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HERE
& NOW

NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

STRATEGIC PLAN

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Nova Scotia Community College believes the future of the province lies in the power of learning. NSCC is committed to the success and fulfillment of every student - in education, in career and in life. When our students succeed, we succeed.

Our intimate interconnection with Nova Scotia's communities and labour markets inspires us to continually improve our programs and services and our inclusive and equitable supports for students.

Strong, diverse learning communities are fundamental to strengthening the economic and social fabric of the province. We are proud of our access agenda and are dedicated to inclusive and comprehensive educational pathways.

It is now time for NSCC to bring renewed energy, bold leadership and innovative thinking to our work - on behalf of our students and our province.

Here & Now is the refreshed Strategic Plan we created together. It builds on current energy and momentum. It is the road map that ensures we stay focused on serving the constantly evolving needs of NSCC students, the labour market and the provincial economy. It provides clarity and purpose for our 2,000-strong team of committed employees. It guides all that we do, every day.

There is an entrepreneurial spirit in each of us that, given motivation and inspiration, can influence culture and ignite community prosperity.

Through our refreshed Strategic Plan, we look forward to a future of economic growth and social prosperity where everyone in Nova Scotia can realize their potential and achieve career success.

I am honoured to work with every one of my colleagues across the province to develop and inspire our workforce, and to make real, meaningful change in Nova Scotia.

With deep appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Bureaux'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Don Bureaux

OUR VISION

**TRANSFORMING NOVA SCOTIA
ONE LEARNER AT A TIME.**

OUR MISSION

**BUILDING NOVA SCOTIA'S
ECONOMY AND QUALITY OF
LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION
AND INNOVATION.**

OUR PROMISE

**TO EMPOWER THOSE WHO
STRIVE TO KNOW MORE,
DO MORE, BE MORE.**

NSCC is built for the makers and builders, those who invent and take action, and those who lend a helping hand. All eager to move forward and make their marks in the world.

NSCC empowers these students through the most innovative, challenging and applied education you can get in Nova Scotia and beyond. They learn from expert faculty who have forged their own career success and what they learn here is hardwired to industry. They are supported by a team of 2,000 highly skilled employees who come to work every day, motivated to see them succeed.

Our graduates have the advanced skills and confidence to propel them in a lifetime of learning and accomplishment. They emerge as practitioners, innovators, researchers and entrepreneurs. They join a diverse community of talented alumni who continue to blaze their own trails in significant and creative ways.

They build their careers, their communities and this province.

And they are the reason we built NSCC.

OUR VALUES

**NSCC'S VALUES REST AT THE CORE OF WHAT WE DO
AND HOW WE DO IT. WE HOLD OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE
FOR THE EMBODIMENT OF THESE VALUES IN OUR WORK
TOGETHER EVERY DAY.**

Accessibility

We commit to opening pathways and providing equitable opportunities for students to engage fully in our programs and services.

Diversity

We are intentional in our efforts to build diversity as a core strength. We recognize diversity of knowledge, worldview and experience as an asset and a key driver of success in advancing innovation, creativity and excellence.

Employee Success

We believe that engaged people make the difference in our environment of continuous learning. Teamwork and creativity are encouraged and innovation is expected to ensure the success of our students and our organization.

Inclusion

We are committed to creating a culture of genuine inclusion that is free from discrimination and harassment and where our students, employees and the communities we serve are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

Innovation

We believe there is always a better way. We find it by inspiring curiosity, openness and creativity in the pursuit of excellence.

Public Accountability

We work with integrity in every area of the College and believe we must be fundamentally accountable for the public's trust in all that we do.

Safety

NSCC is dedicated to ensuring the health and safety of our students and employees. We are committed to working collaboratively to foster a culture of safety, and to improving safety practices, across the organization.

Student Success

We empower students with applied learning, services and supports to propel them on their way to career success and fulfillment.

Sustainability

We commit to the continuous development of the social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of the College and our communities.

NSCC'S DISTINCT INNOVATION OPPORTUNITY

The "community" in Nova Scotia Community College is at the heart of why we exist and what we do. NSCC's campuses are economic and social catalysts in the communities they serve. They are community assets that provide Nova Scotians with inclusive and flexible access to the core literacies and the specialized, industry-driven training required for tomorrow's workforce.

