

# Sparking Productivity & Innovation in Nova Scotia

A novaknowledge Report on the 2007  
Nova Scotia Assembly of Leaders

# BACKGROUND, DEFINITIONS & FEEDBACK

## About **novaknowledge**

nova**knowledge** has been the leading advocate for Nova Scotia's knowledge-driven economy since 1993.

- ***Vision***

As the forum for collaborative action in Atlantic Canada, nova**knowledge** will lead a network of members, volunteers, and participants that advocates for a strong, sustainable, and competitive knowledge-driven economy in the region.

- ***Mission***

Our mission is to stimulate action across the region by bringing together leaders in government, business, and education to achieve our vision.

- ***Approach***

nova**knowledge** advocates for a culture of innovation, provides a neutral space for dialogue among stakeholders, and undertakes fact-based analysis and monitoring of important knowledge-economy measures - innovation and productivity. We achieve our objectives through networking, advocacy, member-driven research, and publications.

## About the Assembly of Leaders

We issued the invitation, and they came. On October 26, 2007, nova**knowledge** brought together over 150 leaders representing business, government, education, labour unions, students, young professionals, visible minorities, and economic and community development groups. Our intent was to facilitate a collaborative effort toward a common and achievable goal – a more forward-thinking, prosperous, productive, and sustainable knowledge-driven Nova Scotia.

We wish to acknowledge the tremendous support that we received from our event sponsors and partners — **Saint Mary's University, McInnes Cooper, Atlantic Business Magazine, Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development, Clearwater, Nova Scotia Association of Regional Development Associations (NSARDA), Halifax Global Inc. Impact Performance Group,** and the **Pictou Regional Development Commission.**

We believe that our province's social and economic action priorities must show "SPARK":

**S**ustainability

**P**roductivity

**A**lignment

**R**esearch & development

**K**nowledge



*"This session changed how I look at the local economy and economic development. It is exciting to think about a Nova Scotia future that is all about productivity and innovation. Thanks for the opportunity to participate!"*

*Michael L. Morris*

*President*

*Cobham Tracking & Locating Ltd.*

## Why we held the event

Several pressing issues motivated us to bring these leaders together. Nova Scotia is facing real and growing workforce and skills shortages, rising health care costs, and the need for economic sustainability. There have been a number of successes in regard to attracting new companies and the launch of new and forward-thinking sustainable economic development policies. We wanted to highlight and to celebrate these successes. However, we were concerned over the number of workers leaving our province, our failure to meet immigration attraction and retention targets, and the fact that over 50% of Nova Scotians still earn less than \$30,000 per year. It was time to lead action by bringing leaders from all sectors and all regions together.

*"I think one of the key things that stood out for me was that so many of the issues we face are exactly the same for the private sector businesses as they are for the Voluntary Sector agencies. I think it is also a key component of "knowledge" that we share not only our expertise, but our best practices and benchmarking for both sectors to continue to grow and improve."*

Margaret Fraser  
Executive Director  
Federation of Community Organizations

We heard from experts that Canada, and in particular Atlantic Canada, is lagging behind other G8 and industrialized nations in both productivity and innovation. For real GDP per hour, Atlantic Canada's productivity rate is 80%, trailing that of the US, Germany, France, and the UK. In 2004, Atlantic Canada's research and development spending as a share of GDP regionally was approximately 1.14%, with business accounting for only 0.26%. By failing to meet these challenges, we risk economic decline and losing the quality of life we enjoy. Presentations made by Thought Leaders from the Conference Board of Canada, Centre for Study of Living Standards, Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development, Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour, Chambers of Commerce of Ireland, and Canmac Economics Ltd. are available on our website at: [www.novaknowledge.ns.ca](http://www.novaknowledge.ns.ca).

*"It turned out to be very appropriate to call the speakers "Thought Leaders." Each of them presented information that highlighted key challenges confronting Nova Scotia. They lit up the room, offering solutions that were sometimes radical, but always provocative and stimulating. The discussions that followed were intensely focused. At the day's end, everyone seemed to leave with a clear sense of a mission to spread the word about our province's need to embrace knowledge, innovation and, most importantly, newcomers."*

Hon. Geoff Regan  
Member of Parliament for Halifax West

## What happened at the event

During the morning, our assembled leaders participated in a series of interactive sessions where local, Canadian, and international experts analyzed critical issues such as demographics, education, productivity, sustainability, and competitiveness. The morning also featured moderated roundtable sessions where participants shared achievements and articulated real or perceived barriers. Afternoon speakers discussed innovation, exploring how other regions and countries have addressed similar issues to those in Nova Scotia. Subsequent discussions explored tactics and suggested actions for change.

