PROJECT REPORT

**Innovations in Flexible Pathways and
Program Development to Enhance
Access to Outbound International
Mobility Programs**

nscc International

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GOALS

01

Understand barriers facing target group students (African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, low income and students with disabilities) to participate in outbound international mobility programs and develop strategies to increase participation from target group students.

02

Test approaches to better prepare NSCC students for outbound student mobility programs.

03

Test innovative technology to measure impact and enhancing employability skills in outbound international student mobility programs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project was led by NSCC International and funded by the Colleges and Institutes Canada Outbound Mobility Innovation program and ESDC. The project team included several NSCC departments: NSCC International, the School of Business and Creative Industries (SBCI), and the Centre for Educational Equity and Belonging (E2B). The NSCC School of Business and Creative Industries (SBCI) has been the most active school for international learning at NSCC.

In Spring 2020, in response to the Covid-19 crisis, NSCC International began working with teams of NSCC employees including from the SBCI, with experience leading in-person international learning, to reimagine international learning in a virtual environment. As a result, several virtual international learning initiatives took place during the winter semester 2021. In addition to the partnership between NSCC departments, two current students and a faculty member were engaged to review and gather information related to the objectives of the project which was funded through the Colleges and Institutes Canada Outbound Mobility Innovation Fund.

"Using technology to scale up international learning opportunities and assessing the impact of virtual and in-person international learning programs will be essential for the future growth of international learning at NSCC."

Another aspect to the project was in testing innovative technology for international employability skills. Using students participating in virtual exchanges, we introduced the CareerProfessor.works app which is a gamification tool guiding users through career advice and increasing global employability skills. Using technology to scale up international learning opportunities and assessing impact of virtual and in-person international learning programs will be essential for the future growth of international learning at NSCC. Leveraging the power of the CareerProfessor.works app to better prepare students for virtual international learning programs and measuring the impact of these programs will help NSCC improve international learning outreach and engagement. This project was also innovative in its use of technology to present a strong evidence base to leadership, funding agencies and employers about the value and impact of international learning programs for students.

PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a toolkit for outreach to under-represented students and create pathways for these groups to participate in virtual and transition to in-person international learning programs.

Build a series of professional development learning resources focused on international education for faculty and staff to access.

Develop courses (credit and non-credit) focused on international education which will lead students to future mobility projects and learning.

Develop an optional work integrated learning for students seeking a combined international education and work experience.

Collaborate with Expertise in Labour Mobility and the CareerProfessor.works app to support student learning and competencies in global employability skills and to understand the impact of international learning in career development.

Build virtual international exchanges within NSCC programs and courses to improve accessibility and increase student participation in international education.

More detailed descriptions of project findings and recommendations are included in the full report and appendices.

PROJECT APPROACH

Three current NSCC departments were tasked to focus
on specific objectives:

NSCC DEPARTMENTS	OBJECTIVES
NSCC International	Provide virtual exchange opportunities Provide students with an opportunity to build job readiness skills Measure effect of international learning and the impact to employability skills
Centre for Educational Equity and Belonging	Conduct an assessment with staff and past student participants to assess needs and barriers of participation Develop a tool kit for outreach and create pathways
School of Business and Creative Industries	Review current curriculum in SBCI and relevance to international learning Review current resources available to students and staff for international learning and professional development Review the Work Experience course and WIL learning outcomes in the SBCI

NSCC International invited NSCC employee participants (Appendix A) to a multi-disciplinary project committee on a voluntary basis for the duration of the project to provide feedback and input to help guide project success. The first committee meeting (1.5 hours) was scheduled in January; project outcomes and the proposed workplan was discussed. The project committee meetings continued once a month with the final meeting and presentation during the last week of April.

STUDENT IMPACT

72 STUDENTS

10 FACULTY & STAFF

Philippines Recipe Exchange
4 students, 2 faculty

Philippines Canada Culinary Cup
2 students, 2 faculty, 1 manager

Social Entrepreneurship Program (Vietnam)
20 students, 2 faculty

Global Meetz (Ecuador)
6 students, 4 faculty

Information Technology Austria Knowledge Exchange
30 students, 1 faculty

PROJECT FOCUS & RESULTS

Immediate Outcome
Increased access and equity of participation of Canadian Post Secondary Education students (particularly target student groups) in international study/work opportunities as part of their academic program, especially in non-traditional countries.

Objectives
Implement and test approaches to better prepare students to transition to a physical mobility experience.

Activity
Conduct an assessment with staff, students, past student participants in mobility programs and external stakeholders to assess the needs and barriers for target groups of students to participate in person study abroad experiences.

Output
Needs assessment report

Innovative toolkit and outreach strategy

Results
Two students were employed and mentored by Centre for Educational Equity and Belonging (E2B) to complete a current assessment of mobility project participation. Interviews conducted with past student and faculty participants and community members.

- Community mentors and faculty are the main source of information and support to encourage student participation
- Barriers identified include financial, family and employment obligations, and program physical accessibility for students with disabilities
- Identified student uncertainty towards the connection of cultural competencies to job related skills and readiness
- More information is located in Appendix B

Next Steps & Recommendations
Develop a toolkit for outreach and create pathways for these groups to participate in virtual and transition to in-person international learning programs (in progress) including:

- Increased visibility of learning opportunities required in underrepresented communities
- Purposeful promotion of international education programs to specific target students would increase participation
- Communications strategy to feature past participants during specific celebrations and community events i.e. Mi'kmaq History month
- Create international learning programs for target student groups to increase participation within target groups

PROJECT FOCUS & RESULTS

Immediate Outcome
Strengthened capacity of Canadian Post Secondary Institutions to test innovative and accessible opportunities and support for students to participate in study/work abroad opportunities

Objectives
Identify potential pathways for program development, enhancement, and roll-out, with the aim to implement successful models across post-secondary institutions

Activity
Create an inventory of virtual international learning experiences and projects underway at NSCC in Winter semester 2021 and provide students with an opportunity to build job readiness skills

Measure effect of international learning and the impact to employability skills.

Output
Repository of existing virtual exchange projects at NSCC

Results
Virtual International exchanges were completed over the Winter 2021 semester in Philippines, Vietnam, Ecuador and Austria

- Culinary students from three institutions (NSCC, Camosun College in Victoria and College of Saint Benilde in the Philippines) participated in a recipe exchange and culinary competitions
- Business Administration students shared cultural information and entrepreneurial projects using presentations and question and answer sessions via virtual meetings through video conferencing technology.
- ALP and Engineering Technology students participated in one-hour conversations with students from partner university UEES in Ecuador on a variety of topics including culture, traditions, food, employability, pandemic response etc.
- Information Technology students from Upper Austria and NSCC each conducted a small assignment and shared video files asynchronously

Collaborated with Expertise in Labour Mobility and tested the CareerProfessor.works app with supporting webinars to gain global employability skills and through reflective exercises to understand the impact of international learning. Refer to Appendix C.

Next Steps & Recommendations
Create a series of promotional materials to highlight students and staff who have participated in past projects including testimonials – incorporate in current communication and marketing strategy and focusing on students from target groups.

Develop cross-cultural communication workshops to prepare students for future virtual international education projects

Review International Pre-Departure course to include more about global employability skills with the goal of using the CareerProfessor.works app in the future.

PROJECT FOCUS & RESULTS

Immediate Outcome
Strengthened capacity of Canadian PSIs to test innovative and accessible opportunities and support for students to participate in study/work abroad opportunities

Objectives
Implement and test approaches to better prepare students to transition to a physical mobility experience.

Activity
Create models to scale up these experiences connect to curriculum learning outcomes, so that they can be available to more students in many NSCC programs and courses

Output
Innovative model to connect virtual exchanges to in person mobility

Results
Current curriculum from SBCI has numerous courses using language in the curriculum such as international, culture, global, cultural awareness, cross cultural and entrepreneurship – this supports the role of international education at the college.

