



Labour and Advanced Education

Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement

Annual Report 2014-2015

Summary

In 2014-15, Nova Scotia invested \$13.7 million in Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund (JFA) related activities. Comprising both Provincial and Federal funding, JFA investments supported over 7000 Nova Scotians with training, labour market attachment and productivity programs and services.

Of the employers and employees surveyed, 90% indicated that the activities supported through the JFA met or exceeded their expectations.

The future health of the Nova Scotia labour market depends on the ability of individuals to participate, attach, and be productive within it. The LMA funding allowed Nova Scotia to support these key elements; helping to ensure a bright future for both individual Nova Scotians and the province as a whole.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement

The Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement (JFA) was signed in July 2014. This agreement replaced the former Labour Market Agreement which ended in March 2014. The JFA is valued at \$13.2M per year and comprises three streams under which the funding must be invested: The Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant, Employer-Sponsored Training and Employment Services and Supports. The JFA may serve either EI or Non-EI eligible clients.

- The Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant is delivered via the provincially-funded Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI) as is permitted by the agreement. This stream assists clients in achieving greater productivity.
- The Employer-Sponsored Training stream funds activities that assist clients in attaching to the labour market. Examples of such activities include the START and One-Journey programs. As per the agreement, a minimum of 40% of JFA (\$5.28M) funds must be invested in either this stream or the Canada Job Grant stream.
- The Employment Services and Supports stream funds activities that assist clients in participating in the labour market. Examples of these activities are labour market programming for immigrants, literacy and essential skills and programming for communities under-represented in the labour market. As per the JFA, no more than 60% of JFA funding (\$7.92M) may be invested in this stream.

Employer and Stakeholder Consultations

Given the nature of negotiations (specifically timelines) for a Canada- Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement (JFA), Nova Scotia was unable to undertake formal consultations relating to JFA investment and priority setting prior to July 1, 2014. However, over the course of the 2013-14 year, Nova Scotia did engage with stakeholders on issues relating to the end of the now former Labour Market Agreement and the effect its conclusion would have on the labour market.

Multiple consultation strategies were employed in order to reach a broad audience over a short period of time, while still allowing for a direct, in-person approach that would strengthen stakeholder relationships. Four face-to-face consultation sessions were held throughout the Province to ensure equal representation from stakeholders, and written submissions were accepted from those that could not make it to any of the sessions.

The consultations took place through a series of regional discussions hosted by the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education. These sessions were guided by a series of questions relating to the impact of LMA-funded programs on client groups; evidence of service provider successes; potential impact of the proposed Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant (JG) on client groups and service provider organizations; and positive and problematic elements of the JG. The results of those consultations helped form the basis for Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund investments in the 2014-15 year.

Stakeholders consulted included:

- community groups,
- labour market program_providers
- literacy networks
- industry groups
- sector groups
- 75 stakeholders participated in the consultations:
- 58 representatives participated in four regional sessions
- 17 stakeholder groups provided written submissions

Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant

Stream 1 investments facilitate the attachment of clients to the labour market by funding direct training costs. A minimum employer contribution to training is also required. Stream 1 investment will be delivered through existing Provincially-funded programming which will allow resources for activities funded under the former LMA to be maximized (specifically Employer-Sponsored Training and Employment Services and Supports).

The provincial program, Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI), qualifies for the Canada Job Grant. Employers are able to apply for the WIPSI and

receive support based on the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant criteria, as set out in Annex 1 of the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement (Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant Core Parameters).

WIPSI is a Provincial funding incentive designed to encourage businesses to invest in employee and management skills development, and improve productivity. It is also designed to help companies adapt to the introduction of new technology and innovative processes, and enhance international competitiveness.

Activities and Expenditures

Program	Investment (000)
WIPSI Encourages businesses to invest in employee and management skills development, and improve productivity	\$1,983
Total	\$1,983

Results

In the 2014-15 year, 5,384 individual employees received training through the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant. Of these employees, 60% were under the age of 40 and 8% were older workers (55+). Gender was split 48% female and 52% male. Given that the WIPSI program is focused on productivity, all individuals receiving training were employed prior to training.

