



# Engaging Learners as Citizens and Community Leaders

Service Learning – Partner Guide

**nscc**

## What is Service Learning?

Service Learning is structured experiential learning that integrates active, meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to promote a sense of civic responsibility and strengthen communities. Service Learning promotes a sense of community and civic engagement that enriches the learning process and enhances personal and professional growth. In addition to providing a meaningful portfolio learning experience for learners, Service Learning increases the capacity of our communities to maintain programs and services that are vital to social and economic development in Nova Scotia. Through service learning, learners will strengthen their attachment to their communities and see themselves as integral to the continued growth of the province. To see examples of how learners from other colleges and universities benefit from Service Learning, you can view videos at [Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning](#) and at [Service Learning Innovation on YouTube](#).

## NSCC Vision Statement

Our vision is to provide every learner with an opportunity to experience community engagement that will enhance her/his critical thinking, leadership development, ethical decision making, social consciousness and civic responsibility. To that end, Service Learning is a program-level outcome in all of NSCC's core programs.

## Community Partnership

Quality service learning experiences are built on a foundation of community relationships. Many of you have established and maintained relationships with community partners for applied learning experience, co-op education, clinical, internships, service learning etc. Working together, our community partners can serve as co-educators helping NSCC to prepare learners for work in various sectors or industries. Beyond this, our graduate profile identifies additional values such as civic responsibility, citizenship, social consciousness and leadership. We believe service learning helps us to shape graduates who are both skilled in their professions and who see themselves as an integral part of the sustainability and progress of their campus, college, community and province.

## Community Partner's Role in Service Learning

- Provide relevant information on the service needs of the organization;
- Collaboratively design service placements that both address real community need and meet stated learning goals and objectives for the learners;
- Help with orientation and/or training to prepare learners for active involvement, and to supervise and support learners during their Service Learning placements;
- Provide learner(s) with feedback and assessment throughout their Service Learning placements;
- Collaborate as a co-educator; for example, Community Partners may be invited by the Faculty member to present in the classroom on relevant subject matter.

## NSCC's GREAT EXPECTATIONS for a Safe and Respectful Environment

Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is committed to the belief that all students [learners] and employees of NSCC have the right and responsibilities to learn and work in a safe environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and that is conducive to learning and teaching.

NSCC endeavours at all times to provide a supportive working and learning environment and to ensure the equitable treatment of all members of its community [including those on Service Learning placements]. Interaction between members of the College is based on the mutual respect, trust, co-operation and understanding inherent in an adult learning community.

A “safe and respectful environment” is simply one where everyone can feel safe, one where the above values are honoured and practiced, one that is inclusive of all and where no distinctions are made based on age, race, colour, sex, religion, creed, aboriginal origin, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, source of income, sexual orientation, family status, political belief, affiliation, or activity. We all thrive in an atmosphere where we are respected and our [NSCC] policy insists on respectful behaviour, regardless of our personal biases.

Most of us can picture the features of a physically safe environment. The socially safe environment is non-threatening. It respects the various comfort levels of its members and it is sensitive to avoid activities that alienate others. It recognizes that words or language, and jokes can hurt as much as a physical assault and cause learners to ‘shut down’ thereby denying them the comfort level they require to fully participate and learn.

The above information represents only a portion of the “Great Expectations” document that is shared with students (i.e. learners) at the beginning of each academic year. It has been included in NSCC’s Applied Learning, Co-operative Education and Service Learning Partner Guides to provide clarity of what NSCC expects of our learners and industry partners during Service Learning practicums.

*To learn more about NSCC’s commitment to providing safe and respectful work environments, please request a copy of NSCC’s “Great Expectations” from your Faculty Advisor or local NSCC Campus.*

## **Preparing for Service Learning**

It is important that Community Partners understand the difference between Service Learning and volunteering and other forms of applied learning. Providing an orientation for Community Partners is an important step in developing and designing successful Service Learning projects. One valuable way to do this is to provide opportunities for Faculty and learners to learn more about your community organization. Also, you may be invited to come to the campus to talk about your organization’s needs. Service Learning always strives to create a balance between benefits to learners and benefits to the community organization



## Managing Risk in Service Learning

A consideration in planning a service learning activity, project, course or placement is risk management. Most risks associated with service learning activities can be managed collaboratively amongst Learners, Community Partners and Faculty effectively with good communication, planning and documentation.

