



International Qualification Recognition (IQR) Funding Program Guidelines

Nova Scotia Department of Labour
and Advanced Education
Skills and Learning Branch
Adult Education Division

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1 International Qualification Recognition Funding Program Introduction

Please read the entire document. This information will become part of an agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia for the delivery of the International Qualification Recognition Program.

The purpose of this guide is to inform applicants about the goals and application process of the International Qualification Recognition (IQR) Funding Program, along with the terms and conditions of associated funding applications and agreements. The guide will cover all eligibility requirements along with assessment criteria that will be used in assessing applications for IQR Funding Program.

For definitions and acronyms relevant to the IQR Funding Program connect to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Labour Mobility website at: <https://novascotia.ca/lae/RplLabourMobility/IQR.asp>

1.1 The IQR Funding Program Goals

The purpose of the funding program is to:

1. Fund eligible organizations to develop and enhance IQR tools, programs and resources.
2. Create awareness of the IQR Funding Program and share information surrounding support services for international qualification recognition.
3. Support eligible organizations to help Internationally Trained Individuals (ITIs) navigate pathways for international qualification recognition and improve attachment to the Nova Scotia labour market in their chosen field.
4. Promote the diversity, equity and inclusion of all Nova Scotians in the recognition of international qualifications and labour market attachment in the Province.

All proposals will be considered; however, the Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) is under no obligation to fund every application submitted.

Please note that prior government support does not guarantee funding for the same or similar project. LAE will not provide deficit funding (expenditures exceeding total approved funding allocation) for an organization resulting from projects delivered.

Unless you receive a vetted notification from the Labour Mobility Coordinator at LAE, or via the Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS), your application is not considered to be approved and any work that may proceed prior to vetting is to be completed at the risk of the applicant.

1.2 Our Commitment

On behalf of the Government of Nova Scotia, the Adult Education Division (AED) of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) is committed to assessing applications from eligible organizations in a fair and transparent manner based on IQR Funding Program criteria. For proposals to be supported, they must align with the IQR Framework and be relevant and responsive to the qualification assessment and recognition needs of International Trained Individuals (ITIs). Eligible organizations will demonstrate suitability for funding by providing evidence of a demonstrated ability to deliver similar projects. Clear guidelines will be published to provide all eligible organizations with an equal opportunity to apply for funding.

1.3 Roles and Responsibilities

All partners in the funding process are responsible to share responsibility for outcomes.

Organizations submitting proposals, and if vetted, are expected to:

1. Follow the IQR Funding Program Guidelines and IQR Program Project Proposal template instructions in preparing the project proposal;
2. Transfer the information in the proposal document to the online application, and submit this along with other supporting documentation in LaMPSS, once proposal has been vetted;
3. Complete all required reporting templates and meet all deadlines;
4. Be accountable for using the funding for its intended purpose by providing required documentation (i.e., Activity and Financial Reports, Accountability Reports) and to ensure all expenditures reflect eligible costs;

5. Submit final project deliverables to LAE in an electronic format (**note: these materials are the property of LAE unless otherwise agreed upon by both LAE and the funded organization**); and
6. Where appropriate, collaborate and form partnerships with other appropriate and eligible partners and, where applicable, submit joint proposals that would further develop IQR capacity in Nova Scotia.

LAE will:

1. Establish and communicate criteria for project approval;
2. Provide the necessary templates, supporting documents and other information required to submit an application for funding;
3. Support the applicant throughout the application process;
4. Lead a fair and open assessment process of funding proposals;
5. Finalize and communicate decisions in a timely manner;
6. Distribute funding;
7. Monitor and evaluate projects; and
8. Ensure accountability in relation to the contractual obligations of the IQR Funding Program.

2 Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria are requirements that are mandatory. Applications that do not conform to the mandatory requirements will not be considered for funding.

