NOVEMBER 18TH & 19TH, 2026

From The Field Conference

2026 CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Best Western Glengarry
150 Willow Street, Truro, NS

A conference by practitioners, for practitioners.

Connect with career development professionals from across Nova Scotia, discover new ideas, and gain practical insights at this NSCDA conference celebrating Canada and Global Career Month.

Wednesday, November 18, 2026

- INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS
- NIGHT OF RECOGNITION

Thursday, November 19, 2026

- KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
- BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Visit our Website
www.nscda.ca

Contact Us
902.832.0334

AT-A-GLANCE SCHEDULE

From The Field Conference

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, 2026

12:30 - 1:00 pm	**REGISTRATION**
1:00 - 4:00 pm	**1: The Human Side of Helping: Navigating Stress, Capacity & Connection in a Changing World** *Autumn Grant* **2: Strengths, Skills and Beyond - Helping People Recognize What They Bring and Where to Start** *Donna Sheppard and Kim White*
5:00 - 7:00 pm	**Night of Recognition** *NSCDA - Celebrating career professionals in the province.*

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH, 2026

	BREAKOUT ROOM ONE	MAIN ROOM	BREAKOUT ROOM TWO
8:30 - 9:00 am 9:00 - 9:15 am	**REGISTRATION** **OPENING WELCOME:** *Matt Thompson, Placemaking 4G*		
9:15 - 10:15 am	**Opening Keynote:** *Angela Simmonds* **Empowering the Next Generation: Seeing It to Believe It**		
10:15 - 10:45 am	**Networking & Coffee Break**		
10:45 - 11:45 am	**When Career Decisions Become Money Decisions: Supporting Clients Through Financial Stress** *Anna Gordon CCDP®*	**Beyond Pushing Through: The Cognitive, Emotional & Physical Realities of Staying Well in Helping Professions** *Hannah Hefler CCDP®*	**Innovative Approaches to Supporting Immigrants in Career Integration and Licensure in HRM and Rural Communities** *Ariuna Kostova CCDP®, Amal Reda Holmes & Zohreh Ramin*
11:45 am - 1:00 pm	**LUNCH**		
1:00 - 2:00 pm	**Beyond the Job: Navigating Barriers, Not Just Placements** *Lauren Steeves CCDP® & Aaron Devine CCDP®*	**Lifelong Trials, Tribulations & Triumphs - Being Autistic & Securing Meaningful Employment** *Blake Priddle & Jo Beyers*	**Under What Conditions: Build Confidence & Capability with AI in Career Development Decisions** *Jessie Crabill CCDP® & Ranjit Singh*
2:00 - 2:30 pm	**Networking & Coffee Break**		
2:30 - 3:30 pm	**Closing Keynote:** *Jen Warrington* **Be Seen: What Hiring Systems Overlook and What Career Practitioners See**		
3:30 - 3:45 pm	**CLOSING REMARKS:** *Michael Bohan, NSCDA & Matt Thompson, Placemaking 4G*		

AFTERNOON CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

From The Field Conference

Wednesday, November 18th, 2026

The Human Side of Helping: Navigating Stress, Capacity & Connection in a Changing World

AUTUMN GRANT

Flo Meditation + Wellness Inc., NS

Helping others through change can be rewarding, demanding, and unpredictable. This interactive, trauma-informed workshop explores what happens when the demands of helping begin to compete with our own capacity. Through accessible, evidence-informed learning, practical tools, reflection, gentle movement, guided mindfulness, and peer discussion, participants will explore emotional labour, cognitive overload, competing priorities, professional boundaries, communication, and the realities of supporting others while navigating our own professional demands. Realistic workplace scenarios will create opportunities to share perspectives, consider sustainable responses, and identify practical strategies to support well-being and connection. You'll have space to pause, consider what's working, and explore strategies for navigating the demands of your work.

Strengths, Skills and Beyond - Helping People Recognize What They Bring and Where to Start

What if the experiences people see as barriers also hold strengths and skills they haven't yet recognized? From work and caregiving to volunteering, disability, and navigating change, people develop valuable abilities in ways they may not always see. This practical, discussion-led session introduces Strengths, Skills & Beyond, a three-part framework that helps people reflect on their experiences, recognize what they bring, and identify a realistic next step. Participants will try selected activities, explore ways to uncover strengths and transferable skills, and consider how these tools can be adapted for employment services, career conversations, community programs, and group settings. Come ready to reflect, share perspectives, and leave with practical tools you can bring into your work.

DONNA SHEPPARD

KIM WHITE

Where To Start Consulting, NL

www.nscda.ca

From The Field Conference

NIGHT of RECOGNITION

Wednesday
November 18th, 2026

5:00 - 7:00 pm

RISING STAR AWARD

Recognizing an individual within their first 3–5 years in the field or organization who has demonstrated rapid growth, initiative, and promise, with a strong commitment to learning and having a positive impact.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Honouring an individual whose sustained contributions and leadership have left a lasting mark on the career development industry in Nova Scotia.

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AWARD

Recognizing a member or chapter that has significantly grown, retained, or reactivated member participation and involvement.

EXCELLENCE IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT: INDIVIDUAL AWARD

Honouring an individual whose professional growth and achievement reflect outstanding dedication to their career field, and support for their clients.

EXCELLENCE IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT: ORGANIZATION AWARD

Honouring an organization that invests meaningfully in staff career and professional development while demonstrating leadership in delivering career services and supports to Nova Scotians.

LSI NOVA SCOTIA SERVICE INNOVATION AWARD for NS WORKS SERVICE PROVIDERS

Recognition of an innovative process, project, initiative, or idea that contributes to positive client/employer outcomes, or of advanced practices that improve client experience at a Nova Scotia Works centre.

An evening celebrating career development professionals and the people making an impact across our field.

NSCDA

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

From The Field Conference

Thursday, November 19th, 2026

Opening Keynote:
Empowering the Next Generation: Seeing It to Believe It

ANGELA E. SIMMONDS

Director of Human Resources, Equity & Culture at Feed Nova Scotia & Founder & Lead Consultant - A Team Coaching, NS

What changes when someone sees their potential in us before they can see it in themselves? What becomes possible when we see ourselves reflected in leadership, feel supported in our ambitions, and have people beside us who believe in what we can achieve?

Drawing on experiences in law, public service, entrepreneurship, and community leadership, Angela explores how representation, mentorship, and meaningful relationships shape our confidence, influence how we define success, and help us navigate change. Through personal stories and reflection, participants will consider how opportunities, challenges, and unexpected turns can reveal strengths, build skills, and open new possibilities. The session also recognizes the important role career development professionals play in helping others see beyond their barriers and recognize what they bring. Explore the impact of your work and the power of believing in one another, while discovering how mentorship, shared learning, and meaningful connections can help us grow, reach further, and lift others as we climb.

Closing Keynote:
Be Seen: What Hiring Systems Overlook and What Career Practitioners See

JEN WARRINGTON

Founder and Principal of The Warrington Group

A résumé tells part of a person's story, but what gets