboriginal Nova Scotians, Persons with Disabilities, those being hired by an employer in a rural area). **ONLY** new employer/apprentice registrations will be approved for the pilot year of the program unless approved by the Director of Apprenticeship Training. For a list of eligible rural areas and small population centers, please see the Apprenticeship section of document
- Unemployed International Graduates who meet the following requirements
 - Must have graduated from a Nova Scotia public post –secondary institution, such as a college, trade/technical school, university a private post –secondary institution

- OR a Nova Scotia private institution authorized under the Private Career Colleges Act to confer degrees but only if enrolled in one of the programs of study leading to a degree as authorized by NS and not in all programs of study offered by private institution
- Graduates must have studied in NS for at least 2 years (not necessarily consecutive). Normally this means the student graduated with a Canadian post – secondary credential that requires at least two academic years of study. However there is **one exception**. If the graduate completes a one-year graduate degree in NS after completing another program of at least one academic year in Canada. The graduate must earn both credentials from a post – secondary institution recognized by a province. Also, must finish the programs within two years of each other. This exception applies only to one-year graduate degrees. One year certificates and diplomas do not count.
- The Graduate must have a valid post – grad work permit
- The Occupation must be a NOC code O, A or B (professional occupations)
- The position must be for a minimum of one year

1.3 Apprentices:

The START program can be used to support employers hiring apprentices

For implementation in the pilot year 2013 only member of the following underrepresented groups will be eligible to apply; **Woman, African Nova Scotians, Aboriginal Nova Scotians, Persons with Disabilities or employers/apprentices in rural areas/small population centres. (as defined by Apprenticeship Training)**

Apprentices must be registered with the Apprenticeship Training Division in Nova Scotia prior to commencement of support and the employer must be in a position to enter into an apprenticeship agreement. Employers are eligible for multiple years of support provided the apprentice is progressing through the program (ie the required hours of technical training and work place practical hours) Information about registration can be obtained by calling Manager of Client services, Apprenticeship Training Division (424-3411). Once the apprentice is registered Apprenticeship Training will inform Employment Nova Scotia who will contact the employer to create the legal agreement and issue funds.

Employers must also;

- adhere to trade regulations for wages
- not be currently entered into a Joint Registration agreement
- consult with Apprentice Training Division if they wish to apply for a Ratio Variance (more than one apprentice per journey person)

1.4 Eligible and Ineligible types of employment

The employment offered under the program provides work experience and is not intended to be used for very large numbers of employees at one time. Wages earned by the individual are insurable and are provided directly by the employer.

Employment should be for a minimum of 30 hours per week. A minimum of 15 hours per week may be considered for recently established small businesses creating a part-time position which will eventually develop into a full-time position or in cases where special accommodations need to be considered for Persons with Disabilities, or in cases where this level of employment is the norm for the industry

The following employment is not eligible:

- Employment that is paid strictly on a commission basis, or by the kilometer

- Employment that is already funded through the LMDA, LMA, or through DCS
- Employment that will displace current employees, or those on layoff, vacation, parental or sick leave

The expectation is that the incentive will lead to ongoing employment with the employer or a subsequent employer. However, the incentive may be applied to a short term job* if:

- It is providing valuable work experience with transferable skills_ **AND**
- It will significantly improve the client's chances of obtaining subsequent employment with another employer.

OR

- The job is related to a priority sector or industry where a short term contract is being implemented (ie muskrat falls project)

*A short term job is defined as one that has a defined start and end with little likelihood of continuing.

Funding is not intended to take the place of summer employment programs

2 Applying for START Funding

2.1 Applying Online Using LaMPSS Self Serve

Once you are a registered LaMPSS user, you can apply for funding on line using the self service capability. To apply on line go to: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/lampss>.