Further consultation uncovered:

- Additional support to faculty in the form of professional development and teaching resources to deliver international education would be welcomed
- Professional development opportunities for all staff could add value to create awareness in the college about international education
- Work Experience courses and WIL learning outcomes share common skills and learning outcomes that link directly with participation in international education and outbound mobility projects
- Refer to Appendix D

Next Steps & Recommendations
Build professional development learning resources for faculty and staff through:

- Library Services – create a subject guide dedicated to International Education
- Organizational Learning – develop a self directed Brightspace workshop
- NSCC International - continue to contribute and participate in Professional Development opportunities across the college
- International Student Ambassadors – expand "Cultural Coaches" sessions
- Faculty Working Groups - create a repository of pre-developed lesson plans dedicated to international education activities for faculty to access

Develop an optional Work Integrated Learning course focused on international education– use the Business Administration program to test. Process will include the following components

- Review the current recruitment and selection of student participants scheduled for Fall semester
- Build on the non-credit International pre-departure course offered to prepare students for mobility projects in the Spring semester
- Offer short term international programs to fulfill the WIL requirements (course to be developed)
- Collaborate with Academic Development for advisement on curriculum and planned delivery for academic year 2022/23

APPENDICES

A. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jeffrey Brewer; Curriculum Consultant, Academic Development
Ute Fiedler; Faculty Business and Creative Industries, Ivany Campus
Jude Gerrard; Senior Advisor, Mi'kmaq and Indigenous Initiatives, Centre for the Advancement of Educational Equity & Belonging
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Adele LeBlanc; Program Assistant, School of Business and Creative Industries
Shari Mallory; Faculty Business and Creative Industries, Truro Campus
Lisa Matheson; Administrative Assistant, NSCC international
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Kellie McMullin; Manager International Learning, Outgoing
Katie Orr; Director, NSCC International
Jill Provoe; Director, Centre for the Advancement of Educational Equity & Belonging

B. COMMUNITY OUTREACH PHASE | REPORT APRIL 2021

Introduction

The goals of this project are to implement and test approaches to better prepare NSCC students (with a special focus on target groups) to transition to a physical mobility experience, and to identify potential pathways to program development, enhancement, and roll out. Through this project, we conducted an assessment of barriers that target groups of students face in participating in international learning to inform strategies for outreach and to overcome barriers to increase engagement and participation.

NSCC International collaborated with the School of Business and Creative Industries (SOBCI) and the Centre for Educational Equity and Belonging (E2B). As part of the project implementation, we hired to current students – James Marble, an Indigenous student, and Saedene Simmons, a Black Nova Scotian student – to reach out to members of their respective communities to gather information and ideas to enhance participation in International Learning Experiences from both communities. An Outbound Mobility Projects Committee was also initiated consisting of NSCC staff to guide and advise on the project deliverables.

Project Outcomes

Although we are aware of some of the barriers that exist for NSCC students, we set out to identify, through conversations with students and faculty who had previously participated in international experiences abroad, as well as to members of the targeted communities, to uncover specific barriers that prevent students from equity-seeking communities from travelling abroad with NSCC. The primary project outcome is to implement and test approaches to better prepare students to transition to a physical mobility experience.

• **Phase I:** Conduct an assessment with staff and past student participants in mobility programs and external stakeholders to assess the needs and barriers for target groups of students to participate in in-person study abroad experiences (*See this report)

• **Phase II:** Develop a toolkit for outreach and create pathways for these groups to participate in virtual and transition to in-person international learning programs (*In progress)

This report details the findings from the Phase I assessments and identifies key themes to inform Phase II which is the development of the toolkit to create targeted strategies for enhanced outreach to diverse students and communities.

Phase I Findings: Faculty Outreach

1. What is the value for a student to participate in an international learning experience at NSCC?

Respondent 1: An international learning experience at NSCC is transformative for students. It increases confidence and helps students develop a greater capacity to adapt, which is crucial in this uncertain world. Students expand their minds as they are exposed to different places, people, cultures, religions, socioeconomic conditions, thoughts, ideas, and values. Also. their international experience is impressive for future employers.

Respondent 2: Depending on the student, for every student may see different values, along with taking away different values with them upon completion. Experiencing other cultures, growing their interpersonal teamwork skills, gaining knowledge and earning the chance to work on projects are all valuable assets. Another value commonly identified is experience.

Respondent 3: A change of scenery for students. It gives them a chance to grow, and learn while building communication, leadership, teamwork, adaptability, employability skills, yet also gaining a changed world view. Building soft and hard skills is also valuable.

Respondent 4: Travel itself, even as part of a school, opens your eyes to so many different things. You grow as a person and find your comfort zone which allows you to explore other cultures in other communities in different countries and just experience how they live in those cultures or countries. Also, you learn to adapt.

Respondent 5: This is huge on so many levels. I think one of most important things is interaction with other cultures, of course, in terms of the connection between students from here that have gone through the program. Getting different perspectives and understanding on the subject they are studying is vital.

Respondent 6: The first value I think is learning. Learning new skills in a different environment and also giving the students exposure and interacting with other countries. Another value is cultural exchange; this is beneficial because when a student ends up traveling, they're going to need to know to interact with other students from that culture which I think is crucial.

2. In your opinion, what is the top reason a student will choose to participate in an international learning program?

Respondent 1: In my opinion, the top reason a student will participate is interest. Whether they are interested in the location, the program, the program's link to their future education and career goals, or all the above. If they are interested and believe they can make it happen, they will.

Respondent 2: Some students just want to go to another country, yet some are truly interested in the project whether it be learning more about a product or applied application of the product and advancing their education around specific fields of interest. The international program offers unique opportunities and that is another aspect of choosing to participate.

Respondent 3: A general interest would be the experience of travelling. Students must feel encouraged and believe in themselves. The idea of "thinking is doing" applies to being in a situation of participating in an international learning program. Students may realize the short-term pain of fundraising and spending money to go to a program which will make them more employable and financially successful in the future.

Respondent 4: The experience alone; not only will you be learning the ways of the culture, but you also get the school learning. It's like a vacation, but not, and you also get to meet new people and form new friendships.

Respondent 5: Top reason is to get a cultural experience and learn the traditions of the country; important to open the dialogue between people.

Respondent 6: To build curiosity so that students want to learn more about other cultures. I think that is the top reason and the second reason is the experience alone.

3. What different barriers exist for students to participate in an experience abroad?

Respondent 1: Financial barriers, employment obligations and family responsibilities.

Respondent 2: The attitude displayed by students is a barrier, for students must display a good attitude without prejudice. Financial barriers, physical disabilities and similar instances could prevent some students from participating for there is a lot of walking and some countries are not as accessible as our own. Students must be able to demonstrate that they are going to be team players.

Respondent 3: Individual's family responsibilities affect everybody differently. Financial

obligations could deter people from participating due to loss of income or fear of losing employment while some may not have secure employment. Accessing other student's stories and experiences such as what they got out of the program, or how they were able to be successful in the program, would help make the international learning experiences more attractive.

Respondent 4: Being able to raise the money even though NSCC gives a certain amount of money. The worry of where they are going to get the funds to be able to participate is significant.

Respondent 5: The financial costs; students come from different social economic backgrounds and some just don't know about the program, as their communities do not have the information about this program.

Respondent 6: I would say the number one obvious reason would be cost because with these international learning opportunities, they require money to travel and they need to be told of the program's existence.

4. In your opinion, what would make it easier for diverse students to participate in international learning programs?

Respondent 1: Increase financial aid for students.

Respondent 2: I don't know, not showing direct prejudice and being non-judgemental.

Respondent 3: Hearing other students experiences and stories. Increasing financial aid while providing workshops for guidance to overcome financial barriers and pointing students in the right direction. Encouragement and building students confidence. Virtual work shops such as class drop-ins or late-night webinars/meetings to attract people and give information to people with kids/ jobs that have conflicting schedules.

Respondent 4: For one, pick partnership countries that are more welcoming to another culture and ethnicity. Better funding for the program is also needed and have a workshop on the process and what to expect in this experience.

Respondent 5: If we can get more students who have traveled to go into more classrooms, hopefully we can reach a diverse population of students.

Respondent 6: Once again, having the funding programs to help these diverse students in these minority communities to participate in these programs and also have the supports available that they need.

5. Do you have any other thoughts to share as we encourage students from equity-seeking groups to get involved in both virtual and in person international learning experiences?