2.1 Eligible Organizations

- Nova Scotia self-regulatory bodies¹;
- Established non-profit community organizations, charities (registered under the Societies Act) or other public or non-governmental organizations, including immigrant-serving agencies;
- Unions;

¹ A body with authority delegated by law (i.e. provincial or federal legislation) to set or implement measures related to: the establishment of occupational standards or certification requirements, the assessment of the qualifications of workers against established occupational standards or certification requirements and the official recognition that an individual meets established occupational standards or certification requirements.

- Employer Associations;
- Sector Councils;
- Professional Associations;
- Post-secondary Institutions; and
- Career Development Centres.

2.2 Ineligible Organizations

- Individuals, including sole proprietorships;
- For-profit corporations; and
- Funding bodies whose sole mandate is to award grants or funding.

2.3 Eligible Participants

- Canadian citizens;
- Permanent residents; and
- Protected persons within the meaning of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada), S.C. 2001, c. 27 entitled to work in Canada.

Note: Individuals who are temporary residents with a 900 series Social Insurance Number are not eligible participants.

2.4 Eligible Project Categories

There are four IQR project categories, determined by LAE, that will be considered as eligible categories or program funding. These categories support the IQR Funding Program goals and align with IQR best practices.

The following is an overview of the eligible project categories. All applications must align with one or more of the categories listed in the following section:

1. **Research and Evaluation** - This project category focuses on conducting research and program evaluation activities which result in recommendations related to IQR processes in Nova Scotia.

2. **Information Access** - This project category focuses on improving information and services on pathways to qualification recognition, labour market access, and academic and skills upgrading for Internationally Trained Individuals.
3. **Qualification Assessment** - This project category focuses on developing support tools that assess qualifications in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.
4. **Program Development** - This project category focuses on developing, implementing and/or expanding IQR programming to reduce barriers, for Internationally Trained Individuals, to obtain licensure, have qualifications recognized and attach to the labour market in the Province. This is not intended to provide core or ongoing operational funding.

2.5 Assessment Criteria Definitions

The following section defines the criteria for which project proposals will be assessed. Defining the criteria supports the commitment of LAE to have a fair and transparent assessment process. Criteria definitions and levels of compliance are detailed in the criteria tables below. The tables also include additional information and examples to provide guidance on how to provide supporting evidence for each criterion.

2.5.1. Identify clear project objectives and expected deliverables that are defined and measurable. (20%)

The following are recommendations meant to assist applicants in including supporting information within the project proposal:

1. Provide objective statements for all project objectives. Objective statements must show correlation with project deliverables. Objective statements must be clearly defined, measurable and timebound.
2. Describe the deliverable(s) that will be provided at project completion.

Score	Levels	Descriptions of expectation levels
0	Does not meet expectations	Objective(s) are not clear and defined. Objective(s) do not describe how they are connected to project deliverables. Objectives are not measurable and timebound in such a way that progress towards deliverables and project completion can be validated.
10	Partially meets expectations	Objectives and deliverables are clearly defined but are deficient in one or more of the other required components.
20	Meets expectations	Objective(s) are clearly defined and linked to project deliverables. Deliverables are defined and tangible. Objective(s) are timebound and provide an ability to measure progress of deliverables and overall project completion.

2.5.2. Define activities that clearly align with objectives, expected outcomes and timelines. (10%)

The following are recommendations meant to assist applicants in including supporting information within the project proposal:

1. Provide a description of all activities that support project objectives and deliverables. Activities must be measurable and timebound.
2. Include activities in a project timeline throughout the duration of the project.

Score	Levels	Descriptions of expectation levels
0	Does not meet expectations	Activities are not clearly defined and do not have a timebound description. Not all activities are listed that support the project objectives and deliverables.
10	Meets expectations	Activities define specific steps or actions that support accomplishing objective(s). Activities are timebound and are described in a project timeline. All activities are listed that support all objectives and project deliverables.

