

2026-2028 Strategic Plan



**Prepared by
Strategic Planning
Committee**

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we work, play, and live in Mi'kma'ki, the unceded territory and ancestral homeland of the Mi'kmaq Nation.

As Geoscientists, we work closely with the land. We must take special care to recognize that in Nova Scotia we are all Treaty People.

Support for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility

We value and extend respect to the diversity in our Association, where we are committed to an inclusive environment that combines the perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds that each participant brings. Embracing diversity strengthens our collective intelligence and fosters a more inclusive and innovative community.

Strategic Planning Committee

Maylia Parker, Scott Conrod, Fiona Gallacher, Natasha MacAdam, Dan Hagan



Introduction from Leadership

Thank you for helping us craft this Strategic Plan - your perspectives, experiences, and ambitions are reflected in every section. Your input made it clear that upholding high standards for the geoscience profession, effectively representing our profession to the public and government, and improving communication with you are top priorities. Your perspectives are reflected in the six key actions in this plan and connected to the day-to-day work of Geoscientists Nova Scotia (GNS).

This plan sets our path towards 2030, laying the groundwork for a dynamic and forward-thinking future for geoscience in Nova Scotia. It ensures that geoscientists continue to serve as trusted stewards of the environment, natural resources, and public welfare. We will play an important role in supporting communities and building a stronger, safer, and more prosperous province.

GNS aims to better connect with its members and stakeholders in person and digitally. Through the development of a Communications Strategy and a robust external communications calendar, we aim to ensure transparency, engagement, and strong stakeholder relationships.

Regulatory harmonization across Canada supports consistency, collaboration, and excellence in the profession. By working in step with our counterparts in Atlantic Canada and across the country, including active participation in Geoscience Canada, GNS strives to ensure that our registrants are prepared to meet the highest standards of practice. This is reflected in actions such as operationalizing Competency-Based Assessment (CBA) for new registrants and improving our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program.

Equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility within our Association are foundational to the success of geoscience in Nova Scotia. An inclusive environment that values individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, experiences, and perspectives unlocks a wealth of talent and fosters a stronger geoscience community. We have taken steps to improve our inclusivity and accessibility, but there is more work to do. This plan builds on those efforts.

Collaboration and partnerships are vital to advancing geoscience in Nova Scotia. GNS plans to enhance connections with other professional/industry associations, educational institutions, and government bodies. By doing so, we will foster a culture of knowledge sharing, continuous learning, best practices, and strengthen our ability to serve as an effective regulator.

GNS believes in the strength of our professional community, and we encourage all registrants to stay engaged, share your insights, and help us achieve the goals set forth in this plan. By uniting around the shared goals set out in this plan and tapping into your skills and expertise, we will ensure that the geoscience profession continues to make a positive, lasting impact in Nova Scotia and beyond. We hope you are inspired to get involved!

Sincerely,

Michael Power, P.Geo.
President

Maylia Parker, P.Geo.
Vice President

Stephen Olmstead
Registrar



About Us

Since 2002, the Association of Professional Geoscientists of Nova Scotia, or Geoscientists NS, has proudly regulated the geoscience profession in Nova Scotia.

We are a small, self-regulating association of approximately 350 registered members. These geoscientists contribute to a variety of projects in Nova Scotia, from responsible mining to developing water supplies, from remediating contaminated sites to helping build large infrastructure projects, to supporting climate adaptation projects. Geoscientists play an important role in protecting the public, protecting the environment, and growing the economy of Nova Scotia.

Our Vision

Nova Scotians are served by competent and ethical professional geoscientists, achieved through accessible, progressive and trusted regulation of the geoscience profession.

Our Mission

Geoscientists NS is mandated to regulate the profession of geoscience in Nova Scotia under the Geoscience Profession Act (2002). As the licensing body, we ensure high standards of geoscience education, admission to the profession, and practice. We achieve this mandate through member registration, compliance promotion, and enforcement.

