



BUSINESS IMMIGRATION

The Approach for Nova Scotia

Contents

Entrepreneur Stream: Program Criteria 2

 Overview 2

 Nomination Process 2

 Fees 3

 Minimum Eligibility Criteria 3

 Expression of Interest Points Matrix 5

International Graduate Entrepreneur: Program Criteria 8

 Overview 8

 Nomination Process 8

 Fees 8

 Minimum Eligibility Criteria 9

 Expression of Interest Points Matrix 11

Disclaimer: this document is meant to be a high-level overview of criteria for the Entrepreneur Stream and International Graduate Entrepreneur Stream of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, and is provided as a courtesy. Criteria may be added, removed, or otherwise modified in advance of the program launch and the criteria set out herein is subject to change at any time upon further review by the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration.

Entrepreneur Stream: Program Criteria

Overview

The Entrepreneur Stream is designed to attract individuals who wish to start or acquire a business and settle permanently in Nova Scotia.

Nomination Process

There are five steps to the nomination process:

Step 1: Submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Province of Nova Scotia

Prospective immigrants will indicate their interest in operating a business and residing in Nova Scotia by completing an Expression of Interest in the form of a short online survey, providing required information about their business ownership or management experience, language, education, investment, net worth, age, adaptability, and their business. Only applicants who meet the minimum criteria will be able to submit an EOI. Candidates will be assessed based on a points matrix according to their profile and then assigned a score.

Step 2: Invitation to Apply

Top scoring applicants will be notified by the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI) that they are being invited to submit a formal application to the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP). Complete applications received from those invited to apply will then undergo an assessment by NSOI.

Step 3: Temporary Work Permit and Business Establishment in Nova Scotia

Successful applicants to NSOI will sign a Business Performance Agreement with NSOI, detailing the applicant's plans to start or acquire a business in Nova Scotia. After entering into the Business Performance Agreement, NSOI will provide a NSNP Entrepreneur Approval Letter which the applicant will include in their application to Citizenship and Immigration Canada for a two-year work permit. If the applicant is successful in obtaining the work permit, applicants will be able to land in Nova Scotia with their family, settle, and start or acquire their business.

Step 4: Request for Nomination

Once an applicant satisfies the conditions of the Business Performance Agreement, including, but not limited to, making the mandatory investment, operating the business continuously for a minimum of one year, and submitting a Business Establishment Progress Report to NSOI, they can then apply to be nominated for Permanent Residency by the Province of Nova Scotia under the Nova Scotia Nominee Program.

Step 5: Apply for Permanent Residence

Upon nomination, the applicant applies to Citizenship and Immigration Canada for Permanent Residence status.

Fees

There are no fees for the Entrepreneur Stream. However, the applicant will be required to provide supporting documentation that will require fees to other parties (e.g., language testing, credential assessments, net worth verification, document translation, etc.).

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the minimum eligibility criteria:

- Have a minimum \$600,000 CAD in Net Business and Personal Assets, verified by NSOI designated third party professionals.
- Have a minimum of three years of business ownership experience including 33.33% ownership or greater than five years of experience in a senior business manager role in the last 10 years.
- Agree to make a minimum capital investment of \$150,000 CAD in Nova Scotia.
- Have Canadian Language Benchmark 5 in either English or French in listening, speaking, writing and reading; verified by either Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program (CELPIP) General test, International English Language Testing System (IELTS) General Training or the Test d'évaluation de français (TEF) and taken within two years prior to the date of EOI submission.
- Have a minimum of a Canadian high school diploma or an equivalent foreign credential verified by an Educational Credential Assessment, which is dated within the five years prior to the date of EOI submission.
- Demonstrate accumulation of claimed net worth through legal means, verified by NSOI designated third party professionals.
- Have a Business Establishment Plan and be able to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the plan.
- Agree to reside in Nova Scotia.