2.5.3. Demonstrate how your organization will be able to manage the project, i.e. sufficient resources, capacity, knowledge, innovation, leadership, experience, etc. (10%)

The following are recommendations meant to assist applicants in including supporting information within the project proposal:

1. Provide examples of successful projects. Outline any previous projects with the Province of Nova Scotia.
2. Outline all resources required for the project including staffing, expertise, financial, equipment, technology, meeting spaces, etc. Identify any risks to the project resources and how you will mitigate or eliminate the risks.
3. Demonstrate applicant’s IQR understanding.
4. Demonstrate applicant’s ability to be innovative in IQR services² and ability to respond to current challenges and opportunities.

Score	Levels	Descriptions of expectation levels
0	Does not meet expectations	Applicant has not provided adequate evidence of delivering similar projects successfully and/or provided evidence that appropriate resources have been secured for the project (staff, expertise, financial, contractors, partnerships etc.). Increased uncertainty and risk to project completion has been identified. Applicant demonstrates a lack of IQR knowledge and/or understanding and does not demonstrate an ability to be innovative or a leader in IQR.
10	Meets expectations	Applicant has completed similar projects in the past which have resulted in successful outcomes. Evidence of adequate resources has been demonstrated and outlined how the resources will contribute to the project. Risks identified, and mitigation measures are planned. Low risk to project completion. Applicant demonstrates a high level of IQR knowledge and/or understanding and has extensive experience in leading IQR projects in the past.

² Services could include programs, tools, information, resources, etc.

2.5.4. Provide a clear rationale for the project (what is the problem to be addressed-what labour market or skills/learning/qualification recognition need?) and outline how the project will leverage IQR practice to address this. (20%)

Briefly describe the problem that the project will address, i.e., what labour market or skills/learning/qualification recognition need? How will the project leverage IQR practice to address this? If possible, provide evidence of the need. Evidence could include:

1. Letters supporting labour or skills shortage (Industry, Sector councils, employers).
2. Demographic or statistical data (case studies, Nova Scotia Labour Market Bulletin, StatsCan, etc.).

Score	Levels	Description of expectation levels
0	Does not meet expectations	The applicant has not demonstrated sufficient evidence of labour market and/or skills shortages. The applicant has not outlined how the project will provide IQR services to address labour market needs.
10	Partially meets expectations	The applicant provided a rational for the project and described the problem to be addressed but only partially indicated how the project will leverage IQR practice to address needs.
20	Meets expectations	The applicant has provided a clear rational for the project, described the problem to be addressed, and has clearly outlined how the project will provide IQR services to address needs.

2.5.5. Demonstrate collaboration and partnerships with industry, organizations and/or government to bring value to the project (i.e., leverage resources and/or expertise and strengthen collaboration or partnerships). (20%)

The following are recommendations meant to assist applicants in including supporting information within the project proposal:

1. Letters of support or documentation from all partners outlining intent, roles and responsibilities and commitments i.e. provide resources such as staff, expertise, funding, etc.

Score	Levels	Descriptions of expectation levels
0	Does not meet expectations	Does not clearly define partnerships or collaboration.
10	Partially meets expectations	Clearly defines partnerships or collaboration. Outlines partners involved.
20	Meets expectations	Clearly defines partnerships outlining partners involved, responsibilities of each partners and shared resources (funding and / or project team members etc.).

2.5.6. Describe how project deliverables can be adapted, shared, and used by others to maximize benefit and impact IQR services. (10%)

The following are recommendations meant to assist applicants in including supporting information within the project proposal:

1. Outline how the project deliverables could be adaptable and utilized by others.
2. Explain the benefits, impacts and outcomes of how deliverables can be utilized.

Score	Levels	Descriptions of expectation levels
0	Does not meet expectations	Project deliverables are not easily adaptable or usable in other situations and/or other organizations.
5	Meets expectations	Project deliverables are adaptable and can be leveraged by others with some effort to update the deliverables prior to sharing or use by other organizations.
10	Exceeds expectations	Project deliverables are easy to adapt or do not require any adaptation. Deliverables can be used in a universal way, maximizing the impact and benefit of the IQR project deliverables.