Respondent 1: Students who have participated in past programs could drop into classrooms, physically or virtually, to share their experiences with international learning. This could raise awareness and serve as a recruitment tool. Prior to this interview, I reached out to a previous student participant and I asked him about his greatest international learning takeaways. He said this, "I developed a perspective that I could be a part of something bigger than myself that would leave an impact for those that came after me - I developed deeper confidence in myself by practicing leadership, communication, and cross-cultural awareness - I became open to new ideas and interests that I would not have considered prior to my experience - I underwent personal growth - I developed a stronger sense of self-reliance - I developed a global mindset and understanding that everything is connected - the experience strengthened my appreciation for home and family."

Respondent 2: There could be a limited group of students and some people just don't find the international experience attractive. For example, if there were more diverse students attending NSCC, there might be more attendance in international learning from equity-seeking groups.

Respondent 3: The chance to have a connection with other previous attendees to hear and share positive stories. More advertisement of virtual /in-person experiences along with promoting/encouraging students to talk and spread word-of-mouth experiences. An advertisement example could be posting information around the school and in other online platforms.

Respondent 4: Marketing to teen students, showing examples of the students in their community that have gone through the program; show that the time they had there was successful.

Respondent 5: Maybe work towards getting the faculty to make it part of an actual classroom and then, from there, I think there's a stepping stone for some students anyway to see the possibility.

Respondent 6: I think students should be encouraged to participate in the international opportunities because it gives them exposure to two different cultures and it creates more opportunities for them to know that they can be more employable.

Themes from Faculty Outreach:

Participation in International experiences provides students an opportunity to learn about oneself. They help build confidence, provide teamwork skills, and a sense of accomplishment. International programs also help to expand a person's worldview that can sometimes be narrowly defined by a person's geographical location. The experience gained can also make you more employable after graduation.
Students participate for several reasons. Some have a keen interest in the country, travel in general, in the learning project itself, or the unique field of study. Participation also provides students with a sense of financial independence through fundraising efforts.

There are some barriers that deter students from participating. Financial costs make it unattractive, or even out of reach for many, and work obligations prevent some student from taking advantage of the opportunities. Family responsibilities can limit resources for many students (both financial and time) and may adversely affect under-represented communities from taking part. Another area that has been identified is accessibility. Student with disabilities may experience barriers due to location and resources available with travelling abroad. One final barrier identified by faculty is student attitude towards cultural competencies.

Several ideas to address barriers were recommended including additional financial aid (through scholarships, bursaries, and sponsorships). Additional workshops to promote international opportunities, including fundraising mentoring, and the sharing of former community members' experiences will help to inform students' decisions to take part. Partnering with countries that are more accessible can also help to remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

Phase I Findings: Student Outreach

1. Who, or what, encouraged you to participate in the international learning program? What specifically caught your interest?

Respondent 1: The opportunity to hone skills, along with the program being offered as an internship. I applied because of interest in the experience; I wanted to explore journalism in an international setting and the faculty were encouraging.

Respondent 2: I graduated with my Diploma in Business Administration back in 2016, so from what I can recall, it was brought up from one of my instructors and then we had a presentation from NSCC International. I remember being so fascinated with the thought of traveling overseas to study and earn a credit for the 2nd year of schooling. I specifically chose the entrepreneurship in Scotland because my heart/passion has always been with being your own boss.

Respondent 3: A former student introduced me to the program and asked if I was interested during my first year at NSCC. She told me about the program and introduced me to a faculty member and from there formed a bond and started a truthful friendship. I also got to do a lot of networking through this program on my travels.

Respondent 4: I couldn't really say for sure specifically what caught my interest but I graduated in 2019 and I actually went on two international trips which was very cool, but to be honest, the money was a worry. My key instructor, she kindly put me pulled me aside, as she was lead faculty, and she encouraged me to apply and said that if I get in to worry about the money part later. I went to Vietnam one year and then, in my second year, I went to Peru which was very cool cultural experience.

2. What barriers did you have to overcome in order to participate in the international learning program abroad?

Respondent 1: The cost of the program was a barrier. I had to do a lot of fundraising, but was successful in the end and so I can see how it could be hard for some students to engage in it. The effort and time the fundraising consumed, along with not having much guidance on how or where to fundraise, was a challenge, along with being on a fixed income.

Respondent 2: I was a single mother to a 6-year old daughter at the time, if it wasn't for my great support system back home, I wouldn't have been able to participate. I also overcame my own personal barriers because I am a very quiet, introverted person and

so for me to accept this venture, knowing that I was attending essentially by myself and

had to talk to new faces and make connections, was huge.
Respondent 3: The only barriers for me were the finances, as it was hard. I did do a lot of fundraising and had to consider that if I went away, where would the finances to keep my family afloat be coming from.

Respondent 4: The biggest barrier was finances for sure and I think the biggest challenge was being able to organize a plan to get some of that money through hard work in scholarships - which was helpful. Also, just in going out and traveling and experiencing different things was scary, but not as scary as the money part.

3. Did you find it valuable to participate in the program? If so, why? If not, why not?

Respondent 1: Yes, it was absolutely valuable. It helped me to gain a strong sense of community and gave me the opportunity to make connections. It was an inspiring experience that motivated me to apply ideas from the program into all aspects of life.

Respondent 2: I found it absolutely valuable, to have the opportunity to travel, see new sites, meet new people. I made it my goal to attend and worked hard throughout the year to save up my monies.

Respondent 3: It just helped me tap into myself more intellectually; thinking about it gives me more of a reason to want to help not only black people around me, but to help those less fortunate. These trips overall helped change me and make me a better person.

Respondent 4: 100% it was an invaluable experience, not just because it was an opportunity, but they treated it like an educational experience for sure. Not only did I like the educational experience and having fun with my school work, but the biggest thing was being able to travel to another place you've never seen before . Both trips were in partnerships with different schools, so it was interesting and intriguing to see the relationships between faculty and students from completely different backgrounds; you learn so much and you're open to it.

4. Were there any specific barriers that you faced and what, in your opinion, would make it easier for diverse students to participate in these experiences with the college?

Respondent 1: I think it boils down to funding. I was absolutely fortunate enough to have my own side business that essentially funded the entire trip. Every piece of handcrafted beadwork had a purpose and I used my social media channels to tell my story, to connect with the public so that when they bought a piece, they were helping a cause to

get me to Scotland.

I think if the traveling abroad program was advertised even before the first year, it would give potential business students the heads up and if they are working a job before they attend college, they can start to save.

Respondent 2: There may be a missing support structure to help Indigenous students. The cost and the fact that racialized groups may not have been encouraged to participate is important, along with the lack of role models. The international learning program is kind of geared toward more upper-class citizens and restricts Indigenous involvement. I felt privileged to receive some funding.

Respondent 3: When I say "diversity," you have to look at diversity here because diversity comes in two forms in Nova Scotia - local and international. With International minorities, they get put in with the local minorities, but I feel they have more resources then the locals get to access. I think that this program needs to be voiced more in the local diverse communities and in the international diverse communities so they can have the same opportunities.

Respondent 4: Money was the main barrier and need more resources out there for more diverse students to participate.

5. Do you have any other thoughts to share as we work to encourage students from equity-seeking groups to get involved in both virtual and in-person international learning experiences?

Respondent 1: I think the destinations/program topics have to really resonate with the future business administration students. Speaking from experience, I've travelled to Albuquerque, New Mexico, prior to attending college so I understood the financial aspect of working/saving/making sure my credit card was good. That could also be a barrier, as not every person attending school has good credit or, if its their first credit card, might not be aware of the responsibility of owning a credit card.

Respondent 2: Put more importance in equity-seeking groups to bridge the gap between equality and equity - do not label a dollar amount on learning. Instead of giving money directly to students in the form of grants and bursaries, create models for fundraising and supports to help students succeed - create equal access to skills.

Respondent 3: I'm not sure how the virtual program would work because I, for one, would like to be in those countries and experience it in person and hands-on; if we can do that again, I would encourage it. Overall, it's a great program and the experience is great; the bonds you form and the friendships you gain. I just think the whole purpose

of international experiences are to be actually in internationally experiences - it not looking at pictures or imagining how things are done in those cultures and countries; I don't think it would work.

Respondent 4: I think that these programs should be advertised from an early stage. After I graduated, a lot of people came up to me and were asking me about my trips and I told them about the trips. I think that we need to have more awareness in the schools.

Themes from Student Outreach:

Most past participants from Indigenous and Black communities chose to participate in International Learning opportunities based on information from pervious students (albeit not from their community) who have taken part, as well as from recommendations from faculty. Students benefited from a deeper sense of community, a better understanding of a world that exists outside of their community/province, and the ability to give back to society in one form or another.

