



HOSPITALITY
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR



We Are Tourism

Workforce Action Plan
Guide for Operators



Executive Summary

Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador (Hospitality NL) led the charge in the development of the new We Are Tourism Workforce Action Plan, providing the sector with a strategic roadmap to collaboratively tackle workforce challenges head-on.

This five-year strategy aims to transition the tourism industry through its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and transform the province into a thriving tourism destination. Pillar 5 of Vision 2026 Transition. Transform. Thrive. also focuses on Employment and the importance of effective workforce planning, policies, and the collaborative approaches required to improve worker attraction and retention.

The tourism industry strives to offer quality, meaningful work for varying expertise and experience levels, from frontline and management staff to business ownership. Tourism continues to support dynamic careers and business investment opportunities for tens of thousands of people and communities throughout the province.

The We Are Tourism Workforce Action Plan includes four strategic goals and thirteen action items to address challenges over the next five years (2024-2028).

Everyone has a role to play: all levels of government, support organizations such as Hospitality NL and Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), communities, and tourism operators. Strategies need to consider both short-term solutions to incentivize workers to return to work and long-term measures to enhance compensation, improve job security, and create a supportive and attractive work environment.

By addressing these concerns, the industry can strengthen its workforce, overcome labour shortages, foster sustainable growth, and thrive in a post-pandemic landscape.

This guide will help tourism operators understand how they can act on insights from the plan to enhance their workforce, elevate recruitment and retention efforts, and make a positive, lasting impact on the future of the tourism industry in Newfoundland and Labrador.



We Are Tourism Workforce Action Plan

Four strategic goals and corresponding actions have been identified by Hospitality NL to help the tourism industry build a dynamic workforce that exceeds visitor expectations.



Goal A:

Enhance the Perception of the Tourism Sector as a Positive Career Path in Newfoundland and Labrador

Improve how people view the tourism industry in general as a potential career.

COLLECTIVE ACTIONS

- Build awareness of the importance of tourism as an economic driver for the province.
- Promote the employment and career opportunities available.
- Promote opportunities to newcomers to Canada and the province.
- Target students by working closely with local high schools and post-secondary education institutions.

What Can You Do Today?

1. POST YOUR JOB VACANCIES ON THE HOSPITALITY NL JOB BOARD. MEMBERS.HNL.CA/JOBS

Ensure you regularly post listings of vacancies on the job board, keeping vacancies current. Promoting the use of one home for job postings has the power to turn this online tool into the go-to resource for employers and employees, thus increasing the opportunities to create a healthy hospitality workforce.

Streamlined Job Matching.

A centralized portal simplifies the job search process for candidates, making it easier for them to find relevant job opportunities within the tourism sector. This efficiency can lead to quicker placements and reduced job vacancies.

Wider Talent Pool.

A single portal can also attract a larger and more diverse pool of job seekers. This diversity can help tourism employers access a broader range of skills, experiences, and backgrounds – enriching their workforce and promoting inclusivity.

Brand Building.

Establishing a prominent online presence for the tourism industry will enhance the reputation of the sector and encourage career growth among those already in the field.

Build Community Awareness of Job Opportunities through Local Job Fairs.

Connect with other local businesses to host a job fair within the community. This allows job seekers to connect with potential employers in their community / region and provides employers with the opportunity to build connections and relationships with other business owners.

2. ATTRACT STUDENTS BY WORKING CLOSELY WITH HIGH SCHOOLS AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.

Step 1: Identify High Schools

Begin by identifying local high schools that you can collaborate with. Consider factors such as proximity and the availability of relevant or related programs. Perhaps the school has an internship program.

Step 2: Contact School Administrators

Reach out to school administrators, such as principals, career counsellors, and even teachers you know, to express your interest in collaborating to provide valuable work experience for interested students. Frame out your conversation by reinforcing the importance of a thriving tourism economy in the community that's supported by a workforce that takes pride in welcoming visitors to the region.