*"The Assembly provided a wonderful opportunity to meet individuals and organizations committed to the development of Nova Scotia's economy. The stimulating discussions and presentations surrounding youth retention and employment strategies, as well as the current demographic realities of our province, have reaffirmed my commitment to the Cape Breton Works project, a human resource study being undertaken by our organization, JCI Cape Breton."*

*Stephen D. Tobin  
Executive Director  
JCI Cape Breton*

Over 50% of the participants indicated that they were glad to learn more about the development approaches and tremendous successes in New Brunswick, Wales, and Ireland. The other 50% indicated that it was time to stop looking at others and begin to craft and implement our own solutions. Over 80% of participants called on nova **knowledge** to release a report on the Nova Scotia Assembly of Leaders, and to lead action.

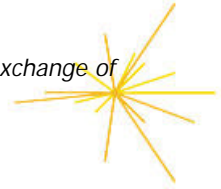
*"The calibre of the speakers and the attendees was top notch. I don't think I've been to any other event where people were still talking about it weeks later. It seems to have changed the thinking of a number of people in our business community."*

*David Fraser  
McInnes Cooper*

### What has nova knowledge been doing since then?

From these sessions, nova **knowledge** has created this summary report with recommendations, rationale, and actions. We will distribute our findings and recommendations to government, business, development, and education leaders province-wide.

*"Thought-provoking speakers and an engaged group of participants made for a very interesting exchange of ideas - looking forward to seeing those ideas turn into action."*



Lisa Setlakwe

Director General for Policy, Advocacy & Coordination

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

## novaknowledge Definitions

### What is a knowledge-driven economy and society?

A *knowledge-driven* (a.k.a., “new”) economy is an export-based economy driven by the addition of knowledge, creativity, and technology to products and services. Innovation is key to achieving this objective.

Knowledge-driven economy stakeholders are businesses, educational institutions, governments, and organizations that are highly innovative and leading in their fields as a result of the knowledge and intellectual creativity that drive their products and services. Their success is seen as the path to follow. The growth of the knowledge economy is the most important factor determining our standard of living and future prosperity.

### What does this actually mean?


- Being a knowledge worker is a way of thinking.
- Know-how is the most critical resource.
- Inspiration and ingenuity are crucial to an organization’s continued success.
- The most technologically advanced and prosperous economies are knowledge-driven.

### What is innovation?

We define *innovation* as the introduction of new products or services, or new ways of making products or services. It may refer to adopting or adapting technical advances in how products are made, or shifts in attitudes about how (and which) products and services are developed and marketed.

## What is productivity?

We define productivity as the ability to minimize the work or effort that goes into producing goods or services and to maximize the number or value of those goods and services delivered to the marketplace. Simply put, it is about driving labour force efficiency – through training and technology adoption – so that goods are produced in a safe, timely, environmentally sustainable, and economical manner. Increased productivity results in enhanced capacity, new products, and often creates new export opportunities.




*"Attending the Assembly of Leaders opened my eyes to the social and economic changes that will inevitably impact Nova Scotia. As someone who has entered the workforce in the last five years, I found the statistics presented to us to be startling. Our 'small but mighty' community, young and old, needs to take this as a wake-up call, and collectively find a way to hone our potential".*

*Erin Hall*

*KPMG*

*"The Nova Scotia Assembly of Leaders introduced new perspectives on old information. The dialogue provided me with new ideas about economic development, and I subsequently introduced modifications to two important strategies we are pursuing."*



*Colin MacLean*

*Vice President, People & Planning*

*NSSC*

# FORWARD-THINKING PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

## Refine the Economic Development Emphasis

It is time to reconsider and reduce the emphasis on short-term payroll rebates that often only temporarily attract foreign-owned businesses to Nova Scotia, tapping already scarce human resources. There has been good progress in recruiting knowledge-economy jobs from the IT, financial, and insurance sectors. Leaders commended NSBI and others for their progress and success over the past five years. This focus must be maintained as a rising dollar and global competition make call centres and unproductive or traditional manufacturers less sustainable. The transition in focus must be well managed to mitigate impact, particularly on rural communities, from the loss of these existing employers.

### LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- The NSARDA, NSBI, ACOA, and Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development must strive to work closer in guiding the transition to a more sustainable economic development mode for all regions.