The experience helped them grow intellectually and provided a rich experience to help them in future job prospects. Students identified the program itself as being geared towards upper class students because there is a lack of mentors such as students from their own community that have previously taken part in such opportunities.

As a way to actively promote these opportunities to Black/Indigenous participants, the destination/program/project needs to resonate with students and with more intentional effort to attract equity-seeking groups. Encouraging International Student Ambassadors to do more promotions on campus and in community would add value. There needs to be an understanding of equity vs equality and more efforts to raise the bar in participation. There also needs to be more in-depth mentoring to build fundraising skills and knowledge, as well as overall mentoring from previous participants in the recruiting process.

Phase I Findings: Community Outreach

1. Did you know that NSCC International offers students in most programs the opportunity to travel abroad?

Respondent 1: No, I wasn't aware.

Respondent 2: I saw a poster; not much word of mouth.

Respondent 3: No, I didn't not know that there were opportunities for a travel abroad learning program that could be beneficial in new experiences outside of Nova Scotia that could explore careers in different places than here.

Respondent 4: I did not know about this program. I knew that other universities have done it, but I did not know that NSCC had this program.

Respondent 5: No, I did not know that NSCC had this program. I do know of other postsecondary schools that have such a program.

Respondent 6: No, I did not.

Respondent 7: No, I did not - if I did, it would be something that I would be interested in.

2. In recognizing the many benefits of learning experiences in other countries and with other cultures, what barriers do you think might exist that prevent more students from our community from getting involved in these opportunities abroad?

Respondent 1: I don't really like to travel unless it's for leisure and maybe not be able to interact with people from other countries.

Respondent 2: Financial supports would help, along with Indigenous supports and cultural supports.

Respondent 3: The main barrier is time and money. Many people doing post-secondary are struggling to find time on a day-to-day basis to be able to juggle school and a job, let alone the opportunity to travel. It becomes a strong aspect of loss of opportunity because the world revolves around money. If you have a place to stay, you have to find ways to pay your rent, you have to find child care if you are a parent, you have to find a way to balance life here and school. If you work and go to school, your employer would have to be on board with you taking a leave of absence also. Many barriers of support

and communication between the school, your life, employment and other aspects. This becomes crucial in trying to see the opportunity at hand as a plus because it becomes a

stressor of trying to plan everything to come back to smoothly if you get to leave for a time. Barriers are placed by your role in society, depending on where you live, do you have dependents, and other life aspects.

Respondent 4: I think the main issue is finances. I know in our communities we have a lot of single parents who could not afford to go on these trips and have these opportunities. I think we need to put programs in place that will help encourage these students to participate in these programs and have that security that they can participate in these programs.

Respondent 5: Finances have a big part in it. I think finance is the main part for someone in our community to get involved in this program.

Respondent 6: I would say money and finances; just being from a small community and not knowing what is out there in these other countries and also not knowing how to deal with different cultures.

Respondent 7: Being a single mother, I will say finances; not knowing about this program would be a barrier as well.

3. Do you have any suggestions for the college to help encourage more students from our community to participate in learning experiences abroad?

Respondent 1: Try to inform people on the different cultures and experiences they are going to be in for when they arrive in the specific country they are travelling to.

Respondent 2: NSCC is not as accessible for Indigenous students. Some people may have a hard time becoming eligible to attend NSCC and some students may be busy with working during the time frame of the programs. More word of mouth advertisement and role models along with more supports and more grants are needed.

Respondent 3: I would encourage bursaries, plus a communications plan of having an advisor to be able to contact people that could hear the many positive reasons as to why they should grant a sublet or leave of absence for peoples living in such situations. A big thing would be to look into how the college could help with the money aspect to those who are struggling to survive day-to-day. Creating more relationships that are positive and beneficial to help with equity with their students would be helpful too. Also, having a template/checklist of what you should prepare for your life outside of school to benefit from doing a term internationally so nothing is left out of place and

becomes a negative to prevent anyone from getting involved in this opportunity.

Respondent 4: I would like to encourage the college to put more programs in place to help people in our community reach their financial goals - more resources.
Respondent 5: I would say just have more programs in place so that people from our community can enjoy these opportunities such as having workshops on how to get there.

Respondent 6: I think the college should have more programs put in place to help us recognize these financial barriers and to help us put in place a financial plan to work towards your goal.

Respondent 7: Just have more workshops on how to reach the financial goals to do the fund raising for this program. I know money is a barrier for me and I would have to have steady income to help my family when I am studying abroad.

4. Do you have any other thoughts to share as we work to encourage students from equity-seeking groups to get involved in both virtual and in-person international learning experiences?

Respondent 1: Get information about the programs and the people who will be participating to share with everyone who wants to get involved.

Respondent 2: More accessibility for Indigenous students to attend school in general is needed. The ability to provide grants and ways to support and promote an equitable environment for everyone such as culture-based programs. Select larger groups of l'nus on a project since not everyone is comfortable being the only Indigenous student.
Respondent 3: Honestly, I am just grateful to see the college get into programs of creating equity within the school community and to create an aspect of getting others involved while creating a notice to communicating to others the opportunity that colleges are now giving to students. When people think of travel abroad opportunities, people think of universities only and so it is great to hear and learn more about the chances, choices and creation of the travel abroad learning opportunities for college students also.

Respondent 4: I believe if they know about the program and they have that financial background to do the program, they would do it virtually or in-person, but we must break down that barrier first to get them involved.

Respondent 5: I think overall this is a great experience and I would encourage any young person to get involved, but with the finances piece, a lot will not get involved because they come from a low income family and will need help.

Respondent 6: We need more awareness of this program such as a workshop on the process.

Respondent 7: More awareness is needed.

5. Do you know any students from our community who may have participated in learning experiences abroad at NSCC or other post-secondary institutions?

Respondent 1: No

Respondent 2: No, it kind of sounds like a rare thing.

Respondent 3: I do not know of any from NSCC. But as a Saint Mary's university alumni, I have met a lot of people that have attended the university and have had the opportunity to do semesters abroad within different departments.

Respondent 4: No

Respondent 5: No

Respondent 6: No

Respondent 7: No

Themes from Community Outreach:

There is a general consensus that Black and Indigenous communities are not aware of the international learning opportunities offered at NSCC. It is well known that these opportunities exist at local universities, but not at the college. Encouraging International Student Ambassadors to do more promotions on campus and in community would add value.

Participation is also limited because of financial constraints, family obligations, as well as systemic barriers that limit or even deter community participation. Community believes that additional participation would be possible with intentional workshops and information sessions highlighting various topics to help with success in the program, such as fundraising and what to expect when participating, while using previous community participants. Having programs tailored specifically to Black/Indigenous communities/participants will also help to increase participation.

Recommendations

Two priority themes emerged throughout the interviews conducted in the Phase I engagement sessions as being critical to enhancing participation:

- Decrease/remove financial barriers; and
- Increase awareness of international learning opportunities
- Removing Financial Barriers:
- Identify additional financial aid opportunities, such as scholarships, bursaries, and
- sponsorships, to offset many of the direct costs to students.
- Source funding to bring a designated cohort(s) of Black students and a cohort(s)
- of Indigenous students on an international learning experience that will not only
- heighten global awareness, enhance inter-personal communication and
- leadership skills, but will also focus on personal cultural esteem building.
- Increasing Awareness:
- Collect testimonials, similar to this video featuring students from Black and
- Indingeous communities who have participated in NSCC international learning
- programs to use for promotional purposes on social media and other
- communication channels.
- Promote the opportunity to participate in learning experiences abroad on the
- NSCC Program Pages, at Get Started events and in College Acceptance Letters so
- that students are informed early on in their college journey. Partner with NSCC
- Recruitment to support this action item.
- Conduct Information Sessions at churches, community organizations and at
- events held within Black and Indigenous communities at places such as the Black
- Cultural Centre and the Native Council of Nova Scotia.
- Coordinate presentations by International Student Ambassadors from diverse
- communities who have participated in learning experiences abroad to be
- delivered both on campus and in community to promote the opportunity and to
- act as a support system as students engage with NSCC International.

Next Steps:

As part of the subsequent phase of work, an International Learning Enhanced Access Action Plan will be developed based on this report that will outline Key Objectives, Rationale, Strategies, Timeframe, Lead Department and Required Resources.