2.5.7. Describe how the project promotes and contributes to qualification recognition, improvements in navigating pathways, attachment to the labour market and inclusiveness for Internationally Trained Individuals (ITIs) from diverse and underrepresented groups³. (10%)

The following are recommendations meant to assist applicants in including supporting information within the project proposal:

1. Demonstrate the need, benefit, impact and inclusiveness that project deliverables will have for diverse and underrepresented individuals and groups.

Score	Levels	Descriptions of expectation levels
0	Does not meet expectations	Project has a generalized inclusive focus that could benefit ITIs from diverse and underrepresented groups but has no specific design or focus on these groups.
5	Meets expectations	Project includes defined and measurable objectives and expected results are designed, focused and inclusive for ITIs from diverse and underrepresented groups.
10	Exceeds expectations	Project primary focus is ITIs from diverse and underrepresented groups with defined, measurable and inclusive objectives and expected results designed accordingly. Project includes specific activities that involve ITI participants from diverse and underrepresented groups.

Added Value / Additional Assessment Criteria

Note: The following criteria for self-sustainability is additional assessment criteria. The criteria is optional and there is an understanding that projects may not incorporate a self-sustainability plan; however, applications that **do** incorporate will be given additional weight.

³ Underrepresented groups include Indigenous Peoples, African Nova Scotians, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and/or recent immigrants.

2.5.8. Provide a self-sustainability plan to maintain the project beyond funding period. (10%)

The following are recommendations meant to assist applicants in including supporting information within the project proposal:

1. Provide a sustainability plan – resources (expertise, staff, funds, partnerships etc.), timeline, promotion and product/service delivery, etc.
2. Letters of support or partnership acknowledging commitments post project/funding.
3. Include timeline – short, medium and long-term of product(s) and/or service(s) delivery post project/funding.
4. Provide an assessment of required resources post project completion/funding.
5. Include an IQR service evaluation and assessment plan and objectives. How can the program remain effective and be maintained and sustained beyond the funding project?

Score	Levels	Descriptions of expectation levels
0	Does not meet expectations	No clear plan to allocate ongoing resources (expertise, staff, funds, partnerships etc.) after project completion to promote and/or continue to offer the services produced/developed from the project. Uncertainty on how the services will be maintained and sustained beyond the funding project.
10	Meets expectations	Applicant submits a comprehensive plan to assume responsibility of maintaining and sustaining services after project completion. Plan includes assessment/evaluation at certain intervals to determine services effectiveness, sustainability and identify risks. Steps are outlined to update and keep the services current and ensure they are of benefit to Nova Scotians and follow current IQR best practices in the interim and long-term.

3 Application Process

The first step in submitting a project for vetting is to complete an IQR Project Proposal template. The purpose of the project proposal is to help applicants clearly articulate the project objectives and outcomes before submitting the application online, as well as to indicate how the project will align with the guidelines and reporting requirements of the funding program.

3.1 Completing and Submitting a Project Proposal

Program applicants will be required to complete a project proposal, using the IQR Project Proposal template and instructions available on the International Qualifications Recognition website, <https://novascotia.ca/lae/RplLabourMobility/IQR.asp>.

Additional details on what is required in the application can be found within the IQR Program Project Proposal template. All requirements for submission will be identified within the IQR Program Project Proposal template; however, it is important to have an understanding of the IQR guidelines, eligible project categories and eligibility criteria when completing the proposal. Once complete, submit the IQR Program Project Proposal template with all required documents (including the IQR Itemized Budget Breakdown Workbook Section 3.2) by email to the Labour Mobility Coordinator (labourmobility@novascotia.ca).

Note: All applications and required documents must be submitted in English.