2.2 Applying Using a Paper Application Form

Please Contact 1-877-223-0888 for application information

Applications will be submitted electronically and information **on site application assistance for employers is available please contact Employment Nova Scotia**

2.3 Completing an Application Form

This section provides supporting information required in completing the application form contents for

2.3.1 Organization Information

Enter the name and complete mailing address for your organization. If you are applying online, this information will be pre-populated.

If your organization name or mailing address has changed, please contact your Provincial contact to obtain a LaMPSS Registration Change form to update your information.

2.3.2 Project Details

Please provide the following:

Project Title	Provide a title specific to this position(s).
Agreement Start Date	Provide the proposed start date for position
Agreement End Date	Provide the proposed end date for position

Incentive amounts will be determined by Employment Nova Scotia and will be based on a variety of factors such as:

- Is the employer hiring apprentices
- ENS clients with lack of work experience
- ENS clients with challenges that prevent labour market attachment, and
- *whether the employer is in a priority sector (e.g. ocean technology, information and communication technology, financial services, clean technology, life sciences, aerospace and defense)

Incentives should be used to pay for individual's wages, Mandatory Employer Related Costs, training costs or other related costs associated with hiring of a new employee.

In situations where an employer has an immediate need to fill a vacancy and is unable to wait for a signed agreement the employer can discuss with Employment Nova Scotia to determine if the client can begin before the agreement is signed.

*employers hiring for jobs that support the priority sector should include information in their application that describes how.

2.3.3 Past Agreements

Please provide information relating to past agreements

2.3.4 Project Description

Please provide the following information:

- Duration of agreement (in weeks).
- Client’s name and position participant will be working in. (briefly describe the position)
- Skills to be obtained.

2.3.5 Attach a detailed project description / proposal to the application

If you wish, you can provide additional information to this application by attaching a document.

2.3.6 Agreement Contact

Provide the appropriate contact for your organization. Please note that this contact should be an individual empowered to negotiate all or some portions of the agreement.

2.3.7 Language Preference

Provide your language preference.

2.3.8 Project Location(s)

Provide the address information for the location of the activities. If you have not yet secured a location, please enter your main organization address.

2.3.9 Participants

Enter the total number of participants expected

2.3.10 Project Activities

The tables below outline the required information for the START Program. This is the complete set of eligible activities.

Work Experience	
Brief Description	Please describe the job and how filling this labour need will help your business/organization
Expected Results	Is the employee expected to be retained?

Where does this activity take place	Identify the location for each activity.
Expected number of participants	Provide the expected number of participants.
Expected number who achieve employment	Please indicate the number of clients who are expected to be hired full time at the end of the agreement.

2.3.11 Project Budget

The following table outlines the eligible costs and specific instructions for each budget category funded by the START Program. Please include your complete project costs and requested amounts by budget category.

Budget Category	Eligible Costs
Program Delivery - Program - Overall	<i>Please enter the total project cost and the amount you are requesting</i>

2.3.12 Project Cash Flow

N/A

2.3.13 Legal Signing Offers

Provide the appropriate signing officers for this project agreement as well as the legal signing requirements for your organization.

2.3.14 Supporting Documentation

You can attach any supporting documents with your application.

The table below outlines documents that **must be included** with the START Program application.

Document	Document Type	Requirements
<i>Job Descriptions</i>	Job Description	You must provide job descriptions for all positions funded or partially funded by agreement. Include hrs of work, position title, description of duties. You must also provide the breakdown of requested costs (Wage, MERC (mandatory employer related costs, like EI, CPP, Vacation pay, training needs, etc) ENS

		will use this amount to assist in determining the amount of incentive and can monitor this information at a later date.
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2.4 Submitting Your Application

Once your organization has finalized the application including the attachment of all the required templates, and projects costs less cash and in-kind contributions, the application may be submitted to the Department using the LaMPSS self-serve system.

In this section of the application enter the following information that would have been received when your organization was registered as in LaMPSS.

Enter your organizations ID, username and password and “submit.” This will connect you with the LaMPSS system to submit the application.

