



# Foreign Qualification Recognition

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

May 31, 2022  
Internationalization Office

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**Introduction:** Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) was established as Memorial University College in 1925, a living memorial to Newfoundlanders who lost their lives on the battlegrounds of World War I. Memorial has more than 18,500 undergraduate and graduate students, about 4,000 international students and an employee base of more than 2,500 faculty and staff. Memorial is home to many academic disciplines, several of which must comply with the policies and guidance of the regulatory bodies that oversee the relevant professions.

Memorial University is an inclusive community dedicated to innovation and excellence in teaching and learning, research, scholarship, creative activity, service and public engagement. The university plays a significant role in welcoming and supporting students and scholars from all over the world and encouraging their retention to the Province.

It is recognized that newcomers are often unable to apply earned skills and experience due to the fact that their credentials and work experience are not recognized by Canadian institutions, regulatory bodies, and employers.

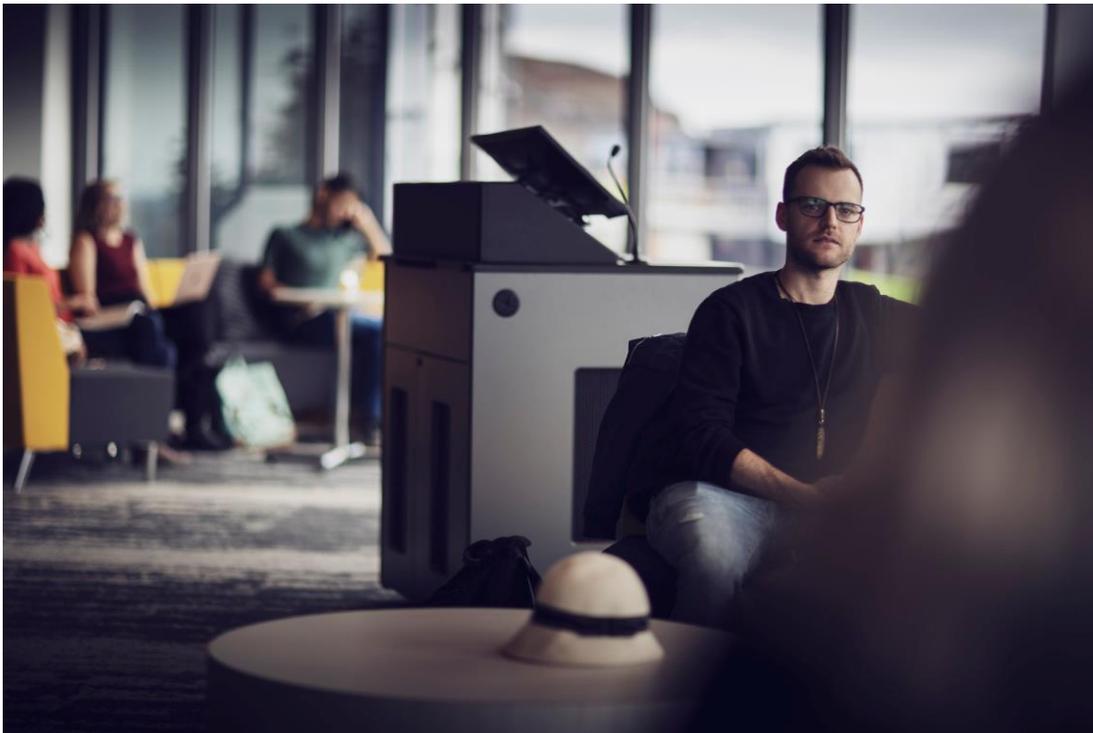
By establishing a project focused on Foreign Qualification Recognition (FQR), Memorial University proposes to support the need to more effectively recognize the pre-existing skills and credentials of foreign-trained workers in the province.

**Background:** For immigrants who wish to work in regulated professions, regulatory bodies which assess qualifications to practice add an additional layer of complexity and represent another hurdle in the process.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, barriers to employing and certifying newcomers with foreign credentials is particularly evident in medicine, nursing, social work, education, and engineering. Newcomers with academic credentials or work experience from developing nations or countries where English is not commonly spoken face even greater challenges.

Since the province's first immigration strategy in 2007, the top source countries for newly arriving immigrants have largely been developing economies or non-native English speaking (Govt. of NL, 2015) – the countries from which newcomers in regulated occupations across Canada have the most difficulty finding meaningful work.

To effectively harness the underutilized human capital pool represented by newcomers, a strategy that mobilizes the talented foreign trained workers in the province through creative and targeted approaches is needed.



**The Project:** The project will require the engagement of a consultant with expertise in FQR and experience in the Province of Newfoundland Labrador. The project is grounded in the following pillars:

- Identification of external stakeholders including professional associations and regulatory bodies (PARB), as well as other institutions and agencies which serve or recruit foreign workers and foreign students, immigrants and refugees in the prioritization, recognition, and recruitment of foreign-trained professionals to take part in focus groups.