### Insurance

Learners have insurance coverage through the *Student Insurance Program* (SIP) while they are participating in College learning activities, but learning how to identify, manage and avoid risk helps learners develop safe employment practices. NSCC requires learning partners (employers, community organizations etc.) to carry general liability insurance of at least \$2 million. We will ask our partners to sign an agreement with us indicating they have met this requirement. For International activities, additional Student Guard insurance for faculty and learners is mandatory and the cost is covered by the College.

### Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should be done to identify risks associated with the Service Learning project/activities. This may include a tour of the facility or a site assessment; a discussion with the agency supervisor; a review of the organization's policies, procedures and OH&S manual; and an orientation to the project.

### Risk Management Strategy

Minimizing risk is in the best interest of learners, learning partners and NSCC. A Partner Agreement has been developed to record any potential risks and plans for minimizing or eliminating the risks. The Partner Agreement will be prepared and signed by: (1) Community Partner, (2) Learner, (3) Faculty, and (4) Academic Chair before the learner begins his/her placement. The final decision about whether or not risk has been adequately managed will be determined by Faculty and the Academic Chair.

## Checklist for Designing Successful Service Learning Projects

The following checklist has been developed by Faculty to help guide the design and delivery of Service Learning projects.

- ☐ Does the Service Learning project meet program or course-level outcomes?
- ☐ Is the Community Partner a not-for-profit organization with at least \$2 million in General Liability Insurance Coverage?
- ☐ Are the benefits shared equally between learning and service?
- ☐ Has a risk management plan been developed?
- ☐ Does the Community Partner understand and share the NSCC definition of Service Learning?
- ☐ Are we confident that the service being provided by learners does not take away employment from local contractors or compete with local businesses or organizations?
- ☐ Is the project location suitable?
- ☐ Have any required permits been obtained (i.e. building permits)?
- ☐ Has a strategy for authentic assessment and evaluation of the learning been developed?
- ☐ Are funds available for costs such as materials, tools etc.?
- ☐ Is there a signed Partnership Agreement in place?
- ☐ Has the Service Learning project been described in the course outline and approved by the Academic Chair?
- ☐ Does the project involve collaboration across programs or Schools? Have all the participating Faculty and/or Learners been involved in planning?
- ☐ Is there a plan for communicating the outcomes or results of the project?
- ☐ Is there a plan for celebrating the results of the project?

Forms	Who is involved in completing forms?
<b>Form 1: Information Section</b>	Faculty and Learner
<b>Form 2: Service Learning Plan</b>	Community Partner identifies <b>needs</b> Community Partner and Learner develop <b>activities</b> Learner identifies <b>goals</b>
<b>Form 3: Risk Management Plan</b>	Completed by Learner in consultation with Faculty and Community Partner
<b>Form 4: Service Learning Placement Accident/Incident Report</b>	Completed by Learner, Faculty and Community Partner
<b>Form 5: Assessment and Evaluation</b>	Completed by Faculty, shared with Learners and partners
<b>Form 6: Service Learning Partnership Agreement</b>	Signed by Learner, Community Partner, Faculty and Academic Chair



## FORM 1: INFORMATION SECTION

Information Section	(completed by Faculty and Learner)
Community Partner: _____ (name of organization)	
Address: _____	
Phone: _____	
Contact Name: _____	Email: _____
Learner: _____	
Faculty: _____	

Course(s) associated with this Service Learning activity
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____



## FORM 2: SERVICE LEARNING PLAN

Completed by Community Partner and Learner (s)

Community Partner's Needs	Learner Activities (What, when and how)	Learning Goals (Course outcomes and personal learning goals)
<b>SAMPLE</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A family resource centre is supporting a group of new parents but they don't have a parenting resources guide.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather and review parenting resources (6 days).</li> <li>Draft and design a brochure (2 days).</li> <li>Present to partner for feedback (1 day).</li> <li>Revise and complete final copy (2 days).</li> <li>Learner will attend parenting group session one afternoon a week for 8 weeks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research skills.</li> <li>Developmental psychology outcomes on parenting.</li> <li>Writing skills- influential writing, APA.</li> <li>Computer skills- document formatting.</li> <li>Verbal and email communication skills.</li> <li>Confidence building.</li> </ul>

