



Hiring and Retaining International Students and Graduates in Atlantic Canada.

An Employer's Guide

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN CANADA

Atlantic Canada has a talented and diverse group of international students. As newcomers to Canada, international students have adapted to a new culture. Their strength, determination, tenacity, resilience, sense of adventure, and global awareness has enabled them to succeed in their studies. According to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), there were 494,525 international students in Canada in 2017, representing a 119% increase since 2010. This resource is here to help you access this pool of candidates and support you in transitioning them from student to employee.

11%



International students represent 11% of all students on Canadian campuses.

(2016, Statistics Canada)

65% of international students plan to apply for permanent residency in Atlantic Canada.

(2017, International Student Graduate Report)



65%

59%



59% of international graduates considered the lack of employment opportunities as their greatest barrier to staying in Atlantic Canada.

(2017, International Student Graduate Report)

THE ATLANTIC GROWTH STRATEGY is about accelerating the economic growth of Atlantic Canada and attracting international skilled workers to the region. It was launched by the Government of Canada and the governments of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick in 2016.

In 2017, the region welcomed over 9,000 permanent residents under economic programs, and there was more than a 600% increase in new job offers in the region (2018, Atlantic Growth Strategy Year 2 Report, <http://www.atlantic-growth.ca>).

RETAINING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

“Our population is growing at the fastest rate in Canada, and we are excited by the continued opportunities to engage with important markets domestically and internationally.”

HON. WADE MACLAUCHLAN,
PREMIER OF PRINCE EDWARD
ISLAND, 2018

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

“The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is focused on achieving economic growth and diversification....our governments are providing responsive supports and new opportunities for businesses, which in turn will lead to greater prosperity for residents across Atlantic Canada.”

HON. DWIGHT BALL,
PREMIER OF NEWFOUNDLAND
AND LABRADOR, 2018

NEW BRUNSWICK

“Advancing the Atlantic Growth Strategy will create jobs by increasing our exports, strengthening our workforce through investments in education and skills training, and growing important sectors such as tourism.”

HON. BRIAN GALLANT,
PREMIER OF NEW BRUNSWICK,
2018

NOVA SCOTIA

“Building the economy and increasing our population are essential for Nova Scotia and all of Atlantic Canada. The Atlantic Growth Strategy is bolstering our work in achieving those goals and we look forward to seeing more positive results for the region.”

HON. STEPHEN MCNEIL,
PREMIER OF NOVA SCOTIA, 2018



THE BENEFITS ARE HUGE

International students are already living and studying in Atlantic Canada. Many of them want to stay in the region after they graduate. They are keen to gain Canadian work experience and become permanent residents.

STRENGTHEN
the economy

INCREASE
diversity

MEET
labour needs

BETTER SERVE
international clients

INCREASE
the reach of
businesses

CONTRIBUTE
diverse ways
of thinking

BUILD
population through
immigration

INCREASE
competitiveness in the
global marketplace

HELP
businesses become
an employer of choice

HAVE
established extensive
networks locally and
internationally

ALLOW
the workforce to
respond to changing
demographics

BRING
entrepreneurial
spirit

International graduates are eager to remain in Atlantic Canada, but find barriers to gaining employment in our region. Some of these barriers can be reduced by shifting some HR practices.

NEW HR PRACTICES FOR SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

LANGUAGE

It is important to recognize that having a strong accent does not mean that a person has difficulty understanding, or with reading and writing. Accents fade with time and experience.



REFERENCES

Ask for English/French speaking references rather than Canadian references, since the citizenship of the reference is less important than understanding what they have to say about the applicant.



CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Consider whether or not certain requirements such as a driver's license, Canadian citizenship, and Canadian work experience are necessary. These may not be essential for a particular position.

EXPERIENCE

Place equal value on international and Canadian experience. Both can contribute significant value and provide unique benefits to your organization.



VISAS AND WORK PERMITS

If a candidate is a good fit for your needs, do not hesitate to make the offer. Your candidate can work with the appropriate permit (study permit, co-op work permit, post graduate work permit or temporary work permit) and can renew or apply for a new permit as needed. The candidate will undertake the appropriate process, and may ask for your support, if required. Federal and Provincial immigration representatives are available to help you navigate this process. They are listed in the Resources section of this guide.

CONDITIONS FOR PART-TIME & FULL-TIME WORK

Many international students have the opportunity to work during their studies as part of a co-op work term, internship, practicum, or part-time job, while some volunteer with local non-profits. Gaining Canadian experience and credentials will help them remain in Canada after graduation.