Step 3: Choose How You Will Connect Students with Job Opportunities

Brainstorm activities that can expose students to the tourism industry. These could include job shadowing opportunities, training workshops, career fairs, paid internships, and part-time employment. Decide how you want to engage with students (and potential employees) and

identify what you hope to achieve through the partnership. For example, this could include raising awareness about employment opportunities, accepting volunteers to try out employment, looking for part-time employees for specific tasks, partnering to help students fulfill required volunteer hours for graduation, etc.

Step 4: Create Volunteer or Internship Opportunities

Define Roles. Demonstrate how students can gain valuable work experience and confidence, positively contributing to the visitors' experience while growing your tourism business. This might include roles that assist with event and experience planning, customer relations, marketing, interpretive guiding, and other hospitality services. Don't forget to portray your work culture, which should represent a positive, encouraging, accepting, respectful, and fun atmosphere.

Address Liability Concerns. Work with your legal counsel or insurance provider to establish guidelines to ensure a safe and productive experience for both students and your business.



Step 5: Offer Career-Related Activities

Prepare Materials. Secure or develop educational materials or presentations that introduce students to the tourism sector, your business, and their role – showcasing how their job is crucial to a positive visitor experience. Don't let them flounder by having to “figure it out” on their own; instead, set expectations. Be sure to ask them what they are looking to gain and what would contribute to a positive working experience.

Step 6: Ensure a Positive Experience

If possible, assign experienced employees as mentors to guide students during their time with your business. Continuously gather feedback from students and school staff to improve your program and ensure a positive experience. Identify ways to reward students when they contribute – e.g., offering complementary goods, services, or experiences, or even a cash bonus at select intervals when working with you.

Step 7: Share Success Stories

Showcase successful student experiences on social media. Share stories with other schools and tourism businesses to encourage wider adoption among students and employers.



Goal B:

Minimize Barriers for Entry into the Tourism Workforce

COLLECTIVE ACTIONS

- Provide support to operators for program applications.
- Advocate for increased support services for the inactive workforce.
- Create a package of employment-related services for newcomers.
- Increase accessibility to sector-based training programs.

What Can You Do Today?

1. GET HELP TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXISTING PROGRAMS.

Tap into Hospitality NL's website and find helpful online information sessions related to attracting and retaining a positive workforce.

2. REACH OUT TO HOSPITALITY NL TO GET HELP NAVIGATING IMMIGRATION PATHWAYS AND / OR OTHER GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.

Government programs, while designed to help tourism operators recruit workers, can be daunting. Let the experts help identify the right program to meet your needs and streamline the application process. If Hospitality NL cannot help, they can recommend someone who will.

3. USE AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO ON-BOARD / SUPPORT NEW STAFF.

Do you have staff who have recently relocated to Newfoundland and Labrador? If so, there are resources available to support them. Connecting staff with these resources will enhance their effectiveness as employees and contribute to their sense of belonging and retention within the province and community where they live.



Goal C:

Support HR Capacity

COLLECTIVE ACTIONS

- Provide a consistent HR capacity resource to support operators.
- Offer HR training to support recruitment and retention.
- Create opportunities for operators to share lessons learned / best practices.

What Can You Do Today?

1. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HOSPITALITY NL HR SERVICES.

Don't have an HR Manager or HR guidelines or programs? Not to worry; Hospitality NL can provide useful information to help you prepare the necessary policies, protocols, and management guidelines to ensure a positive and productive working environment. They can answer a variety of questions and provide helpful advice, and if it involves a situation beyond their understanding, they can connect you to resources to help answer your questions.

2. TAP INTO A HELPFUL LIBRARY OF HR RESOURCES AND TOOLS.

Hospitality NL, in partnership with Tourism HR Canada, has a helpful website containing a library of HR tools and resources: DiscoverTourism.ca. This includes links to HR tools like interviewing techniques, employment letters, and workplace policy suggestions.

