

ECONOMY

Budget 2014–2015 makes private-sector economic growth a priority and sets the stage for businesses to invest, produce, compete, and grow. Government will help more of our graduates, tradespeople, and immigrants connect with opportunities that allow them to build their careers here and contribute to the economy. The potential of our primary industries and tourism sector will be leveraged to attract visitors and investments, and increase exports.

Business Growth

- Enhance the Access to Business, or A2B, and Access for Citizens, A4C, web portals to reduce red tape and provide businesses and Nova Scotians with quicker, easier access to services and programs (\$7.4 million capital cost)
- Extend the Credit Union Small Business Loan Guarantee Program by increasing term loan guarantees to 90 per cent from 75 per cent (\$250,000)
- Create an environment that supports business and economic growth through the Tax and Regulatory and Fee Review

Workforce Development

- Modernize the Apprenticeship Program to give apprentices the experience they need to access good jobs (\$2.6 million)
- Provide financial incentives through the START program to encourage Nova Scotia employers to hire apprentices who need work experience (\$500,000)
- Develop a provincial population strategy to grow the workforce and increase the number of immigrants coming here and staying
- Align immigrants with our areas of greatest need and improve their ability to settle and join our workforce through the Regional Labour Market Demand Stream (\$1.3 million)

- Help new graduates start their careers here by defraying the cost employers incur in the first year of hiring through the Graduate to Opportunities program (\$1.6 million)
- Help high-value businesses recruit and provide meaningful work experiences to university and community college students by expanding the Strategic Cooperative Education Incentive program to a total of 425 funded private and non-profit positions each year (\$500,000)
- Expand the Student Career Skills Development Program to support another 250 not-for-profit summer jobs in high unemployment areas for a total of 750 jobs for post-secondary students looking for career-specific experience (\$1 million)

Primary Industries

- Attract investment in the offshore through the Offshore Growth Strategy, which will make geoscience information available to the industry and directly market our offshore to the world (\$2.8 million)
- Promote Nova Scotia lobster nationally and internationally (\$250,000)
- Invest in research and innovation in the mink industry—one of our fastest growing and globally competitive exports (\$500,000)
- Help the apple industry grow more world-class products (\$200,000)
- Prepare Western Crown Lands for harvesting (\$1.2 million)
- Invest in a Harvest Tracking System to measure progress on the province's goal to reduce clear cutting by 50 per cent (\$500,000)

Tourism

- Market Nova Scotia throughout the Northeastern United States to attract more visitors (\$1.5 million)
- Upgrade and staff the Yarmouth Visitor Information Centre to provide the best possible visitor experience (\$461,000)