### RESULTS

- Investment and business operations from multinational companies that are committed to Nova Scotia over the long term.
- More challenging, better-salaried knowledge-industry employment opportunities for Nova Scotians.

## Growth and Investment

Although pursuing knowledge-driven economy investment from outside Nova Scotia is important, we must also provide more resources and support to our province's existing businesses to ensure their continued growth. Leaders cited recent investments in firms such as Michelin and Advanced Glazings as examples of government helping to improve productivity and grow or modernize existing businesses.

### LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- The government and the Nova Scotia Association of Regional Development Associations (NSARDA) must increase focus on funding existing businesses in Nova Scotia to encourage investment in employees, adaptation of new technologies, and implementation of environmentally sustainable practices.
- The NSARDA, or an RDA governing body, must have the empowerment to ensure all RDAs have equal access to resources, so all provide the same level of service in all regions of the province.

## RESULTS

- Nova Scotia companies achieve growth through access to support and resources that lead to more innovative, forward-thinking, and sustainable business practices.
- Growing companies increases employment or productivity, helping to **SPARK** province-wide economic growth.
- Young Nova Scotians see that there are readily accessible resources and support to develop entrepreneurial ideas into profitable and sustainable companies.

## Maximize Workforce Capacity

Many Nova Scotia graduates are transitioning to the workforce with insufficient understanding, or low levels, of the basic skills – literacy and math – as well as the soft skills that employers require. Too many of our youth are not choosing knowledge-economy education programs (e.g., math, science, IT and the trades) that lead to a new generation of IT professionals, teachers, engineers, doctors, nurses, accountants, tradespeople, financial experts, and research scientists. This challenge exists despite the growing demand for these skills and positions!

In light of our province's workforce challenges, every employee must work to maximum capacity and productivity levels. Leaders want to see graduates with soft skills and characteristics such as respect, accountability for actions and outcomes, motivation, initiative, commitment, loyalty, and a positive work ethic. They want an education system that is more relevant to the digital economy, and to the needs of an Internet and IT savvy generation. And they want to see education standards based on what is required of an immediately productive employee, meaning stronger math, literacy and language skills.



*"It is about all people, not just youth. We must make progress in all areas in parallel, entry-level, mid-level, and late careers. Without viable business and social structures, we will not be able to get, grow, or retain the people we need. If we provide an exciting work environment, leading-edge technology, social infrastructure, and long-term vision, we will get and keep the right people."*

## LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- Business leaders and educators must work together so teachers and career/guidance counsellors better understand the types of jobs available, skills required, and technologies used in emerging employment opportunities, and share this information with students.

- Education leaders must adopt a 'time-on-task' approach in our P-12 public school system to improve results. And government must provide more resources to educators so they can maintain this focus.
- Business leaders, educators, and government must launch an advertising campaign to encourage students to enter math, science, IT education programs, and the trades, in light of increasing opportunities in these fields.
- Government and business leaders need to increase the amount of entry scholarships and bursaries offered to those pursuing careers in skilled trades.
- Government should set aside a portion of resource revenues from Deep Panuke and offshore cancellation fees for adult literacy and early childhood programs.

*"The Nova Scotia government should launch a program in which a training voucher is offered to any employer who hires a new graduate to a permanent, full-time position. This assistance with training would offset the significant risks of hiring a new graduate."*



## RESULTS

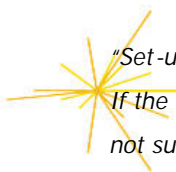
- Learning environments that better reflect the business environment.
- Graduates with the necessary skills to become productive more quickly, and to fill the emerging requirements of Nova Scotia's knowledge-driven economy.
- Improved career and earning opportunities for graduates, and improved workplace safety.
- Improved workforce ability to read, understand, and draw the full benefits from increasingly complex documents and technical operations manuals related to emerging business technologies.
- Development of a higher-value, globally competitive workforce – the cornerstone of economic growth and a knowledge-driven economy.

# Invest in Infrastructure

Investments in infrastructure are vital for several key reasons. They encourage young people to stay in Nova Scotia and ensure the competitiveness and economic growth of our communities, particularly in rural areas. Moreover, improved technology and infrastructure help mitigate workforce shortages and are often more environmentally sustainable than current methods.

## LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- To maintain our leadership position in education, government must increase capital investment for our post-secondary institutions.
- Government should set aside a portion of resource revenues from Deep Panuke and offshore cancellation fees to fund new infrastructure.
- Government must continue to invest in attracting international students, and see this as a strategic recruitment tool.
- Government must continue its initiative to offer broadband Internet access province-wide so rural businesses, their staff, and residents can work competitively and remotely in a knowledge-driven economy.
- Business, education institutions, and government should partner in the creation of a tissue bank to lure researchers and encourage the growth of our life-sciences sector.
- Businesses and education institutions should take advantage of our rising dollar to maximize capital and technology investments.



*"Set-up a business co-operative for capital investment to ensure we are leading edge and most productive. If the venture works, we will gain a reputation for being innovative. Looking to government for capital is not sustainable, and going to the banks can be prohibitive."*

## RESULTS

- Rural businesses become more competitive and grow, generating employment and other economic benefits for their communities.
- Improved quality of life means more people choose to stay or come to Nova Scotia to live, work, and invest.

- Enhanced post-secondary institutions lure more international students and researchers, laying the groundwork for innovation and increased commercialization of research and development.

## Increase Research & Development

In Nova Scotia, universities represent two-thirds of R&D spending. The challenge is how to increase private sector R&D investments given that our province's economy is mainly made up of small-to-medium-size businesses that often lack the capital and human resources to do so.

### LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government should shift its focus to direct contributions, which can be more tailored, more responsive, and more influential than a tax measure. Direct contributions also allow for enhanced evaluation of a business case based on key success factors.

### BENEFITS

- More innovation among Nova Scotia companies, leading to new, exportable products and services that generate increased revenue and growth and are globally competitive.
- Recognized potential of universities outside metro to develop clusters of companies around R&D strengths, and to build the capacity of rural communities.

## Embrace Environmental Sustainability

Nova Scotia's businesses will not become globally competitive until they are environmentally sustainable. Other countries are embracing the cradle-to-cradle mindset. If our products and processes are not based on zero waste principles, our companies will be limited to a shrinking list of export markets, and ignore consumer demands, which will limit potential for growth. Business leaders must view environmental sustainability practices as essential to operating their businesses and maintaining competitiveness. Currently, there is a disconnect - most SME managers know it is the right thing to do, but barriers (staff size, costs, training) prevent them from undertaking the initiatives required. The provincial government's *Opportunity for Sustainable Prosperity* strategy and the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour's new *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* set the stage for further progress on this increasingly important issue.

## LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government must adopt public policy similar to that in Ontario that enables all Nova Scotians to tap into and benefit from alternative energy production.
- Business must embrace environmental stewardship to ensure our natural resources are not depleted.
- Business and government leaders must work together to create market awareness and green procurement strategies that increase local demand for sustainable products and services that meet global standards.

## BENEFITS

- More opportunities for prosperity province-wide through the commercialization of innovative new products, services, and technologies.
- A more globally competitive and sustainable business climate, especially for Nova Scotia's rural-based manufacturing companies.

Business leaders are encouraged to visit the *Nova Scotia Come to Life* website to learn more about the importance of sustainable prosperity to Nova Scotia — <http://www.novascotialife.com/?q=node/76>.

We also encourage all leaders to read novaknowledge's 2005 Knowledge Economy Report Card entitled *THE ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMY - SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES*, available on the novaknowledge website at [www.novaknowledge.ns.ca](http://www.novaknowledge.ns.ca).

## Grow and Prosper Through Collaboration and Integration

There has been a rapid rise in the number of regional, sectoral, and demographic-based organizations in Nova Scotia over the past decade – evidence that many Nova Scotians feel their concerns are not being addressed by existing organizations. The result has been regionalism, silos, and segmentation. We believe that connectivity, collectivity, and alignment are required for our province's continued growth and prosperity. Existing organizations must be more open to the engagement of seniors, youth, young professionals, and new Nova Scotians, tapping into their energy, experience, and ideas.

## LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government and business should investigate the Atlantica initiative thoroughly, and proceed as quickly as possible to reduce trade barriers and regionalism.

## BENEFITS

- We are stronger by working together, both as a province and as an Atlantic region.
- Integration and collaboration will result in focused, stronger, diverse, and forward thinking organizations.

# ADDITIONAL FORWARD-THINKING IDEAS

## Retain Talent

There is now fierce global competition for talent in all forms, particularly new talent. We are losing too many Nova Scotian, Canadian, and international students from our post-secondary institutions to employers in other provinces and around the world. To address this challenge, we must lose our 'come-from-away' attitude and offer more competitive wages.

### LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Leaders need to relax the requirement that employment candidates should have 3-5 years' experience to be considered for challenging and upwardly mobile positions. Leaders must aggressively recruit recent Nova Scotian, Canadian, and international graduates from our post-secondary institutions.
- Government should launch an advertising campaign to promote and highlight the contributions of new Nova Scotians to our society and economy. This would encourage Nova Scotians to welcome and hire new Nova Scotians.
- Leaders should encourage their staff to mentor at-risk youth and high school students, or provide scholarships in return for employment commitments following graduation.
- Government and business leaders must develop additional incentives to retain international students and attract them into sectors with workforce shortages or to jobs in our rural communities.

- Government and business leaders must further develop policies and 'earn-as-you-learn' opportunities to reduce the cost of education and help students pay down debt quicker.
- All levels of government must commit to investing more in our post-secondary institutions in order to maintain internationally competitive and renowned facilities staffed with outstanding educators, and develop creative marketing campaigns that attract and retain international youth and researchers.
- A reduction in corporate taxes would help to attract and retain business. It will ultimately stimulate the growth of our tax base, plus investment in training and new technology.
- Government should offer incentives to encourage SMEs to hire youth and the marginalized.
- Business must engage young professionals through improved cross-generational communication, and by providing them with interesting work at a competitive salary.
- Business, government, unions, and self-regulating association leaders must establish accreditation programs that recognize the credentials of skilled newcomers more efficiently.

## RESULTS

- We attract and retain more talented individuals from around the world, benefiting from their new ideas, perspectives, and skills.
- We build a high-value, globally competitive workforce – the key to a strong, knowledge-driven economy and the cornerstone of economic growth.



*"Nova Scotia employers should take a black marker and mark out the "three-to-five years' experience" line in every job description. We need to take a risk and hire young, local talent."*

## Invest in Talent

In addition to a focus on new talent retention, Nova Scotia must make a greater effort to retain and train skilled employees at all levels. We need an adaptive, well-educated workforce working at maximum capacity and productivity levels. That means greater investment in training so our workforce stays current with trends and is encouraged to stay in Nova Scotia.

### LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- Employers must recognize that their employees are their most valuable assets. They must support and invest in lifelong learning to maintain a leading-edge workforce, and to help employees reach the next level.
- Leaders must look at innovative ways to keep older employees in the workforce, benefiting from their accumulated knowledge and ensuring their skills are passed on to new employees.
- Government and business leaders should establish a Nova Scotia Productivity Institute that fosters the adoption or adaptation of new technology and ingenuity while driving innovation and competitiveness.

### RESULTS

- We enhance the skill levels of our workforce current, enjoying greater productivity, efficiency, and improved economic performance.
- Improved ability for companies to transition to innovative, powerful new business technologies and practices because employees are staying current with emerging skills.

## Improve Health, Wellness, and Injury Prevention

Nova Scotia has a poor record in workforce health, wellness, injury prevention, and return-to-work times after injury.

### LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- Businesses must invest in lifelong learning for employees that updates skills and improves productivity, which will drive higher levels of occupational health and safety.

- Business and government must invest more in health education, recreation, and culture, consistently promoting healthy lifestyles. This entails a great deal more than offering gym memberships to employees.

## RESULTS

- A fitter and healthier workforce that drives productivity and enhances the performance of existing businesses, and attracts new investment.
- An improved bottom line for Nova Scotia companies by reducing lost time due to sickness, injury, and damaged equipment, and through enhanced productivity.

## Take Our Brand Beyond the Traditional

Nova Scotia needs to change both the internal and external image of the province. Our new image must reflect the vibrancy that young people and business leaders are looking for when choosing a place to live and work. Our brand must also go beyond, and break down, traditional images of Nova Scotia as a tourist destination, a party culture, and retirement locale.

## LEADERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government and business leaders must find ways to invest more in cultural and recreational opportunities. This is required in order to create a vibrant, active, diverse culture that will keep people here, attract newcomers, and help lure expatriates back. For expatriates, we have to demonstrate a clear change has occurred, whether it is new attitudes, progressive policies or a revitalized economy offering better paying and challenging jobs.
- Government should update the Labour Standards Code of Nova Scotia to reflect our province's new economic and demographic realities, providing protection to everyone from part-time and temporary workers to individuals caring for seniors or disabled family members.

## BENEFITS

- A clear brand that promotes a province with talent, competitive wages, opportunities, and a diverse and welcoming culture.

- A progressive and updated Labour Standards Code that can be used as an example to show change and forward thinking to attract and retain employers and workers.