CONDITIONS FOR PART-TIME WORK

Generally, study permits allow international students to work a maximum of 20 hours/week off-campus and unlimited hours on-campus. You can check the conditions listed on the student's study permit to verify.



CONDITIONS FOR FULL-TIME WORK

DURING DEGREE

International students can work full-time during a scheduled break. At other times of the year, international students can work full-time as part of a co-operative education program, internship, or practicum program.

AFTER DEGREE

You can hire international students once they have completed their course requirements to graduate from a post-secondary institution.



If you would like to make a full-time job offer to a student before completion of an academic program, please contact representatives from federal and provincial governments to explore options. These contacts are included in the Resources section.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE REGULATIONS?

CO-OP WORK TERMS

- Employment must be a required part of the student's degree or diploma.
- International co-op students can be hired during an academic semester.
- International co-op students will be able to present the following documents upon signing their contract with you:
 1. a co-op work permit;
 2. a valid study permit;
 3. a Social Insurance Number.
- University co-op offices will answer any questions you may have about hiring international co-op students in Canada.



POST-GRADUATION

- Upon completion of their program requirements, some international students can apply for a Post-Graduate Work Permit (PGWP), which allows them to work anywhere in Canada full-time.
- When a job offer is made to an international graduate, they do not have to present a valid work permit if they have a PGWP application submitted. A graduate without a PGWP may be eligible to apply for a closed work permit with the support of an employer.
- After graduation, international students are eligible to apply for permanent residency. They may approach you to help facilitate their immigration pathway or provide supporting documentation. Provincial immigration representatives are available to support you in navigating this process.



HOW DO I RECRUIT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN ATLANTIC CANADA?

JOB FAIRS (ON AND OFF CAMPUS)



CAREER SERVICES IN UNIVERSITIES



IMMIGRANT SERVING ORGANIZATIONS



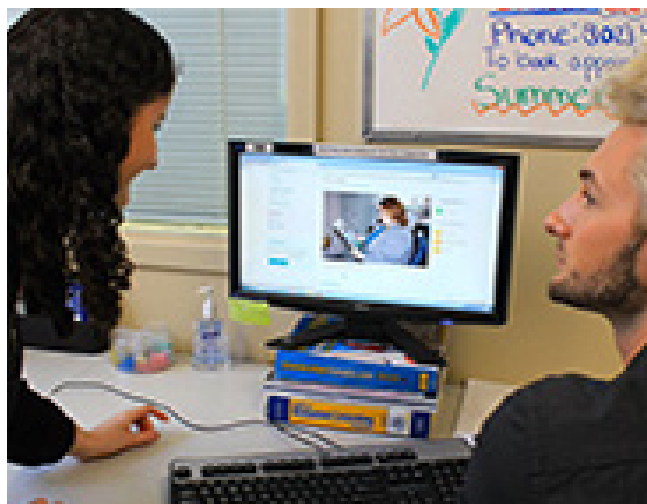
ATLANTIC IMMIGRATION PILOT PROGRAM



ATLANTIC CANADA STUDY AND STAY™



REGULAR JOB POSTINGS



WHAT IS MY ROLE IN SUPPORTING AN EMPLOYEE TO IMMIGRATE?

The type of position determines whether an international graduate can apply for permanent residency. There are a few key programs, and each of them has its own requirements. Please see the Resources section at the end of this guide to find a link to your province's details.

ATLANTIC IMMIGRATION PILOT PROGRAM

The Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program is designed to help employers in Atlantic Canada attract and retain qualified candidates to fill job vacancies they couldn't fill locally.

- It is employer-driven; which means it all begins with a job offer from you.
- It is a faster pathway to permanent residency for international graduates making it an attractive program in this region.
- Your first step is to become designated by the province where the candidate will be working; please visit <http://www.canada.ca/atlantic-immigration> for the full story.

The Atlantic Immigration Pilot is a partnership between the Government of Canada and the four Atlantic provinces under the Skilled Workforce/Immigration Pillar of the Atlantic Growth Strategy.

PROVINCIAL NOMINEE PROGRAM

Most provinces and territories in Canada can nominate immigrants through their Provincial Nominee Program (PNP).

- Each province has its own requirements.
- A qualifying job may help candidates gain work experience and accumulate working hours needed to be nominated by the provincial government.
- Immigrants must have the skills, education and work experience to contribute to the economy of the province or territory in which they want to live.