Please note: There is a 120 day calendar timeline to open, complete and submit an application. After 120 days you must begin the process again to ensure the application information is current.

Once submitted Organizations should ensure the submitted application remains in an electronic state (i.e., saved on your computer network) to enable the organization to make any requested edits and then resubmit.

3 Reporting Requirements

The requirements for Activity and Financial reports are outlined in the agreement.

3.1 Reporting Online Using LaMPSS Self Serve

Reports should be submitted online using LaMPSS self serve functionality at:
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/lampss>.

3.2 Submitting Paper Reports

Please Contact 1-877-223-0888 to obtain information.

If paper reports are requested please discuss with Employment Nova scotia – onsite assistance is available

3.3 Completing an Activity Report

This section provides supporting information required to complete the activity report. If you require onsite assistance with completing this form, please consult with your ENS representative.

3.3.1 Project Activities

The table below outlines the information reporting requirements for each eligible activity for the START Program. Provide this information for each activity in your Agreement.

Work Experience	
Update / Status this Period	Please provide information about the participant(s) progress to date, achievements, issues, concerns.
Number of unique participants	Provide the actual number of participants for this activity during this reporting period.
Number who achieved employment	Until the subsidy period is over (client has successfully completed the agreement duration) please indicate 0. At the end of the subsidy, please indicate if the client has been retained by the employer by indicating the number of clients employed.

3.3.2 Participants

Enter the actual number of participants during this reporting period for all activities.

3.3.3 Supporting Documentation

You can attach any supporting documents with your activity report.

3.3.4 Reporting Notes

Provide any additional information, issues, concerns, and feedback on the program and its administration

3.4 Financial Report

This section provides supporting information required to complete the financial report.

3.4.1 Project Costs

Provide the actual costs being reported for each eligible expense for this reporting period.

3.4.2 Project Cash Flow

N/A

3.4.3 Supporting Documentation

You can attach any supporting documents with your financial report.

3.4.5 Reporting Notes

Provide any additional information.

3.5 Submitting Your Reports

Once your organization has finalized the report including the attachment of all the required templates (if any), and projects costs less cash and in-kind contributions, the report may be submitted to the Department using the LaMPSS self-serve system.

In this section of the report enter the following information that would have been received when your organization was registered as in LaMPSS.

Enter your organizations ID, username and password and “submit.” This will connect you with the LaMPSS system to submit the application.

4 START

No financial assistance shall be provided to an employer where the eligible participant is being hired to fill a position left vacant due to a labour dispute at the employer’s premises, to fill the position of a worker who has been laid off and is awaiting recall or to displace another worker employed by the employer.

Employer will ensure that it has adequate liability insurance coverage including everyone carrying out activities related to this agreement.

The Department's responsibilities with respect to the project are limited to providing financial assistance to the project.

If a participant is terminated, quits or is unable to continue in the position they were hired for, the participant and/or employer must contact Employment Nova Scotia immediately (within 2 business days). An assessment will be made based on the time elapsed, funds issued and reason for leaving to determine if the employer will be required to reimburse Employment Nova Scotia. Employers who fire participants without just cause will be required to return funds. Employers with unsafe working conditions as determined by ENS and or Occupations Health and Safety Division could also have their agreement terminated.

START is intended to fill a need - to provide funding to employers who need it in order to hire unemployed Nova Scotians who need work experience to get and maintain a good job. START is not intended to create a dependency on government funding.

ENS can choose to terminate an agreement at any time if there is a situation where the employer is not providing an appropriate work experience, is becoming dependent on funding, has an unsafe work environment or not using the program for its intent. An overpayment may also be created for funds issued.

Employers may be given approval to hire individuals prior to the agreement being signed or LaMPSS data input complete. This approval will be given in written form (letter or electronic mail). An employer may hire the individual at their own expense until the approval process is finalized. Information should be input into LaMPSS to indicate the approval.