We protect the public through the regulation of professional practice of geoscience in Nova Scotia.

Our Values

We serve our members and the public with:

- Professionalism
- Competency
- Integrity



Areas of Focus & Main Objectives

Geoscientists NS has been working within four (4) Strategic Priorities during successive Strategic Plans, including:

- **Value for Members**, with a focus on the member experience;
- **Licensure Awareness, Compliance and Enforcement**, which reflects our primary activity of regulating the geoscience profession and risk management for our members;
- **Awareness of the Profession and the Association**, which considers our stakeholder relationships; and,
- **Good Governance**, with a focus on promoting the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and sustainability of our organization.

While we will continue to progress initiatives under each of these four strategic priorities, the Association has evolved such that actions related to Licensure Awareness, Compliance, and Enforcement, as well as Good Governance, while critical to our mandate, have been largely operationalized. Therefore, when seeking input from members in our online Strategic Planning Survey 2025, we reconsidered our strategic priorities as four (4) Areas of Focus, including:

1. **Value for Members**, considering the diversity of our membership.
2. **Engagement**, with members and other key stakeholders.
3. **Modernization**, considered to be essential across our organization to progress our priorities.
4. **Organizational Sustainability**, with consideration that Geoscientists NS is the smallest geoscience association in Canada.

Feedback received from our membership was shared via a What We Heard PowerPoint slide deck. Review of the feedback identified three (3) Main Objectives for our 2026-2028 Strategic Plan:

1. Uphold high standards for the geoscience profession;
2. Represent the geoscience profession to the public and the provincial government; and,
3. Elevate Association communication with the membership.

To achieve these objectives, we have developed six key actions, supported by specific initiatives, to be completed under our 2026-2028 Strategic Plan. These actions and initiatives are described in the following section and summarized with proposed timelines in Appendix A.



Planned Actions

Action 1: Develop and implement a Communications Strategy

(Supports Objective 3 - Elevate Association Communication.)

A top priority in our strategic plan is to develop and implement a comprehensive Communications Strategy aimed at enhancing engagement, transparency, and accessibility. The Communications Committee will be re-established to lead this initiative. It is expected that, at a minimum, the Committee will consist of the Registrar, a GeoGazette Editor, Website Coordinator, and the Chair of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDI&A) Committee.

The Communications Strategy, first and foremost, will include a path forward to update, improve, and maintain the Geoscientists NS website. An updated, informative website will become the go-to information source for incoming and existing registrants, and the general public. The Communications Strategy will also consider regular communication from Council to registrants through quarterly newsletters and the Annual General Meeting, as well as reinvigorating the online GeoGazette to foster registrant-to-registrant dialogue. Furthermore, the goal is to introduce clear pathways for registrants to communicate with Council, amplify job opportunities, and promote learning opportunities through webinars and presentations.

In tandem, the EDI&A Committee will be re-established to support inclusive practices and ensure that all communication channels are accessible and inclusive. The first step will be to nominate a Chair for this committee.

Implementation of the Communications Strategy will be guided by clear timelines, assigned responsibilities, and ongoing feedback from registrants to ensure the strategy remains responsive and effective.



Action 2: Develop and implement an annual external communications calendar

(Supports Objective 2 - Represent the geoscience profession to the public and the provincial government.)

The second action will see the development and implementation of an annual external communications calendar to help strengthen relationships and increase visibility across the geoscience community. This calendar will help create consistent engagement with key external stakeholders, as prioritized by registrants, including geoscience departments at Nova Scotian universities, government departments, and professional societies.

Our outreach to university departments, led by the Student Committee, will expand to include both licensure and career information, supporting students' transitions into the profession and promoting national geoscience standards (GKE¹). Additionally, regular communication with departments such as Environment and Climate Change, Natural Resources (including the Geoscience & Mines Branch), and Energy will underscore to Government the importance that only licensed geoscientists practice geoscience in Nova Scotia and may also provide the opportunity for input on new policies, regulatory changes, or other initiatives.