FINANCIAL INCENTIVES & HIRING SUPPORT

The Atlantic Provinces provide financial incentives to hire international students and graduates. The Resources section provides you with the links and contact information for the following programs.

NEW BRUNSWICK

1. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT FUND

The Youth Employment Fund (YEF) provides an entry point to long-term employment for unemployed individuals between 18-29 years of age who require a work experience opportunity as identified through their employment action plan. By placing an individual with an employer, the youth may gain work experience and develop skills through basic workplace training, mentoring and coaching (from the employer).

https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.201375.Youth_Employment_Fund.html

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

1. GRADUATE TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Graduate Transition to Employment Program (GTEP) is an incentive for employers in Newfoundland and Labrador to hire Memorial University graduates. Employers and/or organizations in the private sector (includes not-for-profits) within Newfoundland and Labrador are eligible to apply for GTEP funding.

<https://www.mun.ca/student/student-success/work-experience/gtep.php>

2. JOBSNL WAGE SUBSIDY

The JobsNL Wage Subsidy program is designed to connect employers and employees by providing funding to employers to create sustainable long-term employment or seasonal employment. The subsidy is meant to offset salary costs to create new positions. Employers may receive a 50% subsidy (up to a maximum of \$8/hour) towards the hourly wage.

<https://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/foremployers/wagesubsidy.html>

3. SMALL ENTERPRISE CO-OPERATIVE PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Small Enterprise Co-operative Placement Assistance Program (SECPAP) is funded by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's Department of Advanced Education and Skills and is administered by the Co-operative Education Office in each institution. Work terms must be in small private firms (less than 50 employees and annual sales less than \$5 million) and provide students with relevant employment experience related to their field of study.

<https://www.mun.ca/coop/employers/funding/>

<https://www.cna.nl.ca/programs-courses/pdfs/Co-operative-Education/SECPAP-Wage-Subsidy-Application.pdf>



NOVA SCOTIA

1. WORKPLACE INNOVATION AND PRODUCTIVITY INCENTIVE

This funding incentive was designed to encourage you to invest in employee training to improve productivity and foster workplace diversity.

If your organization represents wholesale, retail, accommodations or food services, you are eligible to apply.

<https://novascotia.ca/programs/workplace-innovation-productivity-skills-incentive/>

2. START PROGRAM

The START Program encourages employers to hire employees requiring work experience. Incentives will vary depending on the type of employment offered and the skill level of the employee.

This program has a focus on small to medium-sized enterprises.

<https://novascotia.ca/employmentnovascotia/programs/start.asp>

3. GRADUATE TO OPPORTUNITY

Graduate to Opportunity (GTO) is helping to build a stronger workforce and retain well-educated young people in Nova Scotia with a salary incentive that makes it easier to hire recent graduates. As an employer, you will receive 25% of the first year's salary, 35% if the new graduate is a member of a distinct diversity group, and 12.5% of the second year's salary.

It is available to small businesses of fewer than 100 employees, start-up companies (incorporated within two years of the application date), social enterprises, not-for-profit organizations, and registered charities with recognized standing.

<https://novascotia.ca/programs/graduate-to-opportunity/>

4. INNOVATE TO OPPORTUNITY

Innovate to Opportunity (ITO) is helping well-educated graduates start their careers in Nova Scotia while helping businesses become more innovative and export-oriented. The program provides an incentive to hire recent Masters and PhD graduates for jobs that are focused on research and innovation that will help businesses begin, prepare for, or expand exports.

<https://novascotia.ca/programs/innovate-to-opportunity/>

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

1. GRADUATE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The Graduate Mentorship Program is an employment program developed to help employers create long term employment opportunities for unemployed recent post-secondary graduates in their field of study. If you are hiring a recent post secondary graduate who lacks the work experience necessary for the position, we can subsidize up to 50% of the wages for 52 weeks. This program supports international graduates.

<https://skillspei.com/programs-for-job-seekers/grad-mentorship-ind>

CREATE AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

It is important to learn about the diverse backgrounds of your employees, so that, as an employer, you can foster an understanding and inclusive workplace.

DEVELOPING AND ENHANCING YOUR ORGANIZATION

While international students and graduates offer so many benefits to the workforce, some may experience additional challenges as they adapt to Canadian workplace culture. These challenges are easily overcome and your organization will reap the benefits of a diverse workforce. By following the tips outlined in this resource, you ease the transition of international students and graduates into the workplace.