3.2 Completing your IQR Itemized Budget

When completing the project proposal there is a requirement to include an “IQR Itemized Budget Breakdown Workbook” which includes a complete description of all associated costs. Refer to the Project Budget Details on the first tab of the workbook for a description of eligible costs and instructions on how to complete the IQR Itemized Budget Breakdown Workbook.. The workbook can be found on the website: <https://novascotia.ca/lae/RplLabourMobility/IQR.asp>.

Note: Ensure all associated costs are included in the workbook as no new costs are to be added after the proposal has been reviewed by the Labour Mobility Coordinator.

3.3 What Happens Next

Once the IQR Program Project Proposal has been received, it will be assessed by the AED team. The project proposal will be reviewed against eligibility and assessment criteria and a decision will be made whether to proceed to the next stage of application submission.

3.4 Proceed to the Final Stage of Application Submission

Once the IQR Program Project Proposal has been fully vetted, an online application will need to be completed and uploaded, with the required supporting documentation, to LaMPSS. LaMPSS is

a common system and set of business processes developed for administering labour market programs in Nova Scotia and is focused on providing consistency in processes and improving services to labour market agreement holders. When reaching this stage in the application process, the Labour Mobility Coordinator will send a link for the LaMPSS application process and advise on the next steps. Organizations will need to register with LaMPSS to obtain an organization ID, to submit an application. The LaMPSS application will then be reviewed by the AED team and a decision will be made on approval of the application. Additionally, the LaMPSS application is an important step to create a contract with LAE for the funding agreement, if approved.

In summary, the following steps are required for a complete assessment of the project proposal.

1. Complete and submit a project proposal and provide all required documentation to the Labour Mobility Coordinator (labourmobility@novascotia.ca);
2. Receive an acknowledgement from the Labour Mobility Coordinator that your project proposal has been vetted and is ready to move to the online application; and
3. The Labour Mobility Coordinator will send a link to the LaMPSS application process for final approval.

Note: Not all proposals will be vetted to move on to the online application, however, all organizations will be contacted and informed of vetting decisions. An application can only be submitted in LaMPSS after the project has been vetted by the AED team. Submissions made before receiving authorization will not be assessed or reviewed.

3.5 Service Registration

Any projects that have a participant component will be required to complete Service Registration for those individuals. Service Registration is a term used in LaMPSS for the set of functions to help an organization manage the services delivered under their agreement(s) with government. It includes the ability to register uniquely identified clients, indicate what services they receive, capture key client characteristics, and generate reports. Personal information is required, from individuals, to verify their eligibility as participants as well as to enable government to understand the effectiveness of the services being delivered. All information about participants that is collected or compiled, should be done so confidentially, and all necessary measures should be in place to protect against unauthorized release or disclosure of that personal information.

Service Registration is accessed through LaMPSS and will require an Intake Form to be completed. Information on Service Registration will be provided by the Labour Mobility Coordinator, but can also be found on the LaMPSS resource website, <https://novascotia.ca/lae/LaMPSS/LaMPSS.asp>.

4 IQR Funding Program Reporting Requirements

After receiving a funding agreement it is important to remain in contact with the Labour Mobility Coordinator throughout the lifecycle of the agreement. LaMPSS Activity, Accountability, and Financial Reports are required throughout the funding agreement to ensure compliance with the funding agreement.

During the course of the project, the agreement holder will be notified through the LaMPSS self-serve system when the (Interim and Final) Activity, Accountability, and Financial Reports are required. Due date(s) for reports are also indicated in the funding agreement for the project. The number of reporting periods for projects, supported by the IQR Funding Program, is set by the Labour Mobility Coordinator at the beginning of each agreement.

Organizations supported via the IQR Funding Program will be required to submit reports on at least two occasions during the life of the project.

It is important to note that failure to submit any of the required completed reports within the allotted timeframe, will result in delays to continued funding support.