- Definition of principles and assumptions that underpin the project.
- Determination of labour market demands of the Province both at present and forecasted.
- The building of expertise with the appropriate stakeholder groups in the province, and analysis of best practices from other jurisdictions in Canada.
- Establishment of an Oversight Committee of stakeholders, as well as a Project Team, led by a consultant and supported by graduate student researchers, that directly works on identification of solutions and reports to/gains key information and insights from the Oversight Committee.
- Development of clear pathways to skills upgrading by discipline (one of the key steps identified in the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications).
- Identification of existing and to-be-developed training modules that would allow newcomers to begin to practice in their fields while upgrading their skills to align with Canadian requirements.

The overall vision for the project is for internationally trained newcomers to have access to:

- Information, advice and services tailored to their specific education and employment needs/expectations in their mother tongue as necessary.
- Transparent and timely assessment of their academic credentials, prior learning, and language proficiency.
- Skills upgrading modules, which build on existing skills and address any gaps
- Specialized bridging opportunities to transition those looking for enhanced training or a change in careers.
- Occupation-specific language programs aimed at the level of English or French proficiency required for success in the workplace.
- Employers who recognize, value and have confidence in the skills and abilities of internationally trained newcomers.
- Educators, employers, regulators, community groups, service providers and governments work in partnership on solutions to improve access to employment.

- Provincial financial assistance programs, and government policies which reflect the importance of access to skills upgrading programs.

**Scope of the Work:** The project scope and activities will include:

- Data collection to outline the scope of the problem.
  - Review of educational backgrounds of newcomers in NL, noting any regions, countries and professions that pose a particular challenge.
  - Interviews with newcomers who are experiencing (and not experiencing) challenges.
  - Interviews with academic units about their experiences with regulatory frameworks and how these are incorporated into curriculum.
  - Interviews with regulatory bodies to understand the gaps between newcomer educational background and the components required for qualification.
- Identification of pathways (combinations of soft and hard skills development) by discipline that would allow a newcomer to successfully achieve the recognition of their foreign qualification.
- Identification of training modules that could be developed by Memorial University.
- A final report and the development of a full proposal to carry out subsequent work:
  - The final report of the consultant will include both a report on findings and a full proposal for subsequent activities for submission to the Province. The new proposal will be a full, multi-year funding proposal for 2023. The proposal will lay out the multi-year plan to embark on solutions for newcomers to enter regulated professions, and will be submitted to both the provincial and federal governments in their annual funding calls.
  - The submission should include relevant appendices (findings and data, position descriptions, stakeholder interview list, etc.).

**Expertise:** The selected consultant will have expertise in the NL post-secondary sector and labour market. The consultant will also have a significant grasp of barriers to labour market attachment of newcomers and knowledge of the international education landscape. In addition, the consultant will also need experience and/or deep understanding of the context of regulation (legislation, etc.) in terms of professionals.

The consultant will define potential opportunities and challenges faced by newcomers to the Province who have work experience and academic

credentials for regulated professions, but are currently unable to work in these professions, and who face significant barriers to full employment in their fields. The consultant will be familiar with best practice from across Canada and have previous experience delivering localized solutions to support newcomers to bridge to regulated professions and meaningful employment.

Some administrative support will be provided by the Internationalization Office, and graduate student assistants to support research, benchmarking and focus group note-taking.

### Timeline:

Start date	Activities	Time allotment
July 1, 2022	Meet with oversight committee, define stakeholders, scope, assumptions, meet initially with stakeholders etc. in order to inform gap analysis.  Develop understanding of the Provincial context.  Review of other jurisdictions.	18 days of work
Sept 1, 2022	Outreach to regulatory bodies, stakeholders, etc.  Hosting of focus groups on pathways with PARB's, internal stakeholders (Deans, etc.) and selected newcomers.  Development and testing of a set of solutions to address barriers to access.	20 days of work
Dec 1, 2022	Preparation of final report and proposal.	10 days of work
Jan 15, 2023	Draft complete for review by committee to meet final due date of Jan 31, 2023	2 days of work

### Budget:

Detailed budget, including professional fees +GST/HST (if applicable), projected expenses, and payment structure. It is not anticipated that travel will be required to meet the project outcomes.

## **Requirements and Submission:**

### **Requirements**

Submit proposals by June 15th, 2022. A digital proposal in PDF form submitted in response to this RFP should contain all of the following information:

- Qualifications and background relating to the project, including knowledge of subject matter and the context of the labour market and regulatory bodies of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Demonstrated understanding of the scope of work, including description of experience with other projects similar in size and scope.
- Proposed work plan outlining capacity to perform work within the scheduled timetable.
- Detailed budget, including professional, projected expenses, and payment structure.
- Name and contact information of two (2) past clients/professional references (contact names, titles, e-mail, and telephone number) to support the work to be completed.

Have questions? All questions related to this RFP can be directed by email Sonja Knutson, at [sknutson@mun.ca](mailto:sknutson@mun.ca).

### **Submission**

Submit proposals via email by 4:30 pm (NST) June 15, 2022 to:

Sonja Knutson  
Director, Internationalization Office  
[sknutson@mun.ca](mailto:sknutson@mun.ca)

Proposals received that do not meet all proposal requirements or received after the deadline date will not be considered.

This deadline is final and extensions will not be granted.