*"If we want young people to return to Nova Scotia and stay, then they must find a clear change has occurred. Why would they return to exactly what they left? It is only a new and vibrant community to which they will return."*



## PRIORITY ACTION ITEMS FROM LEADERS

### Refine the Economic Development Emphasis

- Focus on attracting knowledge-driven economy jobs.
- Attract only higher paying and sustainable jobs.
- Invest only in companies with a long-term commitment to Nova Scotia.
- Government, rural advocacy group, and RDAs work together to put a proactive revitalization plan and training in place before call centres and unproductive traditional manufacturers are lost.

### Growth and Investment

- An evaluation of the RDA model to determine how its business leadership role could be further strengthened.
- Implementation of methods and mechanisms to make community and regional development resources more evenly distributed and integrated.

### Maximize Workforce Capacity

- Establish Nova Scotia Career Week, where employers will be invited to deliver career information about their organizations to high schools and post-secondary institutions.

### Invest in Infrastructure

- Business and government leaders must increase investment in critical infrastructure to enhance innovation, productivity, transportation, and competitiveness.

### Increase Research & Development

- Implement direct incentives rather than tax credits

- Develop additional incentives and resources to improve the commercialization of research and innovation.

### **Embrace Environmental Sustainability**

- There is money to be made, money to be saved, and tremendous opportunities for growth by becoming a leader in the creation of sustainable products and services and by responding to new consumer demands. These benefits must be promoted.

### **Grow and Prosper Through Collaboration and Integration**

- Nova Scotia's leaders must work with leaders from other provinces, regions, municipalities, and organizations to eliminate barriers such as trade restrictions and regionalism.
- Leaders of existing organizations must recruit, welcome, and integrate youth and new Nova Scotians to avoid silos, fragmentation, and loss of talent.

## **OTHER ACTIONS DISCUSSED**

### **Retain Talent**

- Education leaders must work with business leaders to increase the number of meaningful and progressive earn-while-you-learn opportunities for students.

### **Invest in Talent**

- Investigate the role, structure, and industry support for a Nova Scotia productivity institute.

### **Embrace Change**

- Leaders must work together to foster a new mindset, and create a variety of incentives and programs that promote and support risk taking and entrepreneurial spirit.

### **Improve Health, Wellness, and Injury Prevention**

- More collaboration between employers, insurance companies, health professionals, and the Workers Compensation Board.
- Workforce training and literacy programs must be expanded.
- Invest in new technology that eliminates or reduces jobs with high-injury risk.

### **Take our Brand and Image Beyond the Traditional**

- Leaders and the media must work together to celebrate and promote Nova Scotia's innovative and productive organizations, and leading-edge public policy.
1. Profile recent graduates and immigrants who are contemplating a move away due to lack of acceptance or meaningful work, to focus on the real people and stories behind the statistics.

# novaknowledge's

## COMMITMENT TO ACTION

We will establish a **Nova Scotia Leaders' Council** focused on Productivity, Growth, and Innovation. The Council will demonstrate how business, all levels of government, educational institutions, unions, young professionals, new Nova Scotians, students, and individual communities can work together to build a forward-thinking, prosperous future.

The Leaders' Council will not duplicate the effort of any existing government-funded organization or department that markets or funds economic development in Nova Scotia. Rather, it will localize and build on the success of private sector leader-led organizations such as the New Brunswick Business Council, the US CEOs for Cities movement, Sustainable Pittsburg, and the National Economic and Social Council of Ireland.

***The mandate of the Leaders' Council may include:***

1. Draw leaders together in a neutral, objective, and constructive environment;
2. Uncover ways to improve access to private venture capital;
3. Promote the benefits of environmental sustainability and stewardship to fellow leaders;
4. Work with government to improve and promote the Nova Scotia brand and image. The brand must demonstrate and communicate the message that Nova Scotia is open for business, and receptive to new business ideas and new Nova Scotians;
5. Work with government collaboratively to create and implement forward-thinking business, development, labour, and social policies;
6. Ensure the voice of business is heard in public education by fostering ongoing dialogue and information sharing between business and educators;
7. Work with business and government, to help determine the role, structure, and industry support for a Nova Scotia Productivity Institute.
8. Foster a culture of learning in Nova Scotia, helping all Nova Scotians to clearly understand the links between education, the economy, and future prosperity;

9. Find leaders (and retired leaders) who can serve as mentors to Nova Scotia's youth and entrepreneurs, ensuring that accumulated workplace skills are passed along; and
10. Guide the development and delivery of the annual nova **knowledge** Nova Scotia Assembly of Leaders, and help advocate for implementation of the outcomes.