Business Eligibility

In order to qualify as an eligible business under the Entrepreneur program, several criteria must be met:

- The applicant must own at least one third (33.33%) of the equity of the business.
- The applicant must provide active and on-going participation in the day to day management and direction of the business.
- The business must be a for-profit entity with the primary purpose of earning profits through the sale of goods and/or services.
- The business must be considered a "permanent establishment" as defined under subsection 400(2) of the Canadian *Income Tax Regulations*, 1985.
- The business is liable to pay income tax on taxable income earned as a result of a "permanent establishment" in Nova Scotia, irrespective of income or other taxes which may also be payable in other jurisdictions as a result of income earned or other business activity.
- The business must have potential to create an economic benefit to Nova Scotia. For example:

- Increasing value added manufacturing or processing, exports, destination tourism, research and development, and technology commercialization;
- Developing innovative approaches to traditional businesses
- Transferring technology and specialized knowledge to Nova Scotia.
- Providing products or services to an under-served local or regional market.

Starting a Business

If starting a business, the applicant must also create a minimum of one full time (or equivalent) employment opportunity for a Canadian or Permanent Resident in Nova Scotia (non-relative workers). This position(s) must:

- Be over and above any position filled by the approved applicant. For clarity, jobs created for or filled by family members of the applicant are not eligible.
- Be relevant and directly related to the applicant's business.
- Meet the prevailing wage levels.

Business Succession

If purchasing a previously existing Nova Scotia business:

- The business must have been in continuous operation by the same owner for the previous five (5) years.
- All applicants must complete an exploratory visit to meet the current owner(s).
- Applicants must provide evidence that reasonable efforts were taken to establish a fair market value for the business.
- The business must be actively in operation and not in receivership.
- The succession buy-out must result in a complete change in ownership where the applicant will assume full control of the business.
- Applicants must offer employment on similar terms and conditions to existing staff, including maintaining existing wages and employment terms.

Ineligible Businesses

- Businesses that are conducted remotely (from another Canadian jurisdiction or from another country).
- Property rental, investment, and leasing activities.
- Real estate construction/development/brokerage, insurance brokerage or business brokerage; unless the applicant can demonstrate that their business will provide a compelling benefit to the Province.
- Professional services or self-employed business operators requiring licensing or accreditation.
- Pay day loan, cheque cashing, money changing and cash machines.
- Pawnbrokers.
- Credit unions.
- Home-based businesses; unless the applicant can demonstrate that their business will provide a compelling benefit to the Province.
- Co-operatives.
- Investments into a business operated primarily for the purposes of deriving passive investment income.
- Businesses involved in the production, distribution or sale of pornographic or sexually

- explicit products or services, or in the provision of sexually-oriented services.
- Joint ventures between NSNP program applicants.
- Any other type of business that by association could bring the NSNP or the Government of Nova Scotia into disrepute.

Expression of Interest Points Matrix

As noted previously, when candidates submit their Expression of Interest in Step 1, a points matrix will be used to select the strongest applicants who best align with Nova Scotia’s business and economic priorities based on 8 factors: language, education, business ownership or management experience, level of investment in the business, net worth, age, adaptability, and Nova Scotia priorities.

Factor 1: Language

First official language	Points				Points (minimum of 20 points from first official language) maximum 35
	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	
CLB level 7 or higher	7	7	7	7	28
CLB level 6	6	6	6	6	24
CLB level 5	5	5	5	5	20
Note: You can only get points in total for basic-level skills in your second official language, and only if you have a score of at least CLB 5 in each of the four language abilities.					
Second official language					
At least CLB 5 in all of the four abilities					7

Factor 2: Education

Education	Points (maximum 25)
Canadian high school diploma, or equivalent	8
Canadian post-secondary degree or diploma for a one-year program, or equivalent	12
Canadian post-secondary degree or diploma for a two-year program, or equivalent	19
Canadian post-secondary degree or diploma for a program of three years or longer, or equivalent	21
Two or more Canadian post-secondary degrees or diplomas or equivalent (at least one must be for a program of at least three years)	22
Post-secondary degree at the Master’s level or equivalent OR university level entry-to-practice professional degree Occupation related to the degree must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOC 2011 Skill Level A, and • Licensed by a provincial regulatory body. 	23
University degree at the Doctoral (PhD) level or equivalent	25

