

The Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP): Global Skills Exchange (GSE)
– Call for Employers –

Are you an inclusive employer looking to:

1. Promote creative collaboration and introduce fresh perspectives to new and/or existing projects?
2. Share your experience and leadership skills to inspire rising changemakers?
3. Actively support local community partnerships and regional economic growth?
4. Fill short-term staffing needs and/or increase operational capacity at no financial cost?
5. Build and develop a diverse talent pool for your future business needs?

If any of the above apply to your organization, we invite you to consider participating in the PSDP's **Global Skills Exchange (GSE)**, a provincially funded initiative that links international students and alumni with employers through paid work-integrated learning (WIL) experiences. Intended to boost regional social and economic outcomes in line with the [Atlantic Growth Strategy](#), the primary goals of the GSE initiative are:

- i) To support the growth, innovation, and development of local organizations; and
- ii) To strengthen the employment ecosystem by promoting the labour market attachment of skilled international students already in the province. (See [pp. 7-8](#) for more.)

The Global Skills Exchange at a Glance:

- **60-hour paid WIL experiences** with a focus on *collaborative and meaningful work* (see [pp. 2-4](#) for full details)
- Open to **undergraduate and graduate** level international students/alumni enrolled at Memorial University and in the [Professional Skills Development Program](#) (See [p. 6](#))
- **100% funded** by the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism (OIM) - Department of Immigration, Population Growth, and Skills (IPGS), Government of Newfoundland, with stipends administered by Memorial University

— 2022-2025 Highlights —



See our [2022-2025 Impact Report](#) for more!

Interested in becoming an employer partner?

Please read below for complete details. To participate in the GSE, contact psdp@mun.ca by January 5th with brief notes about what kind(s) of placements you would like to host. Full placement details are due January 12 at 12 PM.

The Global Skills Exchange: Full Program Details

Eligible Employers: Businesses, organizations, and companies with an office located in NL. Due to the nature of our funding, provincial and federal government agencies are not eligible. (Also see “Location and Mode of Work” below).

Funding Availability: For the upcoming Winter semester, we are looking to offer approximately 40 Global Skills Exchange WIL experiences (previously known as “micro-placements”). Each placement will be **60 hours in total** and students/alumni are paid at the prevailing student rate of pay set by the university. Employers may host multiple GSE placements if there is capacity.

Context: These WIL experiences fall under the “*Global Skills Exchange Initiative*”, a project selected to receive funding under the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador’s *Settlement and Integration Program (NLSIP)* for the purposes of enhancing outcomes of the PSDP by incorporating meaningful, real-world work opportunities for international students/alumni (see “PSDP at a Glance” for more details).

Work Hours: Depending on the employer’s needs, students/alumni may work with a fixed schedule (for example, 10 hours a week for 6 weeks) or in a flexible manner, as schedules permit. Students/alumni are responsible for recording and reporting their hours to employers, who in turn agree to sign off on timesheets.

Location and Mode of Work: Work can be performed virtually or in-person or hybrid, at the discretion of the employer.

Eligible Students/Alumni: International students/alumni who have a valid work authorization as per Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada regulations, and who have completed the PSDP in the past, or are currently completing the program. Candidates are graduate or undergraduate students or alumni from a host of different disciplines/areas of study including Business, Computer Science, Engineering, Education, Arts, Sciences, and Employment Relations.

Participant Payment: Current university students will be paid directly by the university according to rates set by the university. ([See this page](#) for approximate amounts.) **For alumni participants, employers must pay wages up front and then apply for reimbursement by submitting a claim form with proof of payment.**

Work Criteria: GSE placements should be **professional** in nature and provide opportunities for students to engage in **collaborative and meaningful work** (see below for definition). Positions that are mostly “frontline” in nature (for example, roles which are predominantly characterized by retail or customer service responsibilities) are not eligible for these placements.

Collaborative and meaningful work is defined as work that:

- a) Appropriately matches a participant’s skills and capabilities
- b) Allows opportunities for the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and experience between the student participant and the host organization
- c) Results as a product of mutual understanding between the student and employer, with the presiding mentor providing oversight and guidance as needed throughout the placement
- d) Allows participants to grow, build industry connections, and enhance their employability skills in line with Memorial University’s [Student Success Competencies](#)

Note: *It may be helpful for employers to consider that for some participants, these placements may represent their first experience of a professional workplace environment in Canada. Others may also have years of professional experience accumulated abroad and may be suited for advanced tasks.*

GSE postings should include the following details (see template on p. 5):

- **Basic background information** about the employer
- **Position title and information on project(s)** the student will be working on
- A **description of tasks** the student will be expected to perform
- **Proposed dates of the placement** (ranging between mid-February to April 8, if there are specific dates in mind) and a proposed shift schedule, if any
- **Location/mode of work** (if in-person or hybrid, provide details about office location)
- Any other important information/screening criteria/specifics (job requirements, desired qualifications, certifications, etc.)