With 13 rural and urban campuses and three learning centres across the province, NSCC is uniquely positioned to inspire, cultivate and accelerate community innovation, entrepreneurship and cultural prosperity. NSCC's network of learning communities fosters adaptable and scalable innovation tailored to the specific strengths and needs of Nova Scotia's diverse communities and regions. One of NSCC's key differentiators is our ability to connect expert faculty and students with local workplaces.

Innovation is a particular challenge for Nova Scotia's small and medium enterprises. NSCC's innovation agenda is grounded in practical, concrete and local approaches to problem solving. Our culture of collaboration enables local institutions, industries and service providers to share the resources and technologies that spark local business development, cultural and social activism, and innovation.

Canadian colleges unlock local innovation and empower student and community entrepreneurs.

Fast-tracking Inclusive Innovation for a Successful Canada, CIGAN Submission to the Government of Canada's Innovation Agenda, September 2016

EMBRACING THE FUTURE

THE CALL TO ACTION

NSCC is a vibrant, growing and nationally recognized comprehensive College that provides Nova Scotians with the applied learning and skills they need to be successful in the province's communities and the regional, national and global economies.

This is a pivotal time for Nova Scotia. The province's future success depends on our collective ability to take cohesive and aligned action in order to realize the full potential of emerging sectors and flourishing cultures. The future prosperity and well-being of Nova Scotia's communities will determine the overall strength of the province's economy and quality of life. The One Nova Scotia Commission's *Now or Never* report and collaborative action plan, *We Choose Now*, amplify NSCC's essential role in spurring local growth and unlocking the economic and social potential of Nova Scotia's communities.

The five years since the 2012 release of NSCC's strategic plan, *Now More than Ever*, have brought unprecedented and accelerated change in students' requirements and expectations. Competition and collaboration in Nova Scotia's post-secondary sector have opened up opportunities locally, nationally and internationally.

Guided by *Now More than Ever*, we took a strategic, structured and sequential approach to delivering on the Plan's promise to our students, our employees, and the province. We developed new strategies through consultations with hundreds of internal and external stakeholders. These current strategic documents prioritize the highest value opportunities for NSCC to lead the ongoing transformation of post-secondary education taking place in Nova Scotia and across the world.

Here & Now consolidates our best thinking and connects multi-year, College-wide initiatives that will drive annual business planning for the next five years and beyond. It embraces current and future change imperatives through four strategic priorities and 18 goals. These goals and priorities demonstrate how NSCC is taking strategic, specific action to deliver on our vision, mission and promise to students.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

AT A GLANCE





STUDENT SUCCESS

NSCC IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING EVERY STUDENT HAS ACCESS TO PROGRAMS AND COURSES DESIGNED TO SUPPORT THEIR LEARNING NEEDS AT EVERY STAGE OF THEIR CAREERS, AND THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES.



STUDENT SUCCESS: GOALS

ADVISING

Personalized student and educator relationships that meet individual learning needs are core to NSCC's inclusive and respectful learning community. The Collaborative College Advising Program provides a seamless service experience for all students no matter how they engage - online, through apprenticeship, and in face-to-face, blended or customized program delivery modes. The collaborative advising program spans the full student life cycle, from prospect to alumni. It provides students with the tools, resources and advice to define, plan and achieve their learning, personal and career goals.

NSCC will support student success. We will:

- ensure every student has a student services advisor and an academic advisor to support their success through their entire College experience
- support student success through implementation of common learning systems and processes

FINANCIAL AID

Financial stress is a primary risk factor in a student's ability to remain in school and be successful. The pressure of balancing a job and school is the number one reason students abandon their post-secondary education. NSCC has made great progress implementing an improved financial aid system to address students' toughest economic challenges. The NSCC Foundation is working closely with Student Services to expand, promote and award student financial aid.

NSCC will alleviate student financial need. We will:

- expand students' access to early and renewable financial awards and urgent aid
- embed financial literacy in students' college experience

"We believe in helping people achieve their dreams of higher education - because when education is accessible to all, everyone benefits."