The calendar will also include annual touchpoints with professional and industry organizations such as the Atlantic Geoscience Society, Mining Society of Nova Scotia, Prospectors Association of Nova Scotia, Canadian Energy Geoscience Society, and Engineers Nova Scotia. These engagements will foster collaboration, promote licensure, and support professional development across the sector. By formalizing these interactions into a structured calendar, Geoscientists NS aims to build stronger partnerships, enhance public and professional awareness, and ensure consistent, proactive communication with the broader geoscience community.

¹ <https://www.geoscientistsns.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-GKE.pdf>



Action 3: Operationalize Competency-Based Assessment

(Supports Objective 1 - Uphold high standards for the geoscience profession.)

Geoscientists NS will fully operationalize the Competency-Based Assessment (CBA) model for new applicants to align with Geoscientists Canada, harmonize with other Canadian jurisdictions, and meet the requirements of the Fair Registration Practices Act (FRPA) . A key milestone in this initiative is the recent finalization and publication of a comprehensive CBA Guide, which provides clear instructions and expectations for applicants, as well as validators and assessors. Additionally, the organization has initiated the use of the online Competency Assessment portal to support streamlined submissions and evaluation of competency-based applications².

Ongoing work includes recruitment and training of a diverse pool of Assessors with expertise across various geoscience disciplines, extending beyond the current Admissions Board.

Action 4: Improve the Continuing Professional Development program

(Supports Objective 1 - Uphold high standards for the geoscience profession.)

Association registered members requested increased opportunities to attain Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training and voiced strong support for aligning our CPD approach with other geoscience licensing bodies in Atlantic Canada and beyond. To improve our CPD program, we will reinvigorate our Professional Development Committee to take the lead in identifying, communicating, and promoting CPD opportunities. This will include attaining access to an online professional development portal for Atlantic geoscience and engineering licensing bodies. The Committee will also work with Council to explore other ways to improve alignment with Atlantic Canadian jurisdictions and improve efficiencies, such as policy changes and online tracking.

² More information about CBA can be found here: <https://competencyassessment.ca/About>



Action 5: Identify barriers to registration and explore potential mitigations for geoscientists practicing in under-represented fields

(Supports Objective 1 - Uphold high standards for the geoscience profession.)

Civil servants and geoscientists practicing in academia (e.g., university professors) are underrepresented in our registered membership. Registrants specifically identified challenges in having their work reviewed by non-licensed geoscientists working within the provincial government. We will engage with geoscientists in the public service and academia to collaboratively identify misconceptions and barriers to licensure, as well as identify potential mitigations. We will pilot approaches to promote licensure and measure our success.

Action 6: Work with Engineers NS and other partners to evaluate a potential merger

(Supports Objective 1 - Uphold high standards for the geoscience profession.)

As one potential approach to maintain long-term operational sustainability, efficiency, and rigour, Council will engage with Engineers NS to map out a potential approach to merging the two organizations, including a proposed pathway and timelines. This process will involve legal support and government engagement, as well as ongoing communication with registered members from both associations. This action will also include a thorough evaluation of the benefits and disadvantages of such a merger. It will specifically address registrant concerns that such a merger would result in geoscientists “losing their voice”. Results will be presented to registrants and next steps, if any, will be identified.

