RAISING THE BAR
A strategy to build diversity and inclusion in the public service
2014–2018
Leading the way in diversity and inclusion

The provincial government is one of the largest employers in Nova Scotia.

We expect businesses and organizations to benefit from the contributions of Aboriginal People, African Nova Scotians, Persons with Disabilities, and other Under-represented Groups, and to encourage migration and new Canadians to come to Nova Scotia. We will lead by example.

In Nova Scotia, individuals and groups are protected against discrimination on the basis of many characteristics (humanrights.gov.ns.ca). Our commitment goes far beyond meeting that responsibility.

We are raising the bar for diversity and inclusion in the public service, and here’s why:

• **It’s the right thing to do.** Our workforce must reflect the province’s diverse population and deliver services in a way that meets the needs of all Nova Scotians. It will help to position the province for success in the global economy by allowing us to embrace new opportunities. Having more Immigrants, Women, Aboriginal People, Persons with Disabilities, African Nova Scotians, Racially Visible People, and members of the LGBTI community in our senior ranks brings a range of international and cultural perspectives, enabling new approaches to problem solving and promoting innovation.

• **Our future depends on it.** Nova Scotia’s labour force is shrinking. We must enable our diverse population to participate to their full potential in the workforce—and we must attract more skilled workers to come here, too.

• **It’s good for business.** Organizations with diverse and inclusive workplaces experience improved employee engagement and increased productivity, and they are able to attract and retain a skilled, diverse, and dynamic workforce.
## Our goals and how we will meet them

### Goal 1 • We demonstrate, and are accountable for, our ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion.

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<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Strategic Actions</th>
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| 1.1 Support **collaborative implementation** of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. | • Develop an implementation plan and evaluation frameworks.  
• Resource the Respectful Workplace & Corporate Diversity Unit and strengthen its accountability.  
• Align the Respectful Workplace & Corporate Diversity Unit with Public Service Renewal, including the National Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace Standard. |
| 1.2 Build **support** for a government-wide service-delivery strategy for diversity and inclusion. | • Work with partners to foster the development of a broader service-delivery strategy. |
| 1.3 Strengthen, align, and improve core diversity and inclusion components **within the Public Service Commission** and across government. | • Review diversity and inclusion-related policies and guidelines.  
• Review tools and processes to identify and remove systemic barriers. |
| 1.4 Strengthen opportunities to enable leadership and **accountability** for diversity and inclusion at senior leadership and management levels across government. | • Collaboratively assess the application of the new Intercultural and Diversity Proficiency competency.  
• Review and analyze classification of positions dedicated to diversity and inclusion work to inform further work.  
• Develop and implement a reciprocal mentorship program for senior leaders and employees from Under-represented Groups. |
| 1.5 Improve assessment, measurement, and **research** of diversity and inclusion practices to support accountability and ongoing learning and change. | • Enhance Employment Equity planning and reporting processes.  
• Improve collection and analysis of diversity data.  
• Identify ways to incorporate the use of qualitative research methods for evaluating diversity and inclusion in our work. |

### Goal 2 • We equitably represent the public we serve at all levels of the workforce.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Improve the <strong>recruitment</strong> process for Under-represented Groups.</td>
<td>• Develop and implement a diversity recruitment strategy to support recruitment of Under-represented Groups.</td>
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| 2.2 Improve the screening and **selection** processes for Under-represented Groups. | • Ensure hiring processes are accessible to all.  
• Strengthen awareness of hiring panels about diversity and inclusion, including the Employment Equity Policy and Guidelines.  
• Increase participation of Under-represented Groups on hiring panels. |
2.3 Make accountability for diversity and inclusion visible in the employee **orientation** process.  
- Imbed diversity and inclusion in orientation for all new government employees.  
- Ensure orientation is accessible to all, including availability in English and French.

2.4 Formulate and enhance the fairness and transparency of **career development and advancement** opportunities.  
- Develop capacity to support employees from Under-represented Groups so they can navigate their career development and advancement pathways.  
- Ensure that leadership experience gained through diversity and inclusion work is recognized and valued in career development and advancement pathways.

**Goal 3 • We ensure an inclusive and respectful workplace, free of harassment and discrimination.**

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| 3.1 Explore approaches to ensure respectful, **inclusive** workplaces for Under-represented Groups. | • Implement Positive Spaces Initiative and Guidelines to support transgender and gender-nonconforming employees.  
• Explore opportunities for the inclusion of Women in Non-traditional Roles in government workplaces.  
• Explore opportunities for the inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in government workplaces. |

| 3.2 Build capacity for conducting diversity and inclusion workplace **assessments**. | • Develop tools and resources for conducting diversity and inclusion workplace assessments.  
• Develop expertise within the public service to carry out diversity and inclusion workplace assessments. |

**Goal 4 • We are a culturally competent workforce that values diversity and inclusion.**

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| 4.1 Enable the Respectful Workplace & Corporate Diversity Unit and the Learning Centre to become a centre of excellence in diversity and inclusion **learning**. | • Create a diversity and inclusion lens for reviewing and developing learning programs and materials.  
• Review and enhance current Respectful Workplace and Diversity training courses. |

| 4.2 Examine all **corporate learning** offerings to ensure they are free of discrimination and value diversity. | • Imbed diversity and inclusion in the development process for new learning offerings.  
• Develop and implement diversity and inclusion guidelines for all external learning and development service providers. |

| 4.3 Increase awareness, **engagement**, and involvement of government employees around diversity and inclusion. | • Develop and implement a plan to engage employees and partners in the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. |

| 4.4 Create and host a **collaborative community** of practice for diversity and inclusion partners. | • Create platforms for dialogue, learning, and collaboration about ongoing diversity and inclusion work.  
• Consider new networks and partners. |
How the strategy was developed

The Public Service Commission collaborated with the Human Resource Policy and Programs Working Group, the Diversity and Social Equity Steering Committee, the Diversity Round Table, employee networks, and the Public Service Renewal Team to develop this strategy.

Our process included:

• studying existing diversity and inclusion plans and reports in other organizations;
• doing a literature review of best and promising practices;
• engaging with more than 100 informed government employees focused on diversity and inclusion work.

Building on a strong foundation

Our research identified many ways government already supports diversity and inclusion in our workplaces.

In its role as corporate employer, the Public Service Commission has developed many policies and guidelines for government employees that support diversity and inclusion. The department’s enhanced Respectful Workplace & Corporate Diversity Unit will use its ability and experience to advance this work.

There is existing legislation, such as the Human Rights Act, that also supports this work and defines accountability.

Key stakeholders and partners, such as the Diversity Round Table, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) Network, the African Canadian Women in Public Service, GoverNEXT, departmental diversity committees, offices dedicated to diversity and inclusion issues, and senior leaders can help build upon and implement this strategy.

All public servants are key to success. Our people are our greatest asset.

We’ve built a strong foundation. Now we want to raise the bar higher.
Vision
We strive to be a welcoming, inclusive, and culturally competent public service, free of discrimination and representative of the diversity of Nova Scotia.

Mission
We work collaboratively to attract, develop, and retain skilled people that are representative of all our communities and to ensure we are an inclusive, culturally competent public service that values diversity.

Values
We value respect, integrity, diversity, accountability, and the public good. We stand by these values, and we believe that they are in the best interest of all Nova Scotians.

For more information about the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, visit novascotia.ca/diversity

Respect • Integrity • Diversity • Accountability • The Public Good