



Annual Report

2025-26

nsc***cc***



| Pjila'si (Welcome)

| President and Board Chair message

Our 2026 annual report highlights the College's impact as the province's strategic workforce partner, preparing students to graduate job-ready through career-focused programs, innovation and strong industry connections.

This past year brought significant change to the College, requiring difficult but necessary decisions to ensure a stable, sustainable financial foundation.

Through careful stewardship and a clear focus on priorities, we presented a balanced 2026-27 budget while continuing to deliver on our core mission. We are positioning the College to respond effectively to future opportunities and any potential challenges by modernizing processes, optimizing operations and strategically focusing our resources.

Throughout this period of change, students remained at the centre of every decision, as did our commitment to maintaining high standards in program quality and student supports.

We remain focused on industry-driven programming, aligning our offerings with labour market demands and supporting key sector needs, including skilled construction trades, health, energy and defence.

Innovation continues to guide our work, through applied research solutions, partnerships and responsive program design, helping businesses and communities adapt and grow.

We look to our future with confidence. Our foundation is strong, our purpose is clear and our role in supporting Nova Scotia's future has never been more vital. Together, we will continue to evolve, innovate and deliver the high-quality education and training our province depends on.

You can find our 2025-26 Financial Statements at nsc.ca/financials

With gratitude,



Anna Burke
Acting President,
NSCC



Jackie Poirier
Chair, NSCC Board
of Governors



Left to right:
Gurjeet (Sheet Metal Systems '25),
Oscar (Sheet Metal Systems '25), Heather Cruickshanks
(NSCC IST Council Chair) and Orin (Sheet Metal Systems)

A strong, skilled trades workforce for Nova Scotia's future

Nova Scotia's future depends on a skilled trades workforce. From housing to healthcare to clean energy and shipbuilding, demand for skilled workers continues to grow across the province. To help meet that demand, NSCC has partnered with the Province to launch the NSCC Institute of Skilled Trades (IST) – a province-wide approach to trades education that brings together NSCC pre-apprenticeship programming and apprenticeship training under a new, industry-led model.

“This is the first time NSCC, Apprenticeship, government and industry are all working this closely together. With industry helping guide decisions, we can better align training with what employers need and help students build strong, long-lasting careers.” – Heather Cruickshanks, NSCC Institute of Skilled Trades Council Chair

nsc.ca/industry-driven-programming

Industry-driven programming

As the province's strategic workforce partner, NSCC continuously works with industry and government to evolve programming to ensure it meets current and future needs.

Innovative and responsive programming

Labour market needs evolve rapidly, and NSCC continues to adjust its program mix to ensure learners are prepared for in-demand careers across the province. In 2025–26, the College expanded capacity in priority sectors such as healthcare, skilled trades and early childhood education.

An annual program health review process ensures program offerings are adjusted to reflect enrolment trends, industry needs, and program performance. This includes responding to the growing demand for shorter, flexible training pathways. Expanded online, blended, and accelerated delivery, together with stronger alignment across Academic Schools, is increasing access to education while enabling NSCC to respond more quickly and effectively to Nova Scotia's changing workforce demands.

Evolving health programming to meet Nova Scotia's changing care needs

NSCC continues to evolve its Health and Human Services programming in partnership with government, regulators and industry to meet Nova Scotia's changing health care needs. Redesigned offerings including accelerated Practical Nursing and streamlined Continuing Care and Disability Support Professional programs, equip graduates with current, industry-aligned competencies. Targeted seat expansions have increased capacity while maintaining consistent delivery, program quality, and strong alignment with safety and regulatory standards.

National leadership in wind energy training

In 2026, NSCC received Global Wind Organization (GWO) accreditation for its Wind Turbine Technician program,

making NSCC the only post secondary institution in Canada to hold this designation. The accreditation allows students to complete required industry training as part of their program and supports future recertification as their careers progress.

NSCC Institute of Skilled Trades

Working together to make NSCC the best skilled trades training institution in Canada

In February 2026, the Province of Nova Scotia and NSCC launched the NSCC Institute of Skilled Trades (IST) to strengthen and modernize skilled trades education across the province. The NSCC IST is not a physical campus but an industry-led model that brings together all NSCC pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship technical training in construction, industrial and manufacturing, motive power and service trades.

Guided by an industry-led council that includes key leaders from various trades sectors, Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, other government departments and the College, the NSCC IST was created to ensure programs remain tightly aligned with evolving industry needs and technologies. The Institute is also supported by a provincial government investment of \$25 million over 5 years to enhance College classrooms, equipment and workshops across the province to meet training needs.