RON JOYCE, Philanthropist

STUDENT PROCESSES & SYSTEMS

Students' expectations for mobile and flexible service, and seamless and cohesive digital learning experiences are rapidly changing. NSCC is committed to adapting and embracing innovation to ensure students have access to online services and the educational technologies they need. NSCC is building a culture of service excellence to meet students' expectations across their full student experience.

NSCC will enhance the student experience. We will:

- increase students' access to online and mobile programs and services
- enhance students' self-serve options
- expand service excellence and continuous improvement initiatives

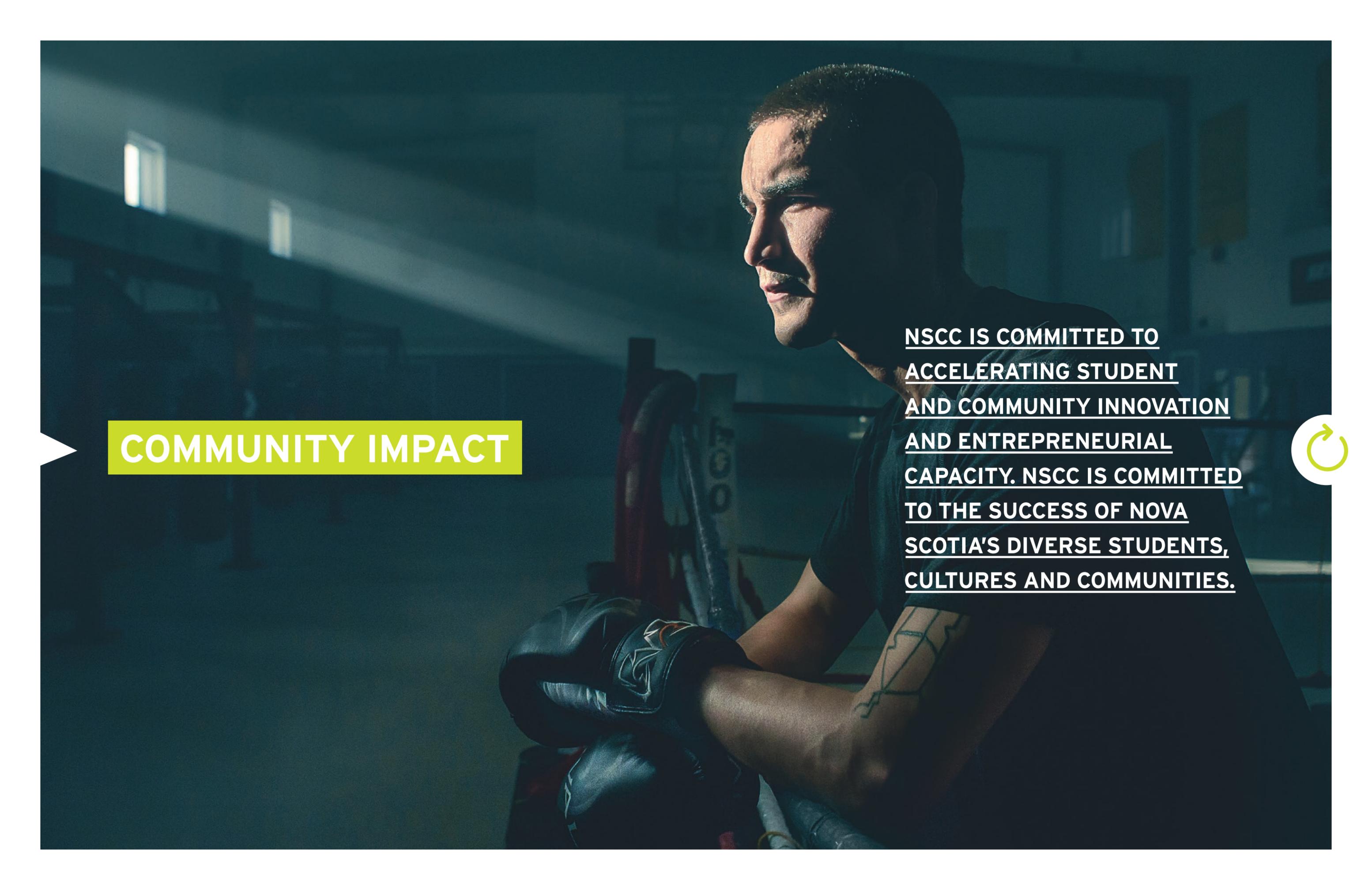
NSCC Foundation's Make Way - the Campaign for NSCC aims to raise \$25 million that will go directly toward student aid, innovative programming, instructional equipment and centres of expertise.