3. CONNECT AND SHARE EXPERIENCES WITH OTHER OPERATORS.

Participate in online HR discussions and information sessions. Facilitated by Hospitality NL, these informative sessions address challenging workforce topics. Using best practices, participants can discuss these situations and solutions among peers and walk away with valuable lived experiences to implement in their own businesses.

Goal D:

Emphasize Newfoundland and Labrador Culture in the Workplace and Recognize those who Demonstrate Excellence in their HR Practices

COLLECTIVE ACTIONS

- Introduce and reinforce our welcoming culture into the workplace. Build relevant and practical supports for operators to understand, embrace, and deliver diversity and inclusion practices into their workplace culture.
- Recognize workforce development leaders and create a provincial / municipal business recognition program.

What Can You Do Today?

1. CONSIDER MAKING A CULTURE CHANGE.

Changing the culture in your business is difficult and takes time. Culture is shaped by a combination of leadership behaviour, practices, employee attitudes, and external influences. Leadership behaviour and commitment have a profound impact on changing an organization's culture. Here are some things you can do to emphasize Newfoundland and Labrador culture in your workplace.

Communicate and set expectations.

Effective communication from leaders about the importance of cultural change and the reasons behind it can create a sense of purpose and alignment among employees. Share your vision

with employees – i.e., how your business will embody Newfoundland and Labrador culture; be warm and welcoming and instill a sense of belonging while celebrating and promoting the creativity and diversity of our people, place, and culture.

Share that your business is dedicated to achieving the goals presented in the We Are Tourism Workforce Action Plan, aligning with the new tourism vision and strategy. Explain how your workplace demonstrates these values to customers and how employees treat each other and work together. Set expectations for how you'd like employees to embrace the culture of Newfoundland and Labrador. When leaders communicate and enforce these expectations, it drives cultural change.

Lead by example.

Demonstrate the values you want to promote. For example, if warmth and inclusivity are key values, make an effort to be warm and inclusive in your interactions with staff, encouraging managers / staff to do the same. Your actions should personify the values you wish to instill. Don't forget to promote an atmosphere of fun, as we are in the hospitality business after all! Enhance your workplace by ensuring staff function in an enjoyable and encouraging atmosphere.

Here are some examples of online training that may benefit you and your organization to further leadership and workplace culture goals:

- Tourism HR Canada Employer Compass: <https://discovertourism.ca/audiences/employers/>
- Tourism HR Canada HR Self-Assessment: <https://discovertourism.ca/tool/managing-your-workforce-an-hr-self-assessment/>
- Tourism HR Canada Mentorship Program – Checklist: <https://discovertourism.ca/tool/attract-driven-workers-with-a-mentorship-program/>

Accountability.

Leaders and staff should be held accountable for adhering to the culture. Celebrate and acknowledge when staff and leaders live the culture. Ensure there are consequences for negative behaviour.

Regularly reinforce the message.

It's not enough to communicate values once. Leaders should consistently reinforce the message through team meetings, social events, and written communications. Repetition helps embed the values in organizational culture. Add them to an email signature, post printed signs so there are visual reminders (e.g., keep your values top of mind), etc.

Decision-making.

Decisions are actions, and actions should align with culture. For example, decisions related to ethical conduct, employee well-being, or sustainability practices can shape culture. When you need to make a decision, ask yourself if it detracts from or supports being a warm and welcoming organization that celebrates the creativity and diversity of our people, place, and culture.

Long-term commitment.