**How has the learner prepared for the Service Learning activity? Check all those that apply.**

- ☐ Participated in a Service Learning Orientation session
- ☐ Developed a community profile
- ☐ Developed a organization profile
- ☐ Conducted an interview with a Community Partner
- ☐ Researched Community Partner's needs
- ☐ Aligned with program/course outcomes, skills or theory required for activities
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>How will the Community Partner support the learner(s)?</b>	<i>Ex. Will meet weekly to discuss project.</i>
<b>How will Faculty support the learner(s)?</b>	<i>Ex. Will have weekly meeting with learner, call Community Partner for feedback.</i>
<b>Outline any costs or resources associated with the learning activities.</b>	<i>Ex. Tools will be provided by Community Partner, materials from local building supplier.</i>
<b>Other Details</b>	



## FORM 3: RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Completed by Learner, Community Partner)

Please review the section Managing Risk in Service Learning (page 3) before completing this form.

<b>Risk Assessment Activities</b> <i>(How did the Learner/ Community Partner/Faculty assess the risks associated with the learning activities?)</i>	<b>Risk Assessment</b> <i>(Describe any risks associated with the learning activities).</i>	<b>Risk Management</b> <i>(Describe how risks will be minimized, eliminated or reduced).</i>
<b>Example:</b> Visited the fire hall with the Fire Chief and looked over the room that needed repairs.	Learner might fall from a ladder while installing drywall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring a first aid kit and cell phone.</li> <li>• Use properly maintained tools.</li> <li>• Work in pairs.</li> </ul>



## FORM 4: - ACCIDENT /INCIDENT REPORT

(Completed by Learner, Community Partner)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Person Completing the form)

Name of Work Placement Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Placement Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

**1) INCIDENT TYPE (circle all that apply)**

☐ INJURY/ILLNESS ☐ PROPERTY DAMAGE ☐ FIRE ☐ SPILL ☐ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

**2) INCIDENT TIME**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME (24 HOUR CLOCK): \_\_\_\_\_

**3) LOCATION OF INCIDENT (if different from Work Placement Site Recorded Above)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**4) NATURE OF INJURY**

DESCRIPTION:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5) AID GIVEN**

☐ ON SITE ☐ DOCTORS OFFICE ☐ HOSPITAL ☐ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

**6) WITNESS**

N AME: \_\_\_\_\_ STATEMENTS ATTACHED \_\_\_\_\_

N AME: \_\_\_\_\_ STATEMENTS ATTACHED \_\_\_\_\_

**7) SUPERVISOR**

PRINT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

**8) PROPERTY DAMAGE**

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION OF DAMAGE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**9) SIGNATURES:**

SUPERVISOR: \_\_\_\_\_ LEARNER: \_\_\_\_\_

**10) Routing Instructions**

- Fax a copy of this report to the Learner's Home Campus, to the Attention of the Principal at:  
\_\_\_\_\_ (insert fax number here)
- Fax a copy of this report to NSCC's Occupational Health, Safety and Environment Office  
at 902-491-1739.

***If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact NSCC's Occupational Health, Safety and Environmental Services Office at (902) 491-SAFE (7233).***

## FORM 5: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION PLAN

(Completed by Faculty)

This form provides Learners with the details on how they will be assessed and evaluated during their Service Learning project.

<b>Methods of Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>De-briefing meetings</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Journals</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Web board discussions</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Learner emails</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Group updates</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Feedback from Community Partner</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other:</i></li> </ul>	<b>Methods of Evaluation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Learner self-assessment rubrics</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Learning narrative</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Individual or group presentation</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Reflective essay or paper</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Pre-post test to evaluate learning outcomes</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other:</i></li> </ul>
<b>Value or grade:</b>	
<b>Due dates or other instructions:</b>	

## FORM 6: SERVICE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

*(Completed by Community Partner, Learner, Faculty and Academic Chair)*

- To be signed after all other forms have been completed and shared with Learners and Community Partners.
- Community Partners confirm by signing below that they hold the required minimum \$2 million general liability insurance.
- Faculty and Learners are comfortable that this project does not take paid work away from community members.
- All Service Learning project partners agree to work collaboratively, ethically and professionally to achieve the service and learning goals outlined.

Project Partners Names	Signature	Date
Community Partner		
Learner(s)		
Faculty		
Academic Chair		

### Document Management

- Copies of the signed forms are to be provided to Community Partner, Learner(s) and Academic Chair.
- The original signed form is to be kept on file by the appropriate Faculty member for three years.