COACHING EXISTING EMPLOYEES

Delivering training sessions or workshops to existing employees, such as diversity training and cultural competency training, is considered a best practice. These are opportunities for employees to learn to value diversity, and overcome stereotypes and discrimination. For programs and training that are available in Atlantic Canada, please see the Resources section.

PLANNING SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Ensuring all employees have the opportunity to participate in the decision making and planning of social activities is a way to ensure that everyone feels comfortable with the types of activities chosen. For example, not everyone will want to go to a bar for drinks as some cultures do not consume alcohol. Since food is such a big part of many cultures, a staff pot-luck is a great way for employees to learn about each other's cultures.

BEING AWARE OF CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND HOLY DAYS

Providing employees with the option to use flex time or a float day to observe culturally significant events or holy days is an excellent inclusion practice. Tell your international employees that you are interested in learning about their holy days and are open to working with their schedule to ensure they can observe them. Let them know that with enough advance notice, you will avoid scheduling meetings that conflict with the observance.

For more ideas, consult your local settlement organizations listed in the Resources section.



WELCOMING NEW EMPLOYEES: ONBOARDING TIPS

Successfully transitioning international students and new graduates into your workplace starts with taking their needs into consideration. Planning an intentional onboarding process can make a big difference. Here are some suggestions to consider:

- Reinforce the commitment to diversity by making inclusion a key objective of onboarding programs.
- Reach outside the organization to help meet onboarding needs will give you a positive reputation for valuing diversity and inclusion, and making you an employer of choice.
- Ensure new hires are aware of Employee Resource Groups and their rights in a Canadian workplace. These concepts are culturally specific, so it is important not to assume everyone is aware of their rights.
- Make your expectations very clear. Remember, workplace expectations and customs are culturally specific.
- Build a mentorship program where international students or graduates are matched with peer mentors to support them with advice and tips on how to successfully integrate into the workplace culture.
- Train managers and empower them to be diversity champions.

YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Our Canadian workplaces have norms and expectations that are culturally specific. To help your new international hire succeed, take the time to explain workplace expectations that you may think are “common sense,” but are, in fact, dictated by our cultural norms.

Consider discussing:

- Start and end time (do you expect employees to arrive 10 minutes early? To stay late to complete their work?);
- Appropriate attire for your workplace;
- Lunch breaks;
- Appointments during the work day;
- Calling in sick;
- Taking personal calls, responding to personal emails, texting, or using social media at work;
- Are employees encouraged to ask for help or clarification with their work? Who should they ask?;
- If an employee wants to discuss something with you, do you expect a meeting to be scheduled or do you have an open door policy?;
- Any policies that they should be aware of (scent free policy, harassment, discrimination, etc.).



RESOURCES

ATLANTIC CANADA

Atlantic Canada Study and Stay™

<https://atlanticcanadastudyandstay.com/>

Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program

<https://canada.ca/atlantic-immigration>

The Employer's Roadmap to hiring and retaining internationally trained workers

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/employer-roadmap-hiring-retaining-internationally-trained-workers.html>

National Occupational Classification (NOC)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/eligibility/find-national-occupation-code.html>

Provincial Nominee Program

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/provincial-nominees.html>

Work in Canada (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's information about permits)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/permit.html>

NEW BRUNSWICK GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour

https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/post-secondary_education_training_and_labour.html

Immigration and Settlement in New Brunswick (Employer Hiring)

https://www.welcomenb.ca/content/wel-bien/en/Employers_hiring.html

HIRING SUPPORT

Youth Employment Fund

https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.201375.Youth_Employment_Fund.html

PROVINCIAL PROGRAMS

Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program

https://www.welcomenb.ca/content/wel-bien/en/Employers_hiring/content/Atlantic_Immigration_Pilot_Project.html

Provincial Nominee Program

<https://www.welcomenb.ca/content/wel-bien/en/immigrating/content/HowToImmigrate/NBProvincialNomineeProgram.html>



NEW BRUNSWICK (CONTINUED)

TRAINING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Asian Heritage Society of New Brunswick

<http://www.ahsnb.org/>

CAIENA-Péninsule acadienne

<http://www.nouveauxarrivants.ca/>

CAFi

<http://www.cafi-nb.org/>

Filipino-Canadian CommUNITY of New Brunswick (FCNB) Inc.

<http://www.pinoys.org/>

Miramichi Regional Multicultural Association

<http://www.miramichimulticultural.com/>

Multicultural Association of Carleton County

www.maccnb.ca/

Multicultural Association Chaleur Region Inc.