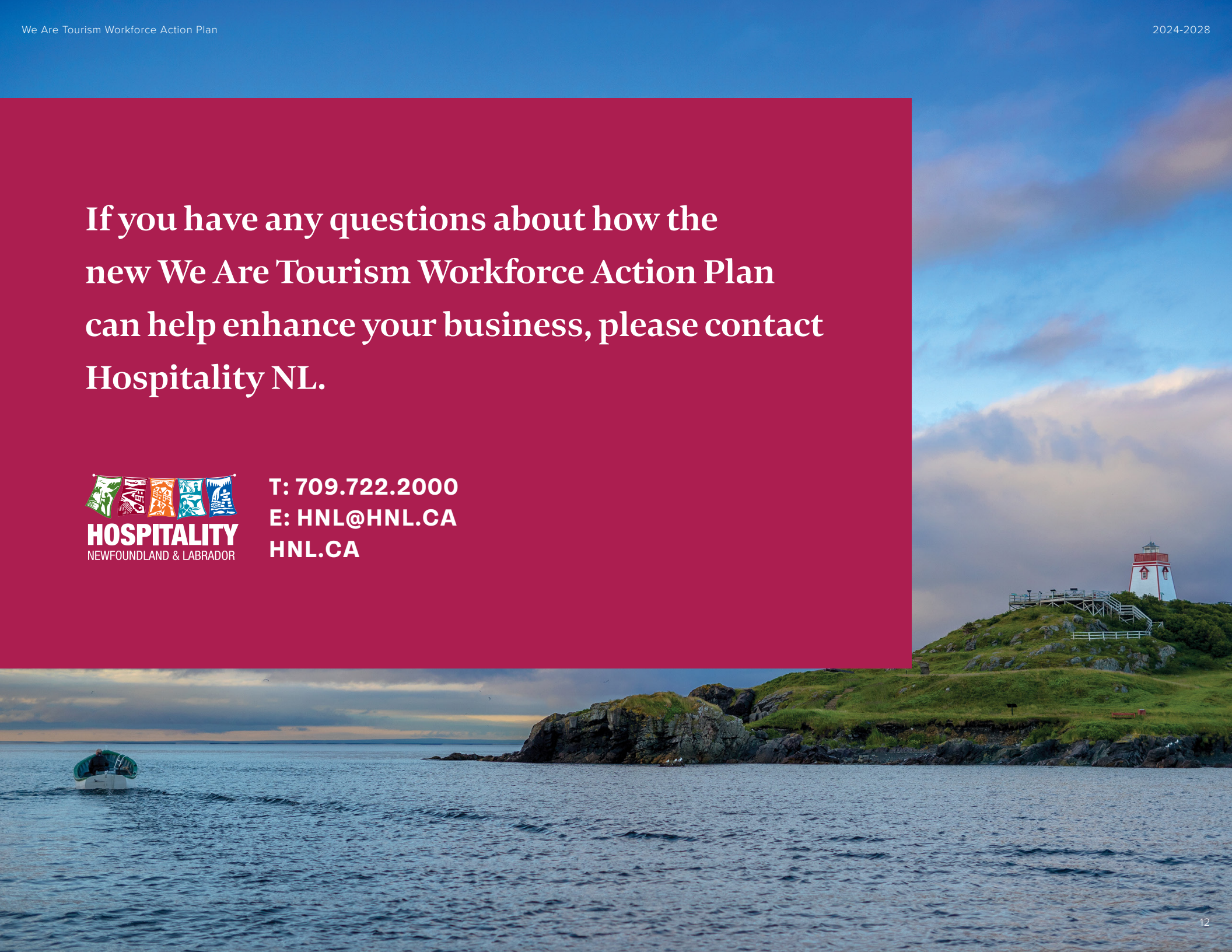
Cultural change takes time and consistent effort. Leaders who are committed to the long-term process of cultural transformation are more likely to see results. While leadership behaviour is critical, there are other important elements that drive positive change, including hiring practices, training and development, revising policies and procedures, fostering open communication, and addressing issues like diversity and inclusion. Employee buy-in and participation in the change process are crucial.



If you have any questions about how the new We Are Tourism Workforce Action Plan can help enhance your business, please contact Hospitality NL.



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Thank you