C. CAREERPROFESSOR PILOT PROJECT

CareerProfessor Pilot Project
@ Nova Scotia Community College

14 April 2021

CiCan Pilot Project
International Employability Skills
CareerProfessor @ NSCC

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close
the
GAP

The Pilot: Employability skills & (virtual) mobility

According to research, international mobility experiences seem to build the employability skills that are deemed vital for success in the workplace. In this light, higher education institutions need to become more intentional and explicit about how they are addressing such skills as a student outcome – for all students, not just those who are privileged to study abroad[1,2].

The ROI of employability is often debated at higher education conferences across the globe. Fostering employability can prove beneficial for institutions as it turns graduates into brand ambassador alumni, happy to recommend their study experience at their higher education institution. But most importantly, employability skills help students to maximize their talents and prepare them for the world that awaits them upon graduation, provided they can 'translate' their experience into skills employers recognize[3].

With this pilot project, we have focussed on both inbound and outbound student mobility to help students, especially those for whom international experiences may be less accessible, to develop valuable intercultural competencies that support their employability skills.

The global COVID-19 situation made most mobility virtual, but this helped us to adjust programming to a COVID-19 environment whilst the program and its outputs serve as a stepping-stone for the full implementation of the program when full international mobility becomes an option again.

We have designed a program, that was kicked-off with a 'pre-departure' webinar (on 29 January 2021) and we finished with a 'post-mobility' webinar (5 March 2021). During the (virtual) mobility

period students have had access to the CareerProfessor.works tool, both the app and the other modules. Next, we have provided the *CP career exercise trajectory*, based on the **CP Career Route Planner** with exercises that could be integrated into existing curricula programs. The exercises followed the track of Understanding, Reflecting, and Implementing the value of an (virtual) international experience.
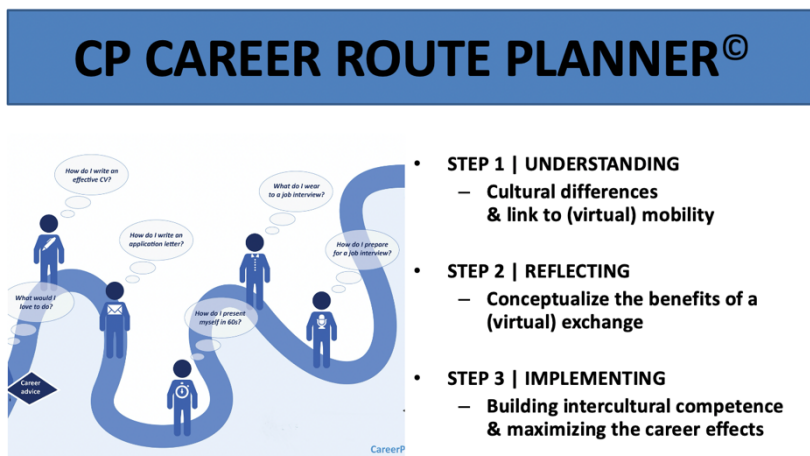
After both webinars, the exercises and the availability of the app, which supports intercultural and employability skills, we have invited the students to an especially created evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the app in preparing students for international learning.

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[1] Cultural Understanding as a Key Skill for Employability, Nannette Ripmeester & Darla Deardorff, INTERNATIONALIZATION AND EMPLOYABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION, Routlegde, Chapter 17, August 2019.

[2] When Being Booksmart is not enough - Skills Graduates Need to Succeed in the Future Workplace, Nannette Ripmeester, Internationalisation of Higher Education Handbook E 1.10, June 2018.

[3] Global Employability: Common Challenges in Preparing Students for a Global World of Work, Sevi Christoforou & Nannette Ripmeester, CAREER INTEGRATION, CAPA, Volume 3, March 2020.

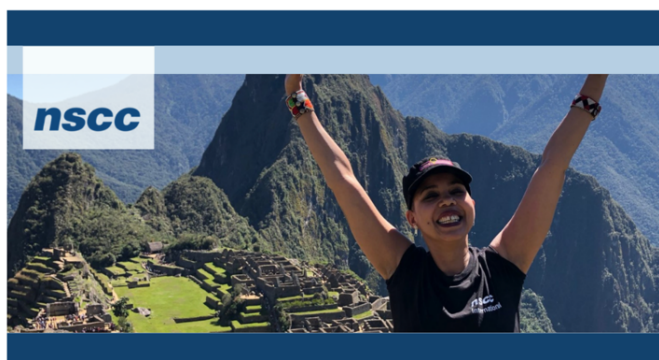## The App: CareerProfessor.works in a nutshell

CareerProfessor.works is a ready-to-use digital tool that provides intercultural training and global careers advice to all students (and alumni). It consists of an **app** and a **website**. The app helps students hone their intercultural knowledge by playing a game with more than a thousand multiple-choice questions on three compelling topics: **job hunting, doing business and social interactions**. It has 9 levels of gradually increasing difficulty, digital badges that measure intercultural competence, and last but not least provides students with rewards that they can collect on the website platform. The rewards are keys that let students 'unlock' the countries of their choice in order to find more practical labour market-related information. CareerProfessor.works currently has over 40 countries available.

CareerProfessor.works consists of four different modules to fully support students' employability:

- **Core Module**: app game & website with country profiles, leader board & digital badges.
- **Careers Module**: a tab with the most fundamental careers advice, available to students 24/7.
- **Community Module**: peer-to-peer networking, the 'Ask Me!' discussion platform & a real-time world map.
- **Coverage Module**: this reporting module provides monthly employability data at your fingertips.
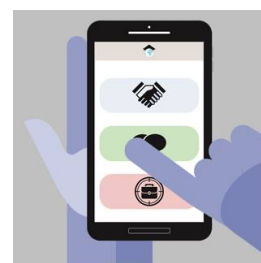
For the pilot project we created a special landing page for NSCC, unlocking for NSCC students the app, the website with the country profiles, the careers module and making the dashboard available for NSCC staff. The landing page can be found here: https://careerprofessor.works/hei/nscc

The Pilot: Timeline & Activities

Activities	Nov/20	Dec/20	Jan/21	Feb/21	Mar/21
Activity #1: Conduct webinar to virtual project participants and students from target groups on how to use CareerProfessor.works app and the benefits of this technology			X		
Activity #2: Test the ability of the CareerProfessor.works app to better prepare students for international learning				X	
Activity #3: Develop and implement an evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the app in preparing students for international learning			X	X	X
Activity #4: Use the evaluation tool and app analytics to determine the effectiveness of the app					X
Activity #5: Develop an evaluation tool to measure the employability skills development and impact of virtual and in-person study abroad experiences		X	X	X	
Activity #6: Test the evaluation tool with students participating in virtual international learning programs in the winter semester of 2021					X
Activity #7: Conduct an evaluation of the tool to determine its effectiveness					X
Activity #8: Collect data from the evaluation of the tool and feedback from participants and produce a report					X

Going abroad for study and internship experiences is not easy for NSCC students, particularly for some groups that traditionally have less access to mobility programs. Whereas from the past experiences that NSCC does have, they know these experiences have strengthened students' global competence and supported their employability.

With this pilot project, we aim to facilitate both virtual and physical mobility by providing students upfront with the opportunity to develop global intercultural competencies. The silver lining of COVID-19 is that it allows us to test new tools and approaches, in order to build the foundation for the launch of the full program.
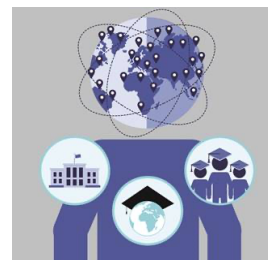
Steps in the program will be:

- Pre-mobility assessment questionnaire (based on work carried out in an Erasmus+ project[4])
- Pre-mobility webinar: Employability Lab - Preparing for a (Virtual) Exchange

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[4] https://www.erasmusskills.eu/eskills/tools/self-assessment-questionnaires

- Self-evaluation Exercise 1
- Virtual internship/mobility experience
- Use of the App
- Past-mobility webinar: Employability Lab – Maximizing your (Virtual) Exchange Impact
- Self-evaluation Exercise 2
- Evaluation of the App
- (Additional developed CP Toolkit)

The *Employability Lab webinars* followed a structure of Understanding, Reflecting, and Implementing, in which the first, the pre-mobility webinar, focused mainly on the first two steps and how the CareerProfessor App could support students in their intercultural understanding preparation. In the second, the post-mobility webinar, the focus was on the implementation and maximizing the mobility experience and for students how to adapt your 'career tools' in such a way they 'translate your mobility experiences into career success'.