Placement Matching Process: GSE placements will be approved on a case-by-case basis, after being evaluated by the PSDP Team. Approved positions will be internally uploaded on the *My MUN Portal* where students can search and apply for positions that align with their interests and experiences. The PSDP Team will pre-screen applications and provide a shortlist to employers (if applicable), *matching student preferences where possible*. Should they wish, employers may arrange interviews to choose their preferred candidate(s) after the pre-screening process.

Please note that depending on numbers and candidate fit, **there is a possibility that not all placements will be matched**. Also note that participants who have not previously been matched to a placement will receive preferential consideration in order to maximize opportunity.

– Proposed Timeline / Key Dates for Winter 2026 Placements –

Deadline	Action / Notes
Monday, Jan. 5	Last day for employers to express interest in GSE.
Monday, Jan. 12	Last day to send GSE placement descriptions to psdp@mun.ca . (Advanced submissions are appreciated. See p. 5 for guidance)
Monday, Jan. 19	Placements published on student/participant portal; GSE application period opens. PSDP workshops begin.
Friday, Jan. 30	GSE application period closes.
Monday, Feb. 2 to Friday, Feb. 6~	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applications pre-screened by the PSDP Team - Shortlisted candidates forwarded to employers - Interviews conducted at the discretion of employers - Interview results and/or selected candidate(s) confirmed by employers - Selected candidates submit required documentation to the PSDP Team (proof of work authorization, direct deposit information, etc.)
<p><i>Placement Period*:</i></p> <p>Monday, Feb. 9 to Friday, Apr 10</p> <p>*Placements may begin earlier should the student selection process allow. Exams begin Monday, April 13.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial meeting takes place between selected candidate(s) and employer; <i>GSE Terms and Conditions</i> signed by student and employer, forwarded to PSDP Team (Note: Employers are strongly encouraged to connect with students in-person to conduct on-boarding and set expectations and deliverables.) - Placements run - Week of March 9th: Mid-Placement Check-In with PSDP Team <p>Note: Given adequate communication between the PSDP Team, the student, and employer, there can be some flexibility with end dates. However, we encourage concluding placements in time for students to focus on exams and end-of-term assignments.</p> <p>Last Week of Placement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final Check-In between participants and employers - Final timesheets are signed off by employers (provided that work is completed to an acceptable standard) and submitted to the PSDP Team
Wrap-up Items:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upon receipt/approval of final timesheets, payments actioned by Memorial University's financial services team - Feedback surveys sent to all participants

– GSE Placement Description Template –

Details to Include:	
Employer Information:	<i>What does your organization do? Include a short description of who you are, who you serve, and what you're about.</i>
Position Title and Project Information (if applicable):	<i>What will the student be working as, and what project(s) the student will be working on? What is your vision or purpose for their work?</i>
Anticipated Student Success Competencies (select up to 5 most pertinent to the placement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academic Knowledge ● Adaptability / Resilience ● Communication ● Creative Thinking / Problem Solving ● Digital Literacy ● Diversity Awareness / Intercultural Understanding ● Leadership and Innovation ● Professionalism ● Social / Civic Responsibility ● Teamwork
Description of Tasks:	<i>What tasks will the student be expected to perform? (ie. What will they be doing to assist you?)</i>
Proposed Dates/ Work Hours:	<i>When will they work?</i> Note: <i>Placements should range between mid-February to April 8th. Include a proposed shift schedule, if any. If you are flexible about work hours, please note that here.</i>
Location/Mode of Work:	<i>How are you working with one another? If work is to be in-person or hybrid, provide details about the precise office location.</i>
Qualifications, Assets, and Job Requirements	<i>What do they need to have a successful placement?</i> <i>Include any other important information/screening criteria/specifics here (job requirements, desired qualifications, certifications, etc.).</i>

Make a copy of this template via Google Docs [here](#).

Also see Sample Placements Descriptions [here](#).

The Professional Skills Development Program at a Glance:

Offered in partnership by Career Development and the Internationalization Office at Memorial University since 2010, the award-winning *Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP)* is a free, non-credit program designed to equip current international students with the foundational skills and knowledge needed to prepare for professional employment in Canada.

PSDP Workshop Topics

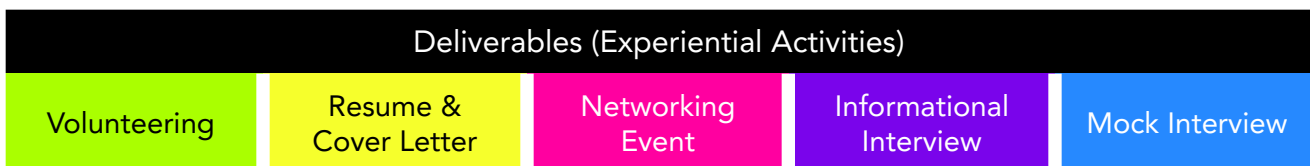
- Career Exploration
- Skills Identification
- Resume & Cover Letters
- Job Searching
- Networking
- Using LinkedIn
- Interview Skills & Strategies
- Labour Standards
- Intercultural Communication

(Note: This list is not exhaustive.)