Contact Us



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www.geoscientistsns.ca

Appendix A: Tracking Table

2026-2028 Geoscientists Nova Scotia, Strategic Plan Tracking			
ACTION 1 - Develop and implement a Communications Strategy.			
Initiatives	Priority/Timeline	Lead	Progress/Comments
A. Establish an active Communications Committee consisting of at minimum Registrar, GeoGazette Editor,	Q1 2026	Registrar	
B. Develop a Communications Strategy, expected to include:	Q2 2026	Communications Committee	
- Update website - for members and the public. (Then amplify the website.)	NOTE: HIGH PRIORITY timelines to be established in Communications Strategy		
- Regular communication from Council to members - quarterly email newsletters, annual AGM			
- Annual online GeoGazette for member to member communication, including geoscience project			
- Pathways for members to communicate to Council - socialize generic emails, annual AGM			
- Learning opportunities via webinars and presentations (geoscience project summaries, professional			to be supported by Professional Development Committee
- Amplification of job opportunities			
C. Implement the Communications Strategy	2026-2028	Communications Committee	
D. Re-establish an active Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility Committee, by first nominating a Chair.	Q1 2026	Registrar/Council	
- EDIA Committee to inform Communications.	2026-2028		
ACTION 2 - Develop and implement an annual external communications calendar.			
Initiatives	Priority/Timeline	Lead	Progress/Comments
A. Develop, implement and track annual calendar to include minimum annual engagement with:	2026 onwards	Registrar	
- Each geoscience department at Nova Scotian universities, also NSCC-COGS. Beginning in 2026, expand information presented to include both licensure and career information.		Student Liaison and Recruitment Committee	
- Department of Environment and Climate Change staff		Environment Committee	
- Department of Natural Resources (re: Geoscience Profession Act.)		President/VP (re: Act)	
- DNR, Geoscience & Mines Branch staff		Mining & Energy Committee	
- Department of Energy		Mining & Energy Committee	
- Atlantic Geoscience Society		Student Liaison and Recruitment Committee	
- Mining Society of NS		Mining & Energy Committee	
- Prospectors Association of NS		Mining & Energy Committee	
- Canadian Energy Geoscience Society		Mining & Energy Committee	
- Engineers NS		Executive Council, Registrar	
ACTION 3 - Operationalize Competency-Based Assessment (CBA).			
Initiatives	Priority/Timeline	Lead	Progress/Comments
A. Finalize and post Guide.	2025	Executive Council	In progress.
B. Attain access to online portal.	2025	Executive Council	In progress.
C. Recruit and train volunteer Assessors of varying geoscience expertise.	2025-2026	Registrar, supported by Admissions Board and Council	
D. CBA system fully operational.	Q4 2026	Registrar, supported by Admissions Board and Council	
ACTION 4 - Improve Continuing Professional Development program.			
Initiatives	Priority/Timeline	Lead	Progress/Comments
A. Reinvigorate Professional Development Committee, including identifying lead, to assist in identifying and promoting CPD opportunities.	Q1 2026	Registrar	
B. Attain access for members to online professional development opportunities via the Atlantic portal.	Q1 2026	Executive Council / Registrar	
C. Identify other CPD opportunities (including member webinars) and collaborate with Communications Committee to share with members.	2026-2028	Professional Development Committee	
E. Explore opportunities to align CPD with other Atlantic Canadian jurisdictions, including using an online platform for tracking.	Q3 2026	Professional Development Committee, with support from Council	
ACTION 5 - Identify barriers to registration and explore potential mitigations for geoscientists practicing in under-represented fields.			
Initiatives	Priority/Timeline	Lead	Progress/Comments
A. Engage with geoscientists practicing in under-represented fields - public service and universities.	2027	Registrar, support from relevant committees and Council	
- Collaboratively identify misconceptions about and barriers to licensure.	2027		
- Explore together potential mitigations.	2027		
- Pilot mitigations and measure success.	2028		
ACTION 6 - Work with Engineers NS and other partners to evaluate a potential merger.			
Initiatives	Priority/Timeline	Lead	Progress/Comments
A. Establish task group.	Q1 2026	President, Registrar	
B. Work with ENS to map out potential approach, including potential timelines. Engage with government, legal, as warranted.	Q2 2026	Registrar, Task Group	
C. Evaluate pros/cons, costs/benefits, identify mitigations for the concern that geoscientists may "lose their voice".	Q3 2026	Registrar, Task Group	
D. Present results and findings to members at AGM, identify next steps.	Sep-26	President	