The work of strengthening skilled trades is well underway with several in-depth programming reviews informed by industry, already complete with more scheduled. Additionally, to help foster academic excellence and ensure graduates are workforce ready, all NSCC IST programs (effective September 2026) will have a mandatory attendance requirement of 90%.

1,844 students enrolled in NSCC IST

39 NSCC IST programs

Supporting Canada's defence sector

Through the College's skilled trades and digital technology programming, and longstanding partnership with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and defence-adjacent employers, NSCC plays a critical role in ensuring Nova Scotia has a skilled, job-ready workforce to meet future demands.

Preparing a skilled defence workforce

NSCC delivers training through the Non-Commissioned Member Subsidized Training and Education Plan (NCMSTEP), supporting workforce development in Canada's defence sector. By providing industry-aligned programs in high-demand technical fields, including aircraft maintenance and aviation systems, NSCC helps prepare skilled graduates to meet evolving defence workforce needs.

Additionally, for over 20 years, NSCC has developed customized training solutions that respond to military priorities. Through a long-standing contract with the Department of National Defence, the College delivers tailored training where new military recruits gain hands-on experience in trades like carpentry, electrical and plumbing.

Military-connected College

As a military-connected College, NSCC not only trains new recruits, but also supports current and retired CAF members as they transition into second careers, leveraging 130+ programs.

Partnering with defence-related employers

NSCC is nationally recognized as a leader in skilled trades education, positioning the College as a key partner for defence-related employers, most notably through initiatives like the Irving Shipbuilding Marine Trades Initiative (MTI). Through MTI, NSCC delivers fully funded, high demand trades training aligned with marine manufacturing and shipbuilding needs.

Aligning training with the National Defence Industrial Strategy

Canada's defence sector has identified 17 Key Industrial Capabilities (KICs) across land, marine, aerospace and space domains. NSCC currently has expertise in 7 of these areas: training and simulation, remotely piloted systems and autonomous technologies, sonar and acoustic systems, advanced materials, clean technology, artificial intelligence and cyber resilience. This makes NSCC a well-positioned partner in supporting Canada's evolving defence and sector priorities.

Responding to emerging skill demands

As Canada prepares to modernize its naval capabilities, NSCC is actively engaged in workforce development planning related to the Canadian Patrol Submarine Program. While submarines are expected to be built internationally, long-term maintenance, upkeep and repairs will be based in Canada, positioning Nova Scotia to serve in a leading role.

NSCC is working to identify how existing programs, including marine trades, welding, electrical, engineering and business disciplines, can be enhanced to support submarine in-service support requirements. While the first submarines are not expected to arrive for several years, preparing a skilled, job-ready workforce must begin now to ensure Nova Scotia has the talent needed to support Canada's defence strategy.



Left to right:
Jack (Aircraft Maintenance Technician – Structures),
Nick (Aircraft Maintenance Technology – Avionics)

Preparing job-ready graduates for critical military occupations

Through its partnership with the Non-Commissioned Member Subsidized Training and Education Plan (NCMSTEP) of the Canadian Armed Forces, NSCC is helping build a skilled, job-ready aviation workforce. At the Aviation Institute in Dartmouth, students gain hands-on training in aircraft maintenance while preparing for critical military and civilian careers. With paid education, practical experience and direct career pathways, programs like NCMSTEP are strengthening Nova Scotia's aviation, aerospace and defence sectors.

“I’m able to earn an education in a field I’m passionate about while receiving a salary and benefits through the military. In return, the Canadian Armed Forces gains trained professionals who are ready to step into the workforce with the skills and experience they need. It’s a win-win situation that benefits students, the military and Canada’s aviation sector as a whole.” – Nick, Aircraft Maintenance Technology – Avionics student

10.7% of applicants self-identified as military-connected

17 locations across Nova Scotia aligned with major defence and marine communities

nsc.ca/defence-sector



Xiyan, Kingstec Campus

Students leading a provincial wellness movement

NSCC’s Student Wellness Champion initiative is the first provincial student-led model in Canada. It has grown from a two-campus pilot to a framework now used by 11 NSCC campuses and 10 additional post-secondary institutions. This year, Champions delivered over 200 wellness events, engaging students and strengthening peer-to-peer mental health support, wellbeing and academic success. NSCC is now expanding this model through new peer-mentorship and community building programs for designated communities and international students.