Factor 3: Business Ownership or Management Experience

Business Ownership or Management experience	Points (maximum 35)
3 to 5 years of business ownership experience (minimum 1/3 ownership) in the last 10 years	20
Greater than 5 years of experience in a senior business manager role in the last 10 years	20
Greater than 5 years of business ownership experience (minimum 1/3 ownership) in the last 10 years	35

Factor 4: Investment

Investment	Points (maximum 15)
\$150,000 CAD – \$300,000 CAD	10
Greater than \$300,000 CAD	15

Factor 5: Net worth

Net Worth	Points (maximum 10)
\$600K CAD – \$999,999 CAD	5
\$1Million CAD – \$1.5 Million CAD	7
Greater than \$1.5 Million CAD	10

Factor 6: Age

Age	Points (maximum 10)
21-24	5
25-32	7
33-39	10
40-44	7
45-55	5
56+	0

Factor 7: Adaptability

Adaptability	Points (maximum 10)
Your spouse or partner's language level Your spouse or common-law partner has a language level in either English or French at CLB 4 level or higher in all four language abilities (speaking, listening, reading and writing)	5
Your past study in Nova Scotia You finished at least two academic years of full-time study (in a program at least two years long) at a secondary or post-secondary school in Nova Scotia. Full-time study means at least 15 hours of instruction per week, and must have remained in good academic standing (as defined by the school) during the period of full-time study in Nova Scotia.	10
Your spouse or partner's past study in Nova Scotia Your spouse or common-law partner finished at least two academic years of full-time study (in a program at least two years long) at a secondary or post-	5

secondary school in Nova Scotia. Full-time study means at least 15 hours of instruction per week, and your accompanying spouse or common-law partner must have remained in good academic standing (as defined by the school) during the period of full-time study in Nova Scotia.	
Your past work in Nova Scotia You did at least one year of full-time work in Nova Scotia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In occupation listed in Skill Type 0 or Skill Levels A or B of the National Occupational Classification (NOC 2011), and • You had a valid work permit or while authorized to work in Canada. 	10
Your spouse or common-law partner's past work in Nova Scotia Your spouse / partner did at least one year of full-time work in Nova Scotia on a valid work permit or while authorized to work in Canada.	5
Relatives in Nova Scotia You, or, if it applies, your spouse or common-law partner, have a relative, either a parent, grandparent, brother/sister, aunt/uncle, niece/nephew, who is living in Nova Scotia for at least one continuous year, 18 years or older, and a Canadian citizen or permanent resident.	5

Factor 8: Nova Scotia Economic Priorities

Nova Scotia Economic Priorities	Points (maximum 10)
Export-oriented business	5
Proposed business location outside of Halifax Regional Municipality	5
Business succession	5

International Graduate Entrepreneur: Program Criteria

Overview

Nova Scotia's universities and colleges are educating over 7,000 international students, many of whom wish to stay in Nova Scotia permanently. International graduates form an attractive pool of potential immigrants. The International Graduate Entrepreneur Stream is open to graduates who have completed at least two years of full-time study from a recognized Nova Scotia university or Nova Scotia Community College, have operated their own business in Nova Scotia for at least one year, and intend to settle permanently in Nova Scotia.

Nomination Process

There are four steps to the nomination process:

Step 1: Submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Province of Nova Scotia

Prospective immigrants indicate their interest in immigrating to Nova Scotia by completing an Expression of Interest in the form a short online survey, providing required information about their work experience, language, education, age, adaptability and their business. Only applicants who meet the minimum criteria can submit an EOI. Candidates are assessed based on a points matrix according to their profile and then assigned a score.

Step 2: Invitation to Apply

Top scoring applicants will be notified by NSOI that they are being invited to submit a formal application to the Nova Scotia Nominee Program. Complete applications received from those invited to apply will then undergo an assessment by NSOI.