<https://macr-amrc.ca/en/home.aspx>

Multicultural Association of Charlotte County

<https://www.ccmanb.com/>

Multicultural Association of Fredericton Inc.

<https://mcaf.nb.ca/en/>

Multicultural Association of the Greater Moncton Area

<http://magma-amgm.org/>

New Brunswick Multicultural Council - Cultural Competency Training

<http://www.nb-mc.ca/ciwc/>

PRUDE Inc. - Employers' Workshop

<https://www.prudeinc.org/services>

Restigouche Multicultural Association

<https://www.rma-amr.ca/>

The Saint John Newcomers Centre - Cultural Competency Training

<https://sjnewcomers.ca/cultural-competency-training.html>

YMCA of Greater Saint John

<https://saintjohnny.ymca.ca/>

RESOURCES

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour (For Employers)

<https://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/foremployers/default.html>

Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism (Information for Employers)

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/immigration/employers/>

PROVINCIAL PROGRAMS

Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/immigration/immigrating-to-newfoundland-and-labrador/atlantic-immigration-pilot-program/overview/>

Provincial Nominee Program

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/immigration/immigrating-to-newfoundland-and-labrador/provincial-nominee-program/>

HIRING SUPPORT

Graduate Transition to Employment Program

<https://www.mun.ca/student/student-success/work-experience/gtep.php>

Jobs NL Wage Subsidy

https://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/empservices/jobsnl_wage_subsidy.pdf

Small Enterprise Co-operative Placement Assistance Program

<https://www.mun.ca/coop/employers/funding/>

TRAINING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Association for New Canadians - Diversity Training

http://www.ancnl.ca/?Content=Diversity_Training

AXIS Career Services - Employer Engagement

<https://www.axiscareers.net/EmployerEngagement>

Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador

<http://www.francotnl.ca/>

NOVA SCOTIA

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Labour and Advanced Education

<https://novascotia.ca/lae/>

Nova Scotia Immigration - Employer Support

<https://novascotiaimmigration.com/help-for-employers/>



NOVA SCOTIA (CONTINUED)

PROVINCIAL PROGRAMS

Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program

<https://novascotiainmigration.com/help-for-employers/atlantic-immigration-pilot/>

Provincial Nominee Program

<https://novascotiainmigration.com/move-here/>

HIRING SUPPORT

Graduate to Opportunity

<https://novascotia.ca/programs/graduate-to-opportunity/>

Innovate to Opportunity

<https://novascotia.ca/programs/innovate-to-opportunity/>

START program

<https://novascotia.ca/employmentnovascotia/programs/start.asp>

Workplace Innovation and Productivity Incentive

<https://novascotia.ca/programs/workplace-innovation-productivity-skills-incentive/>

TRAINING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

African Diaspora Association of the Maritimes

<https://adamns.com/>

Antigonish Women's Resource Centre

<http://awrcsasa.ca/>

Cape Breton Island Centre for Immigration

<http://www.cbici.ca>

Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse

<https://www.acadiene.ca/>

Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia - Workplace Culture Program

<http://www.isans.ca/employer-support/workplace-culture/>

Regional Enterprise Networks

<https://nsrens.ca/>

YMCA of Cape Breton - Employer Supports

<http://capebreton.ymca.ca/Programs/Categories/Employment-Services/Employer-Supports>

YMCA of Greater Halifax / Dartmouth

<https://www.ymcahfx.ca/>

RESOURCES

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Office of Immigration, Department of Economic Development and Tourism

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/immigrate>

HIRING SUPPORT

Graduate Mentorship Program

<https://skillspei.com/programs-for-job-seekers/grad-mentorship-ind>

PROVINCIAL PROGRAMS

Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/office-immigration/atlantic-immigration-pilot-designated-employers>

Provincial Nominee Program

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/office-immigration/provincial-nominee-program>

TRAINING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

La Coopérative d'intégration francophone (CIF)

<http://www.cifipe.ca/>

PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada - Workshops for Employers

<https://www.peianc.com/en/workshops-for-employers>

PEI Connectors

<https://peiconnectors.ca/>

PEI Network

<http://www.peinetwork.ca/>

RDÉE ÎPÉ

<http://www.rdeeipe.net/>

Study and Stay PEI

<http://studypei.ca>

Work PEI

<https://workpei.ca/>



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MSVU will maintain this guide on an ongoing basis.
Any feedback can be sent to international@msvu.ca.

Information presented in this guide is subject to change. Please refer to the official government or organization websites for the most up-to-date information.



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