“Through this initiative, our campuses have become more inclusive and welcoming, with students feeling a stronger sense of belonging and support. My peers look forward to our weekly wellness events, which have helped encourage conversations around mental health and increased awareness of resources and supports on campus.” – Xiyan, Kingstec Campus

nsc.ca/student-success

Focusing on student success

Helping students succeed in their programs and thrive in the workplace is paramount. The College is implementing a new Student Supports framework that focuses on student preparedness, with an emphasis on early supports for college readiness and targeted supports throughout the student lifecycle.

Increasing early supports

Ensuring students have the support they need early is critical for long-term student success. This is why the College is focusing on early connections to help students before they start their program. This includes services such as career exploration, pre- and post-admission assessments, program readiness, orientation to college-level learning, accommodation intake and planning, and financial preparation.

Improving retention with targeted supports

Student retention is being improved by delivering coordinated, targeted supports. These include resources supporting wellbeing, tutoring and academic support, testing services, accommodation implementation, counselling, care navigation and financial support. The Student Wellness Champion initiative continued to thrive over the last academic year, supporting student mental health and wellbeing, peer-to-peer engagement and academic success. Plans are in place to build similar peer-mentorship and community building programs for designated communities, including Mi’kmaq and Indigenous students, African Nova Scotia and Black students, students with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+ students and international students.

Supporting transition to employment

Workforce attachment is being supported by providing integrated career supports. These include resume and interview preparation, networking opportunities, career fairs, employer connections, and services available both before and after graduation.

Building capacity for culturally-responsive supports

The College continues to advance equity and Reconciliation, and are embedding equity-focused and first-voice roles across key teams. Targeted supports will be provided for Mi’kmaq and Indigenous students, African Nova Scotian and Black students, students with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+ students and international students. Within the Student Supports team, two dedicated offices will be established: one for the Mi’kmaq and Indigenous community and one for the African Nova Scotian and Black community.

2,725 NSCC students engaged in peer-to-peer wellness activities

99% of programs include work-integrated learning

Innovation for provincial needs

As the province’s strategic workforce partner, the College partners with employers and organization to address immediate workforce and applied research needs in priority areas. This includes defence, energy, skilled trades, healthcare system renewal and natural resource development.

Collaborating on energy solutions

Unlocking clean heat from the forest

The College partnered with ACFOR Forestry and Energy and pHathom Technologies to convert forestry waste into clean heat. The first pilot system at Lunenburg Campus used pHathom Technologies’ process to capture CO² from the ACFOR biomass boiler exhaust gas and neutralize the CO² with limestone so that it can safely be added to seawater, providing a pathway for carbon-negative biomass heating. In the next stage, work continues with pHathom on systems to measure and verify the effectiveness of their process in the ocean.

Partner investment in wind energy training

In October 2025, NSCC received funding from the RBC Foundation to advance wind energy education at Kingstec Campus. The investment enhances the Electrical Technician – Wind Energy program, preparing students for careers in Nova Scotia’s rapidly growing renewable energy sector as part of a \$2-million commitment to 5 Atlantic region community colleges. The first round of funding went towards significant shop upgrades.

Innovating to protect out province

Advancing wildfire prevention technology

Nova Scotia company Stevens Solutions and Design developed FireGuardian, a tool that predicts wildfire spread. Tested with the NSCC Applied Geomatics Research Group, the software closely matched actual burn patterns and outperformed existing federal tools. Now validated nationally and accepted into the Government of Canada’s Pathway to Commercialization program, it is poised to help protect communities and critical infrastructure.

Supporting community water resilience

NSCC partnered with the Upper Hammonds Plains Community Land Trust and SimplyCast to develop a community-driven platform that helps residents monitor and understand their groundwater using accessible, real-time data. The project builds water literacy, supports informed decision-making for private well users and demonstrates how applied research and community collaboration can strengthen environmental resilience across Nova Scotia.

Increasing student–industry connectivity

Leading Atlantic Canada’s Labs 4 network

In 2025, NSCC secured federal funding to lead Atlantic Canada’s role in the national Labs 4 network, creating new opportunities for students across the region. Through mentorship, partnerships with other post-secondary institutions and access to research facilities and expertise, the network helps students develop and test their ideas while connecting them with industry and clear paths to bring their work to market.