STUDENT WELL-BEING & GROWTH

NSCC strives to ensure educational equity and inclusion across all student supports and services. The College is building an inclusive and diverse learning environment that develops students' resilience, competence, personal capacity and skills. NSCC believes in ensuring supportive and accessible learning environments that encourage students' development as healthy and engaged citizens and leaders.

NSCC will contribute to students' growth and well-being. We will:

- develop and implement an inclusive and comprehensive mental health and wellness strategy
- create tools and resources to strengthen educational equity, diversity and inclusion
- expand opportunities for cultural and global experiences
- expand student engagement and leadership opportunities



COMMUNITY IMPACT

NSCC IS COMMITTED TO
ACCELERATING STUDENT
AND COMMUNITY INNOVATION
AND ENTREPRENEURIAL
CAPACITY. NSCC IS COMMITTED
TO THE SUCCESS OF NOVA
SCOTIA'S DIVERSE STUDENTS,
CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES.



COMMUNITY IMPACT: GOALS

APPLIED RESEARCH

NSCC's leading-edge technologies, applied research projects and resources allow students to actively participate in the province's high-value growth sectors such as oceans, engineering, geomatics, environmental and marine technologies.

NSCC will fulfill our commitment to have a positive economic and social impact on communities. We will:

- nurture current applied research clusters and expand into new sectors
- respond to industrial and sectoral applied research needs and opportunities
- increase integration of students' applied learning experiences in applied research projects

COMMUNITY INNOVATION

NSCC campuses have the educational and technological assets and industry connectivity to spur local innovation and experiential learning directly linked to community business, environmental and social issues and opportunities. Connecting students with community innovators in collaborative spaces will spark local growth, economic development and social enterprise impact. This network of student and community problem solving will become a vibrant focal point in a provincial innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

NSCC will mobilize and strengthen NSCC's leadership in community innovation. We will:

- create a network of coordinated campus assets and resources that accelerate student and community innovation and entrepreneurship
- ensure core community innovation elements - workshops/events, entrepreneurship programs, industry liaison and access to shared technologies - are present at each campus

DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

NSCC is a comprehensive access college that strives to ensure all students' learning experiences are aligned with their historic and current reality, free from systemic barriers to success. NSCC nurtures a welcoming and inclusive culture so students from all communities can gain skills and knowledge to work in the Nova Scotian and global economies.

NSCC will respond to the needs of Nova Scotia's diverse students. We will:

- enhance flexible and accessible programming in collaboration with African Nova Scotian communities
- ensure educational equity, inclusion and universal design in programs and services for all students
- enhance supports and programs for international and new immigrant students
- increase opportunities for students' global and cross-cultural experiences

Innovation hubs are platforms for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship. They provide support and services to reduce barriers and foster private sector partnerships and problem solving.

We Choose Now, ONE Nova Scotia Coalition Collaborative Action Plan, 2015

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 2016 Report and Recommendations compels NSCC to expand opportunities and approaches that contribute to the elimination of education and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.¹ As the leading provider of post-secondary education for Mi'kmaq students, NSCC is perfectly positioned to respond to this vitally important, and urgent, call to action. NSCC is taking deliberate, immediate steps to support Indigenous students' success, and to expand employment options and opportunities for Indigenous students and communities across Nova Scotia.