CORE PROGRAM: The **curricular component of the program comprises six interactive workshops** through which students are introduced to key concepts and best practices on various topics as they relate to career development and the job market. Attendance is mandatory where the purpose of the workshops is to promote active engagement with the core content, help participants build connections, encourage collaborative learning and intercultural understanding, and to provide students with the opportunity to practice their communication skills and professionalism.

To support the learning process, participants are also required to complete **reflections** corresponding to each workshop presentation. The purpose of these assignments is to give students the time and space to independently activate their critical thinking skills, synthesize information presented in the workshops, and dive deeper into their own learning. Individual feedback for each of these reflections is provided by the PSDP Facilitator.

Finally, students are required to submit independently-arranged “deliverables” which represent the primary **experiential component** of the PSDP. Through these applied experiences, students bring their learning to life in real-world environments, putting into practice some of the critical knowledge and skills discussed during the program.



As evident from the above, completion of the PSDP represents a significant commitment: generally speaking, participants dedicate approximately 30 hours of their time to complete the core program. To recognize their energy and dedication to both the program and their personal development, students who successfully achieve all requirements of the PSDP are formally awarded a certificate at the end of the academic semester.

The Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP): Global Skills Exchange (GSE)
 – Supporting International Students and Labour Market Outcomes –

“ International students are a *pillar* of Canada’s immigration strategy, amid a structural demographic squeeze.

Annually, about 17% of all new permanent residents and almost 40% of immigrants in the economic category have prior Canadian study experience. More than 157,000 former students became permanent residents in 2021, with more than 88,000 transitioning directly from a PGWP.

”

Source: “Course Correction: How International Students Can Help Solve Canada’s Labour Crisis.” 2022. RBC Thought Leadership. September 1, 2022. <https://thoughtleadership.rbc.com/course-correction-how-international-students-can-help-solve-canadas-labour-crisis/>.

Source: “Projects to Advance the Settlement and Economic Integration of Newcomers in Newfoundland and Labrador Funding Guidelines 2023-24 Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism Department of Immigration, Population Growth, and Skills.” n.d. Accessed August 10, 2023. <https://www.gov.nl.ca/immigration/files/Funding-Guidelines-2023-24-1.pdf>.

“ Gaining *meaningful employment*, having an opportunity to connect with the workforce, and having Canadian work experience are *key factors* of the settlement and integration of newcomers. ”

“ Almost *3/4s* of all PGWP holders became permanent residents within 5 years of having obtained their PGWP. Through participation in the PGWPP and subsequent transition to permanent residence, international students have provided a *growing source of labour for the Canadian labour market* that extends well beyond their periods of study. ”

Source: “International Students as a Source of Labour Supply: Engagement in the Labour Market after Graduation.” Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. January 18, 2022. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2021012/article/00002-eng.htm>.

What Students Have Said

“ My placement was meaningful because it was my first job related to my degree in Canada. I’ve held part-time jobs but none have been related to my major. ”

”

“ The labour market & international education are not aligned well yet and we are not benefitting fully from the *real power of international students.* ”

With some adjustments to create the alignment, Canada can really **benefit at scale.** ”
- Martin Basiri, Co-Founder & CEO, ApplyBoard

Source: “**Course Correction: How International Students Can Help Solve Canada’s Labour Crisis.**” 2022. RBC Thought Leadership. September 1, 2022.
<https://thoughtleadership.rbc.com/course-correction-how-international-students-can-help-solve-canadas-labour-crisis/>.

Source: “**Course Correction: How International Students Can Help Solve Canada’s Labour Crisis.**” 2022. RBC Thought Leadership. September 1, 2022.
<https://thoughtleadership.rbc.com/course-correction-how-international-students-can-help-solve-canadas-labour-crisis/>.

“ All organizations, including employers, should enable more Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities for international students. ”

Lack of work experience acquired during studies has been cited as a **primary barrier** to international students finding a job after they graduate. International students are also ineligible for most government-funded and other WIL programs. ”

“ Participation in WIL is associated with **higher likelihood** of having the first job after graduation be highly related to the student’s field of study across types of WIL at both the college and university levels. ”

Source: “**From Class to Career: How Work-Integrated Learning Benefits Graduates Looking for Jobs.**” Rosalie Wyonch and Bradley Seward. CD Howe Institute. Accessed August 28, 2023.
<https://www.cdhowe.org/public-policy-research/class-career-how-work-integrated-learning-benefits-graduates-looking-jobs>.

What Employers Have Said

“ We had an unbelievable student placement. Our student's knowledge and skills were very in tune. All we had to do was give her direction and she went and did it with no hesitation. I am now a reference for our student in the real world. We look forward to participating again. ”

“ This program has allowed me to access students with skills that I wouldn't easily have access to. Being able to bring in someone (or a group of three, as I did) to target a specific task is very useful, and I think it's gratifying for the students as well. ”