The Skills: Employability Skills gained by (virtual) mobility

Going abroad for either study or an internship helps students to build certain skills. Research confirms that it are exactly the skills employers seems to value from an employability perspective[5,6].

Via the two self-evaluation exercises, at the beginning and at the end of the pilot project, we have asked students to reflect on the skills gained and whether the CareerProfessor App has helped them to build their skills. *Cultural Awareness* was the top skill, mentioned by most students as a skill developed by their (virtual) international mobility experience. However, it is interesting to note that students also indicate in the first self-evaluation survey, they are most uncertain about this area. In particularly about their cultural knowledge of their host country, with 9 out of 15 students saying they are 'somewhat aware of the customs, traditions, religion in the host country'. Apparently, this is an area for development for young people and exactly the learning which the CareerProfessor App tries to support.

TOP 5 SKILLS GAINED THROUGH MOBILITY

- Cultural Awareness
- Adaptability & Resilience
- Empathy & Cultural Understanding
- Creativity & Initiative
- Teamwork

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When we compare the 'before' and 'after' for the 3 questions around Cultural Awareness, we can see all students have progressed in this area. Although the strong sense of awareness with their own national cultural identity has lowered slightly. In line with the research of Davina Potts referenced in the Employability Lab webinar 2: "…internships help students to discover how much they don't know at that stage of their professional development."[7]

The picture around *Adaptability & Resilience* skills gained during their (virtual) international experience show that skills acquisition needs a deliberate structure with support for maximizing these skills for career success. Students have gained confidence to deal with unexpected events but feel less brave about their own ability to adapt to new environments. Probably in a similar manner as mentioned above regarding cultural awareness.

Students have absolutely gained *Empathy & Cultural Understanding* skills while being on a (virtual) international experience. The same applies to *Creativity & Initiative* according to the self-evaluation. When it comes to *Teamwork*, the students seem confident but 'humbled' after their (virtual) international experience. With only one person indicating he/she feels not confident in expressing their opinion in a group.

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[5] https://erasmusjobs.org/docs/Skills_needed_by_employers-ERASMUSJOBS.pdf
[6] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/top-10-work-skills-of-tomorrow-how-long-it-takes-to-learn-them/
[7] Career outcomes of learning abroad: national report, Davina Potts, IEAA Australia, 2020.

The Comments: NSCC Students & the CP App

When the NSCC students in the pilot project were asked whether they would recommend the CareerProfessor App to other students, they unanimously stated their agreement. Below are the comments the students provided.

"The gamification of learning about new cultures is ideal for today's, short attention span, increasingly multicultural world."

"I would definitely recommend the CareerProfessor app to students that are planning to work in a different country and for regular students as well. The CareerProfessor app is a great tool that helps students understand other countries' cultures and prepares them for their environment in a fun and interactive atmosphere and even gives some tips at the end of each level. And when unlocking a country, on the CareerProfessor website you can view all the information about that country like country facts, feedback teamwork, cultural tips and many others. I think that this is extremely helpful for students that are going to work in a different country. Also, I personally learned a lot of business, social and job hunting facts about different countries like Spain, France, Columbia, Nigeria, Indonesia and many others."

"It's amazing the number of differences in interactions in each culture that I hadn't even stopped to think about. The job-hunting tab was a treasure, it gave me an extra degree of confidence for preparing to get a job in my host country."

"When I was playing the CareerProfessor app I started thinking more about how people in different countries behave in different situations, what I should do/say and what to avoid. I also started thinking more about people's culture when interacting with them and taking into consideration any misunderstanding that may be caused. For example, I learned that in the Indonesian language "blue" is how some Indonesian address foreigners meanwhile in Russian when we call someone "blue" it means they are gay. This may be confusing between a Russian and Indonesian and can cause a conflict."

"I will recommend this app to a friend because this app gives a lot of information if you are planning to work internationally or apply for a job abroad. Learning from this app is very valuable in that aspect and I want my friends to be successful in their career and get all the knowledge and tips to improve themselves before stepping into the real world."

"I learned that many cultural norms differ across the globe and most importantly different culture communicates differently. As a result, in business meetings it is critical to know what people mean to understand and work as a team. Thus, knowing how they communicate helped me to understand them better and as a result work with them efficiently. (Our 'International Business' program has a lot of international students and this helped me a lot for leading group projects)."

"I am a culture enthusiastic person, I knew some of the teachings and information before using CareerProfessor. But what I love about the app is that - information is organized in such a way that if you are looking for guidance before starting your career or putting yourself out in Industry this is one of the best apps I have come across. I especially love how there are levels like game which really kept me going on and on to learn more in a very fun way. The concept is designed well in my point of view."

"The gamification component is amazing and has relevant information regarding experiencing different cultures when going on an exchange so the students can have a better picture of what there is to come when they are abroad. Valuable tips are giving in all sections, social, job hunting and, career advice, cv writing, etc. Good job CareerProfessor.works! ☺"

The Tech: NSCC Dashboard & Coverage Module

CareerProfessor uses a client dashboard allowing NSCC staff to (re-)invite and/or message students. Different staff can be assigned different roles, allowing them different functionalities and actions within the CP platform.

The students using the CP App provide input upon which monthly reports are being generated, helping an institution to better understand their student population (see figure 1 and 2 below covering gender and nationalities) and their employability metrics (see figure 8 below covering happiness with study choice).
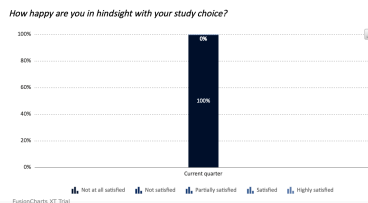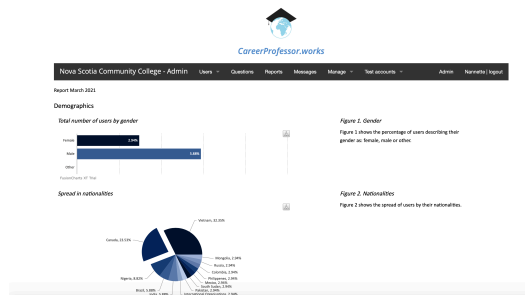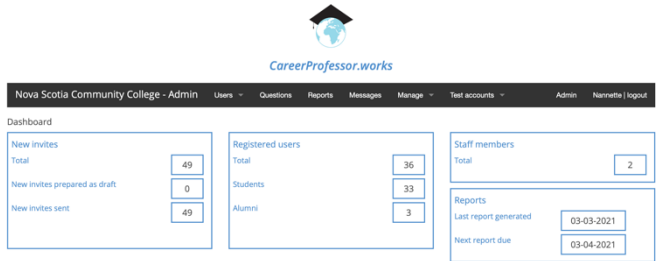
The technical rollout of the CP App requires little involvement from NSCC staff. Once the landing page and client dashboard is set up, the invitation process using Mandrill is easy and user-friendly. The screenshots below show the account overview (with 90.8% - 100% deliverability) and a high open (75%) and click (50%) rate after just one invitation and no reminders.
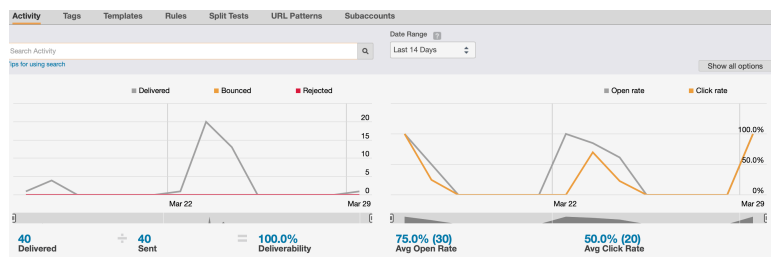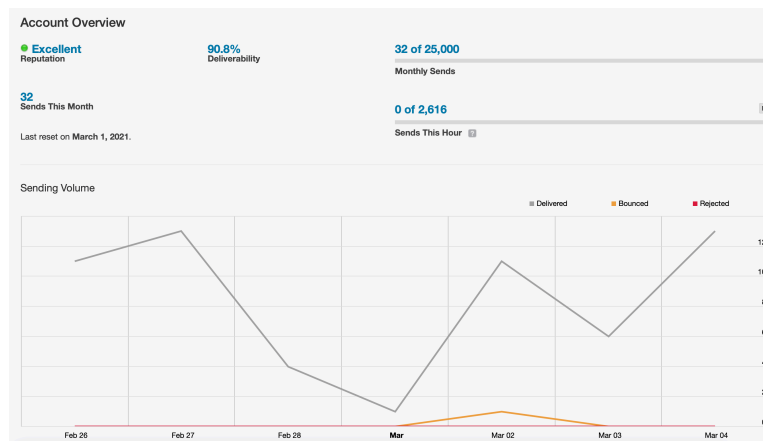
The Results: MOBILITY IMPACT SURVEY