NSCC will improve educational success rates for Indigenous students. We will:

- develop specific strategies to address the recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation report
- become a signatory institution to Colleges and Institutes Canada's Indigenous Education Protocol
- ensure NSCC structures and approaches are in place to address Indigenous peoples' learning needs
- leverage NSCC's pan-provincial reach and network to support Indigenous-led community economic and social development

"We have described for you a mountain. We have shown you a path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing."

JUSTICE MURRAY SINCLAIR

Chair, Truth and Reconciliation Commission

STRATEGIC SECTORS

Nova Scotia must compete on a global level, not only by supporting our local economy, but also through increasing exports from our province to people around the world.² NSCC is a community catalyst for growing Nova Scotia's key sectors and social enterprises in niche areas such as oceans, ICT and analytics, geomatics, alternative energy, creative industries, tourism and sustainable agriproducts.

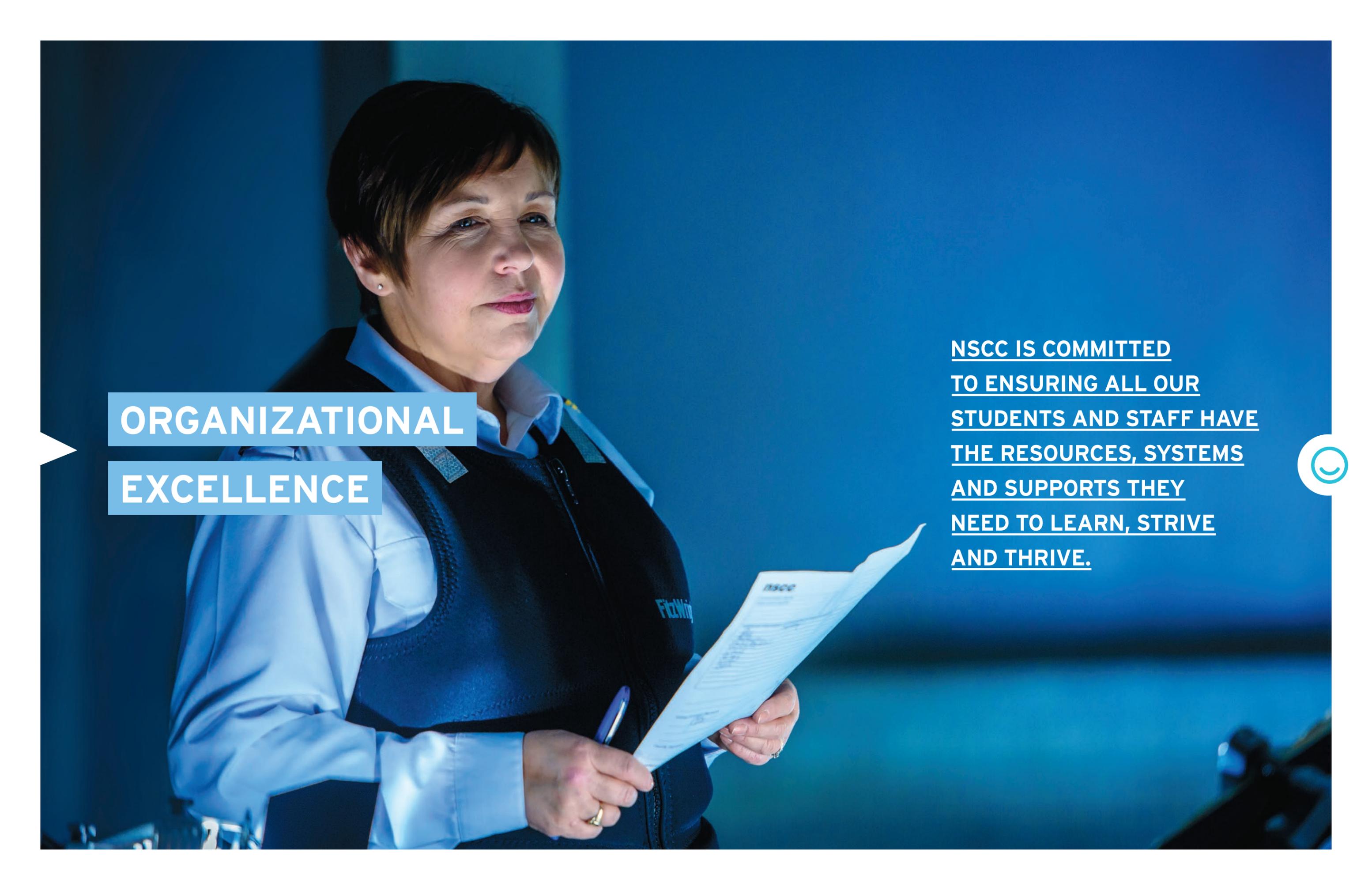
NSCC will maximize and leverage its industry, community and institutional partnerships. We will:

- expand programs and partnerships in key national, regional and provincial industry growth sectors to align with government priorities
- expand program pathways for key sectors through strategic post-secondary and community initiatives
- use philanthropic investment to expand specialized, industry-focused learning experiences

NSCC, Bear Head LNG and Bear Paw Pipeline are collaborating to explore, develop and offer programs to meet the anticipated demand for the skilled workforce needed for a liquefied natural gas facility on the Strait of Canso. This partnership will equip local residents with the skills needed for jobs in their community.

¹ Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015

² We Choose Now, ONE Nova Scotia Coalition Collaborative Action Plan, 2015



**ORGANIZATIONAL
EXCELLENCE**

NSCC IS COMMITTED
TO ENSURING ALL OUR
STUDENTS AND STAFF HAVE
THE RESOURCES, SYSTEMS
AND SUPPORTS THEY
NEED TO LEARN, STRIVE
AND THRIVE.



ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE: GOALS

EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING & GROWTH

NSCC is committed to modeling a culture of employment equity and mutual respect for everyone in our learning and working communities. Empowering and supporting employees to excel in times of transition has never been more important. The College is investing in initiatives to provide employees with the tools, resources and training they need so they are equipped and confident in their abilities to foster student success.

NSCC will invest in the health and wellness of our employees. We will:

- infuse diversity, inclusion and employee equity across all programs and services
- develop and implement a comprehensive and inclusive mental health strategy
- expand programs and services to enhance employees' health, well-being, resilience and personal development

INNOVATIVE & FLEXIBLE TECHNOLOGY

Infusing leading-edge technology across all learning opportunities and business lines is a competitive imperative. NSCC recently approved a five-year technology strategy that provides direction on how the College can best respond to the current and future technology needs of employees and students. The strategy includes specific initiatives to ensure NSCC technology supports innovative learning and teaching with exceptional service.

NSCC will maximize technological assets. We will:

- enhance and implement integrated practices for technology use and renewal
- expand training for students and employees in current and emerging technologies
- ensure technology security by providing compulsory awareness programs for students and employees
- improve technology innovation and sustainability through inclusive technology governance
- ensure the digital preservation of institutional resources and records

Health promoting universities and colleges transform the health and sustainability of our current and future societies, strengthen communities and contribute to the well-being of people, places and the planet.

Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges (2015)

POLICY, PLANNING & ACCOUNTABILITY

NSCC employees care deeply about the organization and value our culture of informed risk taking, creativity, and integrity. NSCC's ethos of continuous improvement, resource stewardship and trust ensures strong public accountability. The College's planning processes and tools ensure we work nimbly and collaboratively across all functions of our learning communities.

NSCC will strengthen accountability, planning and governance. We will:

- enhance policy transparency and excellence
- ensure nimble and iterative risk management, planning and governance practices
- expand and align organizational health, program and enrolment accountability measures

SAFETY & SUSTAINABILITY

NSCC is a nationally-recognized industry leader in sustainability practices. A dedicated and comprehensive focus on reducing our environmental impact is one of the College's core values and is deeply embedded in our culture. Doing the right thing for the planet is important to our students and also gives NSCC a competitive edge. NSCC promotes a culture of safety where risk identification and assessment are integrated into all operations and processes. The College community works diligently and collaboratively to reinforce safety and sustainability leadership in all we do.