Advancing power systems with Detect

Student–industry engagement is further strengthened through a \$1.9 million project supported project by Mitacs, a national organization that funds student research with industry partners. With Detect as the industry partner, this is the largest funding partnership of its kind at a Canadian college. Twenty-one students are using advanced technologies such as drones, imaging and AI to modernize Nova Scotia’s power distribution system, improving safety, efficiency and asset management while gaining real-world experience.



Left to right:
Barry Stevens (Stevens Solutions and Design) and
Lauren Douglas (AGRG) at Annapolis Valley Campus

Innovating to protect our province

Barry Stevens, a Mi’kmaq engineer and founder of Stevens Solutions and Design, created FireGuardian, a tool that helps predict how wildfires will spread so communities can prepare and respond more effectively. The idea grew from his earlier work using 3D technology to help people better understand coastal flooding and climate risks. Developed with support from his son, NSCC Applied Geomatics Research Group (AGRG) and students, FireGuardian combines science and Indigenous knowledge to help protect people, communities and critical infrastructure.

“There’s a big difference between having data and being able to act on it. Tools like this (FireGuardian) give communities the ability to generate insight in real time, instead of waiting for updates or relying on outdated systems. Speed matters, especially when a fire can shift direction in minutes.”
– Lauren Douglas, AGRG Research Associate

nsc.ca/innovation

160 students contributing to industry research collaborations

\$192K awarded to student entrepreneurs through Labs 4



Left to right:
College employee, Dewal Boucher-Tyndale
with Reign (Continuing Care '26)

Organizational excellence and efficiency

The College continues to improve efficiency by streamlining processes and delivery, optimizing resources and enhancing coordination across teams to strengthen organizational excellence for employee and student success.

Ensuring a stable, sustainable financial foundation

The College spent the latter part of the last fiscal year preparing to address a deficit and balancing the 2026-27 budget. Guided by input from employees and students, a plan was created to address this financial challenge. The plan enhanced focus on the College's purpose: to deliver career-oriented programs aligned with industry needs and supporting students to graduate ready for the workforce – within financial means. This meant no budget-related impacts to academic programming or faculty positions.

Non-wage savings were first secured through operational efficiencies and cost reductions across departments, while prioritizing activities that support future revenue generation. With most of the budget dedicated to salaries, an organizational review was then completed. As a result, a number of structural changes and job impacts, including position eliminations, were identified. While the work was difficult, every decision was made with care and with the College's mission in mind. Realizing a balanced 2026-27 budget has provided a stable, sustainable financial foundation for the years ahead.

95% participation in Safety 101

85% of employees have participated in cybersecurity awareness training

Fostering a strong environment of safety

In the 2025-26 academic year, NSCC introduced a number of initiatives to enhance physical, psychological and digital safety across the College.

A mandatory online training module – Safety 101 – was introduced to all employees to increase awareness of legislative and regulatory responsibilities and ensure College-wide adherence to occupational health and safety standards. Work is underway to launch a student safety training module this fall.

NSCC also adopted the nationally recognized Run, Hide, Fight protocol to guide community members during an immediate, internal active threat situation. This survivor centric, trauma informed approach provides clear, prioritized actions to help protect individuals in life threatening circumstances.

Cybersecurity remained a major focus, with improvements to password standards, mandatory resets, system protections, and the integration of vendor security requirements into procurement. Maturity assessments informed a new cybersecurity roadmap, while a strengthened vulnerability management program

enhanced proactive risk detection. Expanded awareness efforts and training increased employee engagement and strengthened a culture of digital safety across the College.

This year, core policies defining expectations and behaviours for employees and students were reviewed, aligned and updated to ensure clarity, consistency, accountability and included the advancement of psychological safety across the College community. This work resulted in a new Human Rights, Harassment and Discrimination Policy, updated Sexual Violence Policy, and two distinct community standards policies – one for students and one for employees.

Policy renewal and excellence

NSCC has designed structure and resources around its policy development and renewal process, providing tools and guidance to support consistent, transparent and effective policy and procedure management. These resources help policy stewards and contributors ensure policy-related materials remain accessible, aligned with best practices and responsive to the needs of the College community.