Mobility Impact

Studying abroad is so much more than just a 'fun experience'. The overall journey will have an impact not only on your personal but also your professional life, as it will equip you with the necessary skills to succeed in a modern society and will enhance your future career prospects. Through your (virtual) international study experience you will:

- Become aware different cultures do things differently
- Learn to work in a multi-cultural team
- Understand the impact of cultural diversity
- Learn other languages
- Become more flexible
- Look for creative and out-of-the-box solutions

Exercise: Please reflect on the 3 questions below, then write down your answers.

Question 1: What skills do you believe you have developed during your (virtual) international experience that will be useful for your future career? Please provide concrete examples if possible.
Answer 1:

I. *Cultural Awareness* was mentioned by most students (4x).
II. Followed by Adaptability, Resilience and Time Management (3x each).
III. Next Flexibility, Creativity, Communication and Empathy were mentioned (2x each).
IV. The least mentioned skills were Strategic Thinking, Self-confidence, Patience, Technical skills, Assertiveness, Problem-solving, Teamwork, Leadership and English (1x each).

* Cultural Awareness: "The App helped me to understand other customs in order to learn to respect them. Understand that in Nigeria, if an older person invites you to lunch, they are the one who pays the bill; otherwise, I can make a person feel bad; or talking about personal matters in a French work environment is definitely frowned upon."

* Cultural Awareness: "I've learned that you can't take anything about other cultures for granted and being aware of knowing or not knowing these subtle differences can make or break relationships with people from other cultures. It is better to ask yourself if there is a reason why a person overreacts to something not important from my point of view or why the person does not react at all to something that does matter to me."

* Cultural Awareness: "next time I'll have to make a presentation in front of people from other countries, I'll know I will study first the other culture, but also know they will probably make an effort to understand me; and both things will make me feel more comfortable in that kind of situations."

* Communication: "The App allowed me to identify communication strategies and tactics that allow the communication process to flow more smoothly and avoid mistakes and/or misunderstandings that can easily ruin a negotiation process."

"During this pilot project, I developed resume and interview skills, what to avoid on a resume/interview and what to include. For example, I learned a maturity skill in providing reflections for provocative and surprising questions during an interview. Also, if you do not have any questions at the end of the interview it is better to say, 'this was a great interview, and you answered all my questions'. For resume, I learned that you must avoid grammatical errors because recruiters often will not continue reading the resume if you have grammatical errors. Also, I learned that you should not post anything disturbing on social media because recruiters may visit your social media accounts. Instead, make sure that your social media represents a good image of you."

Question 2: Has the CareerProfessor app helped you to think more about and/or prepared you better for the cultural differences in working with people from other cultures?
Answer 2:

○ *To a great extent, say 9 out of 15 students (60%)*

○ To some extent, say 6 out of 15 students (40%)

○ Not at all, say 0 students

Question 3: Would you recommend using the CareerProfessor app in preparing students for a mobility experience?
Answer 3:

○ *Yes, say 14 out of 15 students (93,3%)*

○ Maybe, say 1 out of 15 students (6,7%)

○ No, say 0 students

Annex 1: CareerProfessor **Career Route Planner**

Career Route Planner©

By CareerProfessor.works

Career Route Planner exercises created for NSCC International by CareerProfessor.works

Webinar
5 March 2021: **Employability Lab Webinar: Maximizing your Virtual Exchange Impact**

Self-evaluation of the 5 Key Mobility Skills

One of the most important parts about studying abroad is the skills you gain. They will be of value in both your professional and personal life.

Your experience abroad will help you gain and strengthen these five key mobility skills. On top of that, these skills are sought after by (prospective) employers, making you a valuable job candidate.

5 SKILLS GAINED THROUGH MOBILITY

- CULTURAL AWARENESS
- ADAPTABILITY & RESILIENCE
- EMPATHY & TOLERANCE
- CREATIVITY & INITIATIVE
- TEAMWORK

Instructions self-evaluation questionnaire: *Please read the below statements carefully and on a scale of 1-5 (with 1=Strongly Disagree, 3=Somewhat Agree and 5=Strongly Agree.), rate with a number that you feel best reflects your knowledge, skills and attitudes. Answer as honest as possible, it is called 'self-evaluation' for a reason. Remember, there are no correct or incorrect answers, or trick questions.*

Cultural Awareness

I have a clear sense of my own cultural identity.	
I am aware of how my culture influences my perception of what is "normal" in behaviours, communication styles or values.	
I am aware of the customs, traditions, religion in the host country.	

Adaptability & Resilience

I understand that open-mindedness regarding new challenges is important.	
I am able to adapt to new environments.	
I feel confident enough to deal with unexpected events.	

Empathy & Tolerance

Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine why they reacted in a certain manner.	
I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the other person's point of view.	
I enjoy making other people feel good about themselves or the situation.	

Creativity & Initiative

I know how to develop an idea and put it into practice.	
I can express myself in an original and authentic manner.	
I am able to think outside of the box to bring new ideas to solve problems or seek solutions to a particular situation.	

Teamwork

I am able to work collaboratively in a variety of teams.	
I am able to interact with people who hold different interests, values, or perspectives.	
I feel confident in expressing my honest opinion in a group.	

Mobility Impact
Studying abroad is so much more than just a 'fun experience'. The overall journey will have an impact not only on your personal but also your professional life, as it will equip you with the necessary skills to succeed in a modern society and will enhance your future career prospects. Through your (virtual) international study experience you will:

- Become aware different cultures do things differently
- Learn to work in a multi-cultural team
- Understand the impact of cultural diversity
- Learn other languages
- Become more flexible
- Look for creative and out-of-the-box solutions

Exercise: Please reflect on the 3 questions below, then write down your answers.

1. What skills do you believe you have developed during your (virtual) international experience that will be useful for your future career? Please provide concrete examples if possible.

2. Has the CareerProfessor app helped you to think more about and/or prepared you better for the cultural differences in working with people from other cultures?

○ To a great extent, because … (please elaborate)

○ To some extent, because … (please elaborate)

○ Not at all, because … (please elaborate)

3. Would you recommend using the CareerProfessor app in preparing students for a mobility experience?

○ Yes, because …(please elaborate)

○ No, because …(please elaborate)

○ Maybe, (please elaborate)

Annex 2: CareerProfessor **Skills Toolkit**

CareerProfessor Skills Toolkit

The CareerProfessor Skills Toolkit is created for NSCC International by CareerProfessor.works
"A mobility exchange is a lecture in life - You have to make it work!"

UNDERSTANDING SKILLS

What are the skills you gain when going on a (virtual) exchange? The list below provides the main skills you gain and helps you to understand their importance once you start (looking for a) job.[1]

Adaptability

The ability to adapt to changes has never been more important than it is now. Employers are looking for people who are not afraid of ambiguity and acknowledge that change is part of our lives. Adaptable people are often aware of their strengths and shortcomings, and this self-awareness helps them evaluate a new situation and adjust accordingly. They are open to challenges, willing to get out of their comfort zone and curious to learn new things.

Communication Skills

Everyone possesses some sort of communication skills. However, the ability to convey the right message to the right person, clearly and convincingly, to listen carefully, and to have a coherent argumentation is what employers' value in applicants. Regardless of the field of expertise, the ability to get on well with other people is a must. Regardless of your job and sector, it is very likely that you will have to communicate with people to reach goals and find solutions.