NSCC will ensure a safe and sustainable learning community. We will:

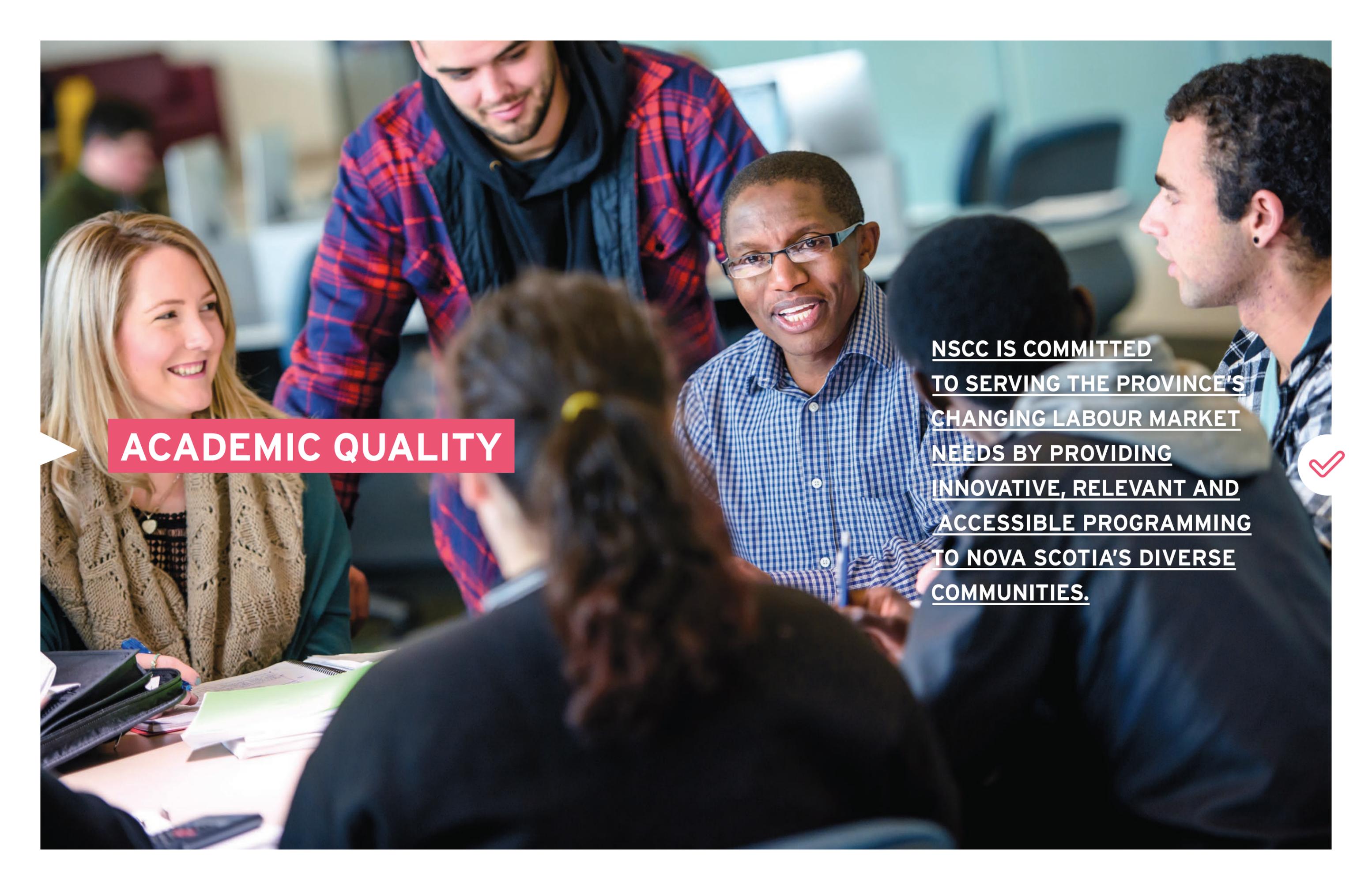
- improve practices, increase resources and foster a College-wide culture of safety
- embed sustainability principles, practices and literacy in programs and services, planning and operations
- meet or exceed industry best practices for sustainability and safety in post-secondary education

WORKFORCE PLANNING & PERFORMANCE

NSCC is committed to the success of every employee. The College is launching three College-wide learning programs in the areas of teaching & learning, training & development, and leadership & management. These programs will inspire employee success, promote and strengthen NSCC's inclusive culture, and build diversity and cultural competence. NSCC is also introducing a holistic workforce planning model to support and empower the College's most valuable resource.