Making an impact

130+

programs offered¹

22K

students welcomed each year¹

26

average age of NSCC students¹

93%

of NSCC students are from Nova Scotia¹

56%

of incoming students have previous post-secondary experience³

37%

of incoming students are first generation to attend post-secondary³

94%

of employed NSCC graduates live and work in Nova Scotia²

94%

of graduates satisfied with their overall NSCC experience²

\$2.2B+

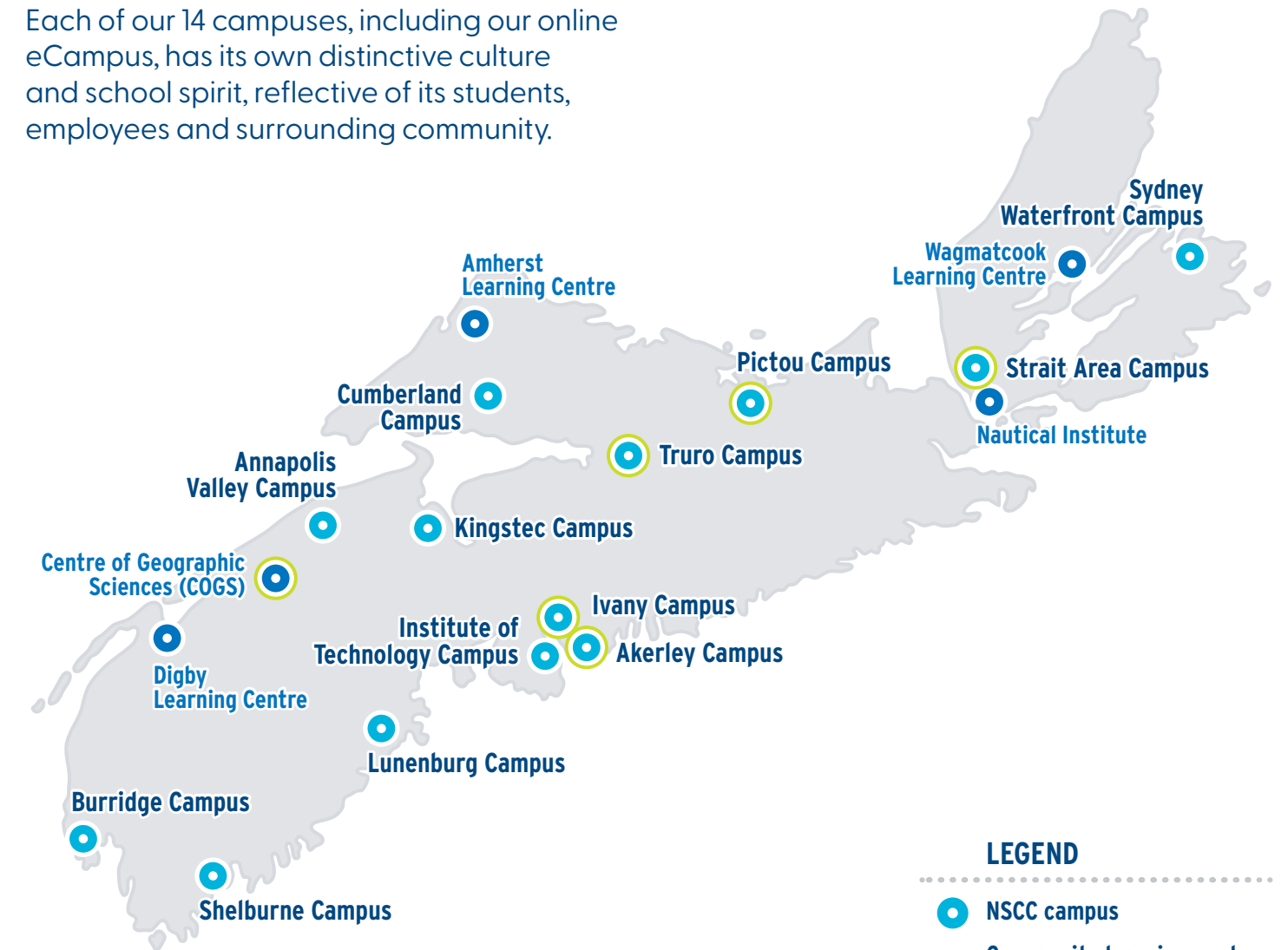
contributed to the Nova Scotia economy by NSCC and its students in 2022-23⁴

Sources:

1. NSCC Institutional Research
2. NSCC 2025 Graduate Survey
3. NSCC 2025 Fall Student Success Survey
4. The Economic Value of Nova Scotia Community College, Lightcast 2023

Nova Scotia. We're all over it.

Each of our 14 campuses, including our online eCampus, has its own distinctive culture and school spirit, reflective of its students, employees and surrounding community.



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