Creativity

Having creative skills means being able to think outside the box, bringing different perspectives to the table, sharing original ideas, and finding smart solutions to problems. Creative people are usually open-minded, willing to take risks, and are not afraid to express their ideas. Employers are looking for people who can propose new approaches and can introduce new, successful ways to deal with work demands and challenges.

Cultural Awareness

Cultural differences in the workplace and when job hunting is not 'just' about people being from different places. Cultural awareness refers to all attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and values that are different from our own. The ability to work efficiently and avoid clashes with people from a different cultural background will be highly valued in the current global business environment.

Teamwork Skills

Employer's value teamwork and will look for previous examples of teamwork in the application of a prospective employee. It is important to demonstrate that you have the ability and experience of working effectively with other people towards common targets and goals.

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[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRR-PAEf-dw

Proactivity

Being able to think critically and take initiative is highly valued in modern workplaces. Proactive people can estimate a situation, plan ahead, and lead towards the right solution. Confidence and a positive attitude are common characteristics of proactive people. Employers value employees that can set goals, take action to meet deadlines, and are able to identify possible problems and drawbacks.

Problem Solving Skills

Problem-solving skills are important in any position and any industry. Employers are looking for people with analytical and creative minds with the ability to handle challenging or unexpected situations in the workplace. A person with problem-solving skills is characterized by their motivation and persistence, and their capability to analyse a situation, calmly develop a solution and implement a strategy.

Professional orientation

Being professionally oriented and having the ability to identify opportunities and risks in one's field of expertise is highly valued by employers. It is equally important to be willing to accept feedback from others to improve your work and your professional skills. Being on top of things within the field of expertise shows commitment to growth and maturity.

Source: CareerProfessor.works – the employability app for internationally minded students.

CareerProfessor.works™

GAINING & TRANSLATING SKILLS

Understanding that employers look for a particular skill and being able to showcase a prospective employer you have acquired that skill during a mobility exchange is key to job hunting success.

Adaptability
What are recruiters looking for? The ability to:
• Respond positively & quickly to changing circumstances
• Deal effectively with changing priorities & unpredictable conditions
• Adapt easily to changing situations & environments
How to showcase this in your application? Via:
• Side & part-time jobs
• Extra-curricular activities
• International experience
How to showcase this in a job interview? Through:
• Your willingness to learn new things & take up new tasks
• A positive, 'can-do' attitude
• Making it clear you considering various scenarios

Communication Skills
What are recruiters looking for? The ability to:
• Convey a message clearly
• Motivate & tailor your communication style to various audiences
• Presentation skills
How to showcase this in your application? Via:
• Readability of your application documents
• Presentations you've delivered
• Blogs, articles, publications you've written
How to showcase this in a job interview? Through:
• Listening carefully
• Showing empathy & being polite
• Coherent argumentation & a convincing presentation

Creativity
What are recruiters looking for? The ability to:
• Think creatively using both hard & soft skills
• Think outside the box
• Take a proactive approach
How to showcase this in your application? Via:
• International experience(s) & travel
• Extracurricular activities & community involvement
• Team projects, competitions, event organisation, hobbies
How to showcase this in a job interview? Through:
• An unexpected approach towards complex issues
• Providing innovative answers
• Showing commitment & enthusiasm & willingness to learn

Cultural Awareness
What are recruiters looking for? The ability to:
• Understand cultural differences
• Learn from others
• Act with tolerance towards others
How to showcase this in your application? Via:
• Global Experience (it can be study, work, volunteer or internship experience)
• Projects with international teams
• Travelling as a hobby or language skills
How to showcase this in a job interview? Through:
• Curiosity for new ideas
• Describing projects in international teams
• Pointing out interesting areas (of learning) when working in a diverse team

Teamwork Skills
What are recruiters looking for? The ability to:
• Collaborate with others
• Learn from others
• Try to see things from the other person's perspective
How to showcase this in your application? Via:
• Team (sports) & project experiences
• Voluntary work, community involvement or side jobs
• A healthy mix of "I" & "we" statements
How to showcase this in a job interview? Through:
• Self-confidence without arrogance
• Understanding of your own working style
• Talking about your role within a team effort

Proactivity
What are recruiters looking for? The ability to:
• See (growth) opportunities
• Move ahead
• Couple curiosity to leadership potential
How to showcase this in your application? Via:
• Side & part-time jobs
• Extra-curricular activities
• Project management tasks
How to showcase this in a job interview? Through:
• Your willingness to learn new things & take up new tasks
• Self-reflection on past experience
• Demonstrating open-mindedness

Problem Solving Skills
What are recruiters looking for? The ability to:
• Take initiative & know when to ask for help
• Develop a strategy to resolve a problem
• Demonstrate calmness in front of problems
How to showcase this in your application? Via:
• International experience(s)
• Event organisation
• Research & team projects
How to showcase this in a job interview? Through:
• Discussing relevant stories about your ability to resolve issues
• Demonstrating logical thinking
• Your reaction when challenged

Professional orientation
What are recruiters looking for? The ability to:
• To take ownership
• Recognise when to work independently & when the help of colleagues is required
• Motivate & inspire others
How to showcase this in your application? Via:
• Extracurricular activities
• Ease with which you integrate in new destination
• Choice of study subjects or thesis
How to showcase this in a job interview? Through:
• Analysis of & solutions to problems
• Ability to set-up new social circle
• Showcasing your awareness of a situation & motivation to make 'it' work

Source: CareerProfessor.works – the employability app for internationally minded students.

CareerProfessor Skills Toolkit

D. SBCI PROGRAMS WITH WORK EXPERIENCE

Program Name	Course Code	Year 1 or 2 WIL offered	International Learning Opp WIL?			Notes
			Yes	No	Partial	
Office Administration	FFI 2995	1		X		one-year program
Hospitality Tourism	TRHS 2995	1	X			same as ACCT 4995
Business Administration	BUSI 4995	2	X			LO 6 specific to program
Baking Pastry Arts	COOK 2993	1			X	LO 1 & 7 specific to program
BA Accounting	ACCT 4995	2	X			LO 6 specific to program
BA Financial Services	FINA 4995	2	X			LO 6 specific to program
Business Fundamentals	BSFD 2995	1			X	one-year program
Culinary	COOK 2995	1			X	one-year program LO 6 & 10 specific to program
Event Management	EVNT 3960	1	X			LO 6 specific to program
Finance	FINC 3960	1	X			same as ACCT 4995
Graphic & Print Production	GAPP 2500	1	X			all LOs meet
Graphic & Print Production	GAPP 4500	2	X			LO 7 specific to program
Graphic Design	GDES 4500	2		X		LO 7 specific to program
Human Resources	HRES 6995	1			X	very HR specific
Library Information Technology	LIBR 4995	2		X		LO 6 & 10 specific to LIT
Medical Office Administration	MOAS 2995	1				one-year program
Music Business	BART 2500	1				Curriculum under development
Music Production & Engineering	SOUN 4500	2				Curriculum under development
Paralegal	LEGL 4995	2			X	LO 5 specific to program
Professional Photography	PPHO 2500	2	X			LO 7 specific to program
Professional Sales	PSAL 3235	1	X			one-year program
Public Relations	PREL 6995	1			X	one-year program - LO 1,7 & 10 specific to program
Radio Television Journalism	RTVJ 2500		X			LO 7 specific to program
Radio Television Journalism	RTVJ 4500	2	X			LO 7 specific to program
Screen Arts	SART 4500	2	X			LO 7 specific to program

E. SAMPLE LOS FOR WORK EXPERIENCE COURSES

Learning Outcomes Learners are required to successfully complete each course outcome. In keeping with NSCC's approach to portfolio learning, learners will have demonstrated the ability to:

1. Identify personal learning outcomes and share with employer.
2. Work well with other team members.
3. Maintain a regular attendance in a punctual manner.
4. Comply with the code of professional and ethical conduct required by the workforce or profession.
5. Follow instructions and perform assigned tasks and job functions in a satisfactory manner. Apply new concepts and skill appropriate for entry level positions within an approved field related to the learner's program of study.
6. Apply new concepts and skills appropriate for an entry-level position within the field of XXXX.
7. Organize tasks and take initiative when required to work on their own.
8. Assess their own performance.
9. Maintain a professional journal including reflecting on learning accomplishment during the work experience.