Please contact the Labour Mobility Coordinator if there are any questions or concerns.

4.1 Interim Accountability Report

The Interim Accountability Report will be submitted during the project as an attachment to the scheduled Interim Activity Report in LaMPSS. The Interim Accountability Report has been designed to streamline reporting and improve accountability and must be submitted during each project. The objective of the Interim Accountability Report is to provide an understanding of the project's overall performance by analyzing what has been accomplished during this period.

Note: Completion of the Interim Accountability, Activity, and Financial Reports are a condition of the funding agreement, and these reports must be attached and submitted in LaMPSS.

Templates for the Interim Accountability Reports are available at the RPL and Labour Mobility website, <https://novascotia.ca/lac/RplLabourMobility/IQR.asp>.

4.2 Final Accountability Report

The Final Accountability Report is intended to concisely summarize the outcomes of a project. The Final Accountability Report is used to document project successes, lessons learned and performance in order to provide evidence-based information on the impact of the project and any improvement in project delivery for the future.

Templates for the Final Accountability Reports are available at the RPL and Labour Mobility website, <https://novascotia.ca/lac/RplLabourMobility/IQR.asp>.

4.3 Activity Reports

Throughout the lifecycle of the funding agreement, there is a requirement to submit Activity Reports. All Activity Reports require submission of outputs related to each activity. In addition, the final Activity Report must also include outcomes of the project. Details on these required reports will be provided by the Labour Mobility Coordinator during the course of the funding agreement.

4.4 Financial Reports

It is also a requirement of the funding agreement to provide Financial Reports within the reporting period outlined in the funding agreement. Organizations will be asked to submit actual costs/expenditures for each eligible budget category that was defined in the Itemized Budget Workbook during the IQR Program Project Proposal.

Note: Completion of the Final Accountability, Activity and Financial Reports are a condition of the funding agreement, and these reports must be attached (as Supplementary Documentation) and submitted in LaMPSS.

5 IQR Funding Program Terms & Conditions

The following terms and conditions form part of IQR Funding Program agreement in addition to the “General Terms and Conditions” outlined in the agreement.

5.1 Communications Requirements

The Province of Nova Scotia must be acknowledged in all communications related to the project. Any public communication of the project via news release or any other event must be coordinated with LAE. Organizations shall notify the LAE's Labour Mobility Coordinator (see [section 6](#) for contact information) at least 15 working days in advance.

Communications activities can be generally defined as, but not limited to, the following:

- News releases;
- Public events such as funding announcements, official openings, press conferences;
- Written or electronic communications material;
- Project products such as brochures, program descriptions, forms for the use of clients, annual plans and reports; and
- Advertising in all forms.

At offices or kiosks where information is provided to the public, or transactions are conducted with the public pertaining to this project, signage is required indicating that the products/services provided are funded in whole or in part by the Province of Nova Scotia. Bilingual notices are required in designated bilingual offices. Please note that the project will be made public on the Department's website.

Logos can be obtained from LAE. Organizations are responsible for creating their own materials i.e. watermarks, wordmarks, signage etc.

5.2 Funding Announcements

Contact the Labour Mobility Coordinator (see [section 6](#)) if you are contacted by the media about a project or as soon as your organization starts to discuss:

- A funding announcement or event;
- A news release or feature;
- A radio or television spot;
- An advertisement; and
- A poster or brochure.

6 Contact Information

Information about the IQR Funding Program can be obtained through LAE by contacting the Labour Mobility Coordinator, via e-mail labourmobility@novascotia.ca, phone (902) 424-3968, fax (902) 424-1171 or mail:

Mailing Address

Labour Mobility Coordinator
Department of Labour and Advanced Education
PO Box 697
Halifax, NS B3J 2T8

Civic Address

Labour Mobility Coordinator
Department of Labour and Advanced Education
Maritime Centre, 4N
1505 Barrington Street
Halifax, NS B3J 3K5