Step 3: Request for Nomination

Once an applicant has been assessed and is deemed to meet the criteria of the program, he/she will be nominated for Permanent Residency by Nova Scotia under the Nova Scotia Nominee Program.

Step 4: Applying for Permanent Residency

Upon nomination, the applicant will apply to Citizenship and Immigration Canada for Permanent Residency status.

Fees

There are no fees for the International Graduate Entrepreneur Stream. However, the applicant will be required to provide supporting documentation that will require fees to other parties (e.g., language testing, audited financial statements, document translation, etc.)

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the minimum eligibility criteria:

Human Capital Criteria

- Applicants must have completed a full-time Nova Scotia post-secondary diploma or degree of at least two years in length from a recognized university in Nova Scotia or the Nova Scotia Community College.
- Applicants must have resided in Nova Scotia full-time during the academic program. (No distance learning programs or compressed academic programs will be eligible.)
- Applicants must demonstrate proficiency in one of Canada's official languages by achieving a test result demonstrating Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 7 in all four language abilities; verified by either CELPIP General test, IELTS General Training or the Test d'évaluation de français (TEF) and taken within two years prior to the date of EOI submission.
- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Applicants are required to reside in Nova Scotia while they establish their eligible business.

Business and Financial Criteria

- Demonstrate intention to settle in Nova Scotia, and own and operate a business in Nova Scotia for at least one continuous year prior to the date of EOI submission.
- Applicants must own 100% of the equity of the eligible business and provide active and on-going participation in the day to day management and direction of the business.
- The applicant must demonstrate that they are receiving compensation in the form of salary from the business, which must, at minimum, meet the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) as defined by Statistics Canada. The eligible business has to be in sound financial health. This means that it must be producing revenue and earning sufficient profits to allow the owner to become economically established in the province. Audited financial statements from an NSOI approved professional third party will be required to assess the financial health of the business.

Starting a Business

If starting a business the applicant must create a minimum of one full-time (or equivalent) employment opportunity for a Canadian citizen or Permanent Resident in Nova Scotia (non-relative worker). This position(s) must:

- Be over and above any position filled by the approved applicant. For clarity, jobs created for or filled by family members of the applicant are not eligible.
- Be relevant and directly related to the applicant's business.
- Meet the prevailing wage levels.

Business Succession

- The Nova Scotia based business must have been in continuous operation by the same owner for the previous five (5) years.
- Applicants must provide evidence that reasonable efforts were taken to establish a fair market value for the business.
- The business must be in active operation and not in receivership.

- The succession buy-out must result in a complete change in ownership where the applicant will assume full control of the business.
- Applicants must offer employment on similar terms and conditions to existing staff, including maintaining existing wages and employment terms.

Eligible businesses must also include the following elements:

- The business must be initiated or operated for the purpose of making a profit. Businesses created solely for immigration purposes are ineligible.
- Businesses must meet the legal requirements of the community in which they operate.
- The business must be a for-profit entity with the primary purpose of earning profits through the sale of goods and/or services.
- The business must be considered a “permanent establishment” as defined under subsection 400(2) of the Canadian *Income Tax Regulations*, 1985.
- The business is liable to pay income tax on taxable income earned as a result of a “permanent establishment” in Nova Scotia, irrespective of income or other taxes which may also be payable in other jurisdictions as a result of income earned or other business activity.
- You are required to reside in Nova Scotia and operate your business and be involved in its day to day management. You may not do this remotely, or from another Canadian province or territory or from another country.
- The business must have potential to create significant economic benefit to Nova Scotia. For example:
 - Increasing value added manufacturing or processing, exports, destination tourism, research and development, and technology commercialization;
 - Developing innovative approaches to traditional businesses
 - Transferring technology & specialized knowledge to Nova Scotia.
 - Providing products or services to an under-served local or regional market

Ineligible Businesses:

- Businesses that are conducted remotely (from another Canadian jurisdiction or from another country).
- Property rental, investment, and leasing activities.
- Real estate construction/development/brokerage, insurance brokerage or business brokerage; unless the applicant can prove their project in this area will have a compelling benefit to the Province.
- Professional services or self-employed business operators requiring licensing or accreditation.
- Pay day loan, cheque cashing, money changing and cash machines.
- Pawnbrokers.
- Credit unions.
- Home-based businesses; unless the applicant can prove their project in this area will have a compelling benefit to the Province.
- Co-operatives.
- Investments into a business operated primarily for the purposes of deriving passive investment income.
- Businesses involved in the production, distribution or sale of pornographic or sexually

- explicit products or services, or in the provision of sexually-oriented services.
- Joint ventures between NSNP program applicants.
- Any other type of business that by association could bring the NSNP or the Government of Nova Scotia into disrepute.

Expression of Interest Points Matrix

As noted previously, a points matrix will be used to select the strongest applicants who best align with Nova Scotia’s business and economic priorities. Points are awarded in the following categories: language, education, work experience, adaptability, age, and Nova Scotia priorities.

Factor 1: Language

First official language	Points				Points (minimum of 20 points from first official language; maximum 35)
	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	
CLB level 9 or higher	7	7	7	7	28
CLB level 8	6	6	6	6	24
CLB level 7	5	5	5	5	20
Note: You can only get points in total for basic-level skills in your second official language, and only if you have a score of at least CLB 5 in each of the four language abilities.					
Second official language					
At least CLB 5 in all of the four abilities					7

Factor 2: Education

Education	Points (maximum 25)
Completion of a Nova Scotia post-secondary diploma for a two-year program	12
Completion of a Nova Scotia post-secondary degree or diploma for a program of three years or longer	15
Two or more Canadian post-secondary degrees or diplomas (at least one must be for a program of at least three years completed at a Nova Scotia institution)	17
Nova Scotia university degree at the Master’s level	22
Completion of a Nova Scotia university level entry-to-practice professional degree. Occupation related to the degree must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOC 2011 Skill Level A, and • Licensed by a provincial regulatory body 	22
Nova Scotia university degree at the Doctoral (PhD) level	25

Factor 3: Work Experience

In addition to operating a business for at least one continuous year in Nova Scotia applicants can score points if they fall into one of the following categories:

Work Experience	Points (maximum 15)
-----------------	---------------------

3 to 5 years of work experience in the last 10 years at NOC 0, A or B level	10
Greater than 5 years of work experience in the last 10 years at NOC 0, A or B level	15

Factor 4: Adaptability

Adaptability	Points (maximum 10)
Your spouse or partner's language level Your spouse or common-law partner has a language level in either English or French at CLB 4 level or higher in all four language abilities (speaking, listening, reading and writing)	5
Your spouse or partner's past study in Nova Scotia Your spouse or common-law partner finished at least two academic years of full-time study (in a program at least two years long) at a secondary or post-secondary school in Nova Scotia. Full-time study means at least 15 hours of instruction per week, and your accompanying spouse or common-law partner must have remained in good academic standing (as defined by the school) during the period of full-time study in Nova Scotia.	5
Your spouse or common-law partner's past work in Nova Scotia Your spouse / partner did at least one year of full-time work in Nova Scotia on a valid work permit or while authorized to work in Canada.	5
Relatives in Nova Scotia You, or, if it applies, your spouse or common-law partner, have a relative, either a parent, grandparent, brother/sister, aunt/uncle, niece/nephew, who is living in Nova Scotia for at least one continuous year, 18 years or older, and a Canadian citizen or permanent resident.	5

Factor 5: Age

Age	Points (maximum 10)
21-39	10
40-44	7
45-55	5
56+	0

Factor 6: Nova Scotia Economic Priorities

Nova Scotia Economic Priorities	Points (maximum 5)
Export-oriented business	5
Business location outside of Halifax Regional Municipality	5
Business succession	5