NSCC will renew and reinvest in employee development and learning. We will:

- implement a comprehensive, College-wide workforce planning and performance program
- develop and deliver competency-based employee learning and professional development programs
- expand and improve employee equity initiatives



ACADEMIC QUALITY

NSCC IS COMMITTED
TO SERVING THE PROVINCE'S
CHANGING LABOUR MARKET
NEEDS BY PROVIDING
INNOVATIVE, RELEVANT AND
ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMMING
TO NOVA SCOTIA'S DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES.



ACADEMIC QUALITY: GOALS

ACADEMIC PROCESSES & SYSTEMS

NSCC must have a nimble and responsive program development and renewal cycle to ensure our programs are innovative, high quality and tightly aligned to the province's labour market, communities and economy. NSCC recently approved a five-year *Academic Plan* that includes specific initiatives to respond to both current and future needs of students, faculty and all employees.

NSCC will strengthen academic systems and structures. We will:

- ensure course and credentials standards that facilitate student mobility and academic integrity
- ensure industry currency through responsive and nimble program development and renewal processes
- implement a work-integrated learning management system to maximize experiential learning
- establish a common learning management system and platform for all programs
- optimize collaborative program and enrolment planning processes

EQUITABLE ACCESS & PATHWAYS

It is an imperative for the College, and for the province, that all Nova Scotians have an opportunity to move successfully into training and the workforce.³ NSCC builds diversity and inclusion into everything we do. Adult students come to NSCC because our welcoming environment is inclusive and supportive. The College is building on successful transitional programming to expand post-secondary options for all Nova Scotians.

NSCC will expand equitable access and pathways for students. We will:

- ensure educational equity and inclusion across all programs and services
- provide students with tools and services to help them make the right career and program choices
- increase flexible delivery options through enhanced program pathways
- work with the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency to align and enhance industry-connected apprenticeship training

Canada's colleges play a pivotal role in community and regional economic and social growth by making students "innovation ready".

Fast-tracking Inclusive Innovation for a Successful Canada, CICAN Submission to the Government of Canada's Innovation Agenda, September 2016

PROGRAM QUALITY

NSCC is focused on ensuring the highest quality learning experience so that our graduates can drive the workforce our communities and economies need. Learning that is hard-wired to industry enables our graduates to transition to local and global workforces quickly and successfully.

NSCC will ensure exceptional quality learning experiences are aligned to Nova Scotia's workforce. We will:

- ensure quality and currency of experiential learning through industry-connected programs and services
- embed innovation and entrepreneurial problem solving and skills across programs and services
- embed 21st century literacies, employability skills and universal design across programs and services
- increase project-based, cross-disciplinary and diverse learning experiences for all students
- develop new programs that align with Nova Scotia's emerging economies and labour market requirements

TEACHING & LEARNING EXCELLENCE

Exceptional learning experiences and the relationships between students and educators are the keys to academic performance and success. It is imperative to the province's future that we maintain the highest standard of graduate quality while increasing our retention and graduation rates. NSCC is committed to ensuring that teaching and learning excellence reflects a standard of cultural competency and an environment of continuous improvement.

NSCC will ensure excellence in teaching and learning. We will:

- establish expectations and supports to strengthen excellence in teaching and learning
- provide professional development and coaching programs to support excellence in teaching and learning
- ensure student and faculty access to leading-edge equipment, shops, technologies and creative spaces
- ensure faculty advising is a key component of teaching and learning excellence

The quality and depth of supportive relationships between students and educators are the keys to raising academic performance and consequently student graduation rates.

NSCC Academic Plan, 2015-2020

HERE & NOW

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



OUR VISION

Transforming Nova Scotia one learner at a time.

OUR MISSION

Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation.

OUR PROMISE

To empower those who strive to know more, do more, be more.



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