



Students Nova Scotia (StudentsNS) is a not for profit and nonpartisan advocacy group that represents Nova Scotia post-secondary students. Our members study at Acadia, Saint Mary's, and St. Francis Xavier Universities, as well as the Kingstec, Annapolis Valley, and Marconi Campuses of the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC).

Mission

It is the mission of StudentsNS to represent the collective interests and priorities of post-secondary students in Nova Scotia. In pursuit of this mission, StudentsNS will:

- Conduct research to identify issues affecting the accessibility, affordability, accountability, and quality of post-secondary education in Nova Scotia;
- Develop credible and constructive policy to address these challenges;
- Communicate research and policy to both educate and affect the opinions of stakeholders, Nova Scotians, and government;
- Lobby the government to affect their post-secondary education policy;
- Organize campaigns to effectively articulate the needs and interests of our members; and
- Build partnerships to accomplish our vision.

Vision

StudentsNS envisions a Nova Scotia post-secondary education system that is accessible, affordable, of the highest quality, and that includes students in decision-making.

Values

The foundation upon which StudentsNS is built is the belief that post-secondary education can play a fundamental role in allowing both the individual and society to realize their full potential. StudentsNS' values are pillars built on this foundation, and the organization shapes its decision-making around these values.

Accessibility: Every qualified Nova Scotia resident who wishes to pursue post-secondary education should be able to do so, irrespective of their financial situation, socioeconomic or ethnic background, physical, psychological or mental disability, age, sexual orientation, geographic location, or any other factor exogenous to qualification.

Affordability: The cost of post-secondary education in Nova Scotia should not cause undue hardship upon any student, restrict their ability to pursue the career path they choose, or make them financially unable to live in the community that they choose.

Quality: Policies, programs, and services in post-secondary education should meet student expectations to help prepare them for lifelong success, including their citizenship, careers, and personal wellbeing.

Student Voice: Nova Scotia students must be empowered to actively participate in setting their post-secondary systems' direction via engagement through their representative student bodies, within the post-secondary institutions themselves, and through the broader democratic process.

Annual Plan 2017-18

On August 19th 2017, the Students Nova Scotia Board of Directors approved this Annual Plan. It prioritizes the organization's work for the year by providing direct actions, outcomes, and measures for each goal.

- **Goals** are the overarching objectives that work to achieve StudentsNS' 2016-19 Strategic Plan.
- **Action Items** are the direct actions taken by StudentsNS in pursuit of the **Goals**.
- **Outcomes** are the immediate results of the **Action Items**.
- **Measures** provide an evaluation and demonstrate how the **Outcomes** advance the **Goals**.

Goal: Post-Secondary Advocacy <i>This goal aims to improve the advocacy efforts of StudentsNS by defining relevant post-secondary issues and building relationships with government and political parties.</i>		
<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Measure</u>
Advocate to improve student and recent graduate employment programs.	Increased awareness for the issues of student and recent graduate employment.	Government and political parties consider or implement StudentsNS' recommendations.
Advocate for more accessible student financial aid.	Increased awareness for the issues of the student financial aid system.	Government and political parties consider or implement StudentsNS' recommendations.
Advocate to increase campus mental and sexual health resources.	Increased awareness for the issues of campus mental and sexual health resources.	Government and political parties consider or implement StudentsNS' recommendations.
Advocate for underrepresented students	Increased awareness for the issues facing	Government and political parties consider or

in the post-secondary system.	underrepresented post-secondary students.	implement StudentsNS' recommendations.
Advocate for more accessible elections.	Increased awareness for the issue of accessible elections.	Government and political parties consider or implement StudentsNS' recommendations.
Develop stronger relationships with government, political parties, and the civil service.	Increased access, collaboration, and information sharing with the government, political parties, and the civil service.	More communication and meetings with government, political parties, and the civil service throughout the year.

<p>Goal:</p> <p>Research and Policy Development</p> <p><i>This goal aims to further develop the research and policy of StudentsNS by defining clear targets, topics, and projects for the year.</i></p>		
Action Item	Outcome	Measure
Produce 1-2 policy papers on relevant post-secondary issues.	StudentsNS has strong, well-researched positions on the selected topics.	The government, political parties, stakeholders, members, and the public engage with StudentsNS' new positions.
Review and evaluate past organizational policy and positions.	StudentsNS has strong, well-researched positions.	Past policies and positions remain relevant or are archived.
Develop an accessible, concise, and public-facing policy manual outlining organizational policy positions.	Policies and positions are effectively communicated to government, stakeholders, members, and the public.	The government, political parties, stakeholders, members, and the public engage with StudentsNS' policy positions.