Of the 178 employers that received Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant support, 71% were small businesses (50 employees or less) and 29% were large businesses. According to a follow-up survey, 90% of employers indicate that their expectations were met or exceeded by their participation in the WIPSI/Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant. Further, 68% indicate an increased profit as a result of the training received.

Employer-Sponsored Training

Stream 2 investments facilitate the attachment of clients to the labour market by funding training costs which include, but are not limited to, direct training costs. Employers are expected to make a contribution (financial or in-kind), but a minimum employer contribution is not required.

In contrast to the CJG, Employer-Sponsored Training is broadly defined, is not limited to direct training costs, and does not require a minimum employer contribution. As per the JFA, programs funded under the Employer-Sponsored Training stream meet the following principles:

- Employers decide which Eligible Beneficiaries get training and what type of training is required;
- Training leads to an available job for the Eligible Beneficiary; and
- Employers make a contribution (financial or in-kind) to the training.

Activities and Expenditures

Program	JFA Investment (000)
START: Financial incentives are provided to employers with a labour need willing to support ready-to-work Nova Scotians.	\$1,392
One Journey/Workplace Education: Skill development opportunities are provided to employees of an organization or unemployed/underemployed Nova Scotians, where there is an identified industry labour shortage.	\$2,678
Total	\$4,070

Results

In the 2014-15 year, the Employer-Sponsored Training Stream of the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund assisted 237 individuals. Of these, 74% were under the age of 40 and 6% were older workers. The majority (59%) identified as female and 37% identified as male (the remaining 4% did not identify gender). Of the clients funded under Stream 2 that identified as belonging to a Designated Group under the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement, 44% were Income Assistance (IA) recipients and 24% were Persons with Disabilities (PWD).

Percentages of 2014-15 Stream 2 Clients Identifying With a Designated Group

Aboriginal	Acadian	African NS	Immigrant	PWD	IA
7%	4%	8%	13%	24%	44%

A full 91% of clients funded under Stream 2 were employed 3 months after completion of their program.

Employment Services and Supports

Stream 3 investments facilitate client participation in the labour market. Funds will be used to support programs previously funded under the LMA.

The 2014-2015 budget for Employment Services and Supports under the JFA in Nova Scotia is \$7.428 million. These funds will help Nova Scotians prepare for, find, and keep employment. Programming under this stream targets clients who are low skilled and not collecting EI. Funding also prioritizes underrepresented groups and supports programs typically funded under the previous LMA.

As per the JFA, programs funded under the Employment Services and Supports stream support the following activities:

- Skills training, ranging from training in basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy, to advanced skills training;
- On-the-job training and workplace-based skills upgrading;
- Group interventions and job readiness assistance;
- Financial supports and benefits such as loans, grants and living allowances;
- Employment counselling and services; and
- Labour market connections such as services to facilitate matching supply and demand and services that promote and enhance labour market efficiency.

Activities and Expenditures

Program	JFA Investment (000)
Nova Scotia School for Adult learning: Provides adult learning programs across the province ranging from basic literacy to high school completion.	\$1,151
Labour Market Funding for Immigrants: Funds employment supports for immigrants.	\$1,447
Skills Up: Provides financial assistance to eligible African Nova Scotians to help them obtain	\$787

the skills training they need they need for employment.	
Works For You: Supports projects across the province which increase the job readiness of non EI eligible clients, and aid in attaching participants to the workforce.	\$2,617
Special projects	\$668
Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) Employment Outcomes	\$1,025
Total	\$7,695

Results

Of the 1447 registered clients who received services through Stream 3 of the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement, 80% were not employed at the start of their intervention. The majority (56%) were under the age of 40 and 8% were older workers. The gender split of Stream 3 clients was 48% male and 52% female. Of those clients who identified as belonging to a designated group under the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund, 57% were immigrants and 29% were Income Assistance recipients. The education levels of Stream 3 clients were 30% less than high school, 30% with high school education and 40% post-secondary education. Of the clients responding to the query, the majority (86%) stated that the service had helped them increase their skill level and achieve their employment goals.