Formulate a mechanism to identify further research and policy topics.	StudentsNS focuses on relevant, member selected post-secondary education issues.	A mechanism is developed to facilitate the membership's decision on the next research topic.
Create an advocacy document and budget submission that is of the highest quality.	StudentsNS recommendations are seriously considered and StudentsNS reputation as a stakeholder is strengthened.	StudentsNS recommendations are implemented by the government, and discussed by political parties.

<p style="text-align: center;">Goal:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strengthen Membership</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>This goal aims to solidify the foundation of StudentsNS by enhancing organizational communication and engagement with existing and prospective members.</i></p>		
<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Measure</u>
Engage in recruitment activities.	Relationships are developed with unaffiliated student associations and more student voices are represented provincially.	StudentsNS gains new interest in membership.
Conduct research and consult with NSCC students in order to understand NSCC needs and wants.	StudentsNS understands the NSCC system, the way in which their Student Associations operate, and their government advocacy priorities.	Increased engagement from NSCC Board Members, as they feel welcomed and informed at StudentsNS meetings and events.
Develop and implement a plan to further accommodate NSCC members and prospective members engagement within StudentsNS.	NSCC students and board members are fully accommodated and integrated into StudentsNS.	Increased participation of NSCC campuses within StudentsNS, and increased interest from prospective NSCC members.

Engage with other unaffiliated and affiliated Student Associations.	Diverse student voices contribute to StudentsNS priorities, advocacy, research. More students are informed of the work of StudentsNS.	Increased attendance at StudentsNS conferences and events, and increased engagement on social media. More interest from prospective members.
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<p style="text-align: center;">Goal:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Organizational Sustainability</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>This goal aims to revitalize StudentsNS' governance and sustainability by reviewing and updating current structures and processes, and examining the annual cycle.</i></p>		
Action Item	Outcome	Measure
Create a code of conduct for delegates and board members.	Expectations for board members at conferences and events are clearly outlined.	StudentsNS Board creates and approves a code of conduct.
Review and update the bylaws and operating policies of the organization.	StudentsNS foundation is solidified, helping to build sustainable success.	StudentsNS bylaws, governing policies, and operational policies are updated.
Review and update the annual cycle of the organization.	A clear yearly timeline and pathway of work is established.	StudentsNS annual cycle and conferences are added to the operational and governance policies.
Create a mechanism to update past policy and research.	StudentsNS policy and positions are updated regularly and remain relevant.	Past policy and research is updated.

Goal:

Engagement and Outreach

This goal aims to develop StudentsNS’ position as a relevant stakeholder and commentator within the post-secondary education sector by communicating more effectively with other stakeholders, the public and the media.

<u>Action Item</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Measure</u>
Produce and distribute accessible information to students on the purpose and importance of the organization.	Students at large are more educated about the work of StudentsNS and the role of the provincial government in post-secondary education.	Members are more informed, and StudentsNS priorities are reflected in the platforms of candidates running in student association elections.
Increase the number of press releases on StudentsNS’ activities and events in the post-secondary sector.	The public, stakeholders, government, and political parties are more informed about the work of StudentsNS.	StudentsNS has increased media attention, resulting in more stories and interviews across all media platforms.
Produce monthly blog posts from home office, members, and students.	Members and students are more engaged in producing content for StudentsNS.	StudentsNS publishes a new blog every month, gaining increased website traffic.
Attend relevant community and stakeholder conferences and events.	StudentsNS builds relationships with stakeholders and the community.	Representatives of StudentsNS attend more events, and stakeholders and community members engage with StudentsNS work.
Increase StudentsNS social media capacity and usage.	Members, students, the public, stakeholders, political parties, and government are more informed about the work of StudentsNS.	StudentsNS has increased interaction on social media.



<p>StudentsNS builds relationships with local Indigenous communities and advocacy groups.</p>	<p>Strong working partnerships with local Indigenous communities and advocacy groups.</p>	<p>Increased consultation and collaboration with local Indigenous communities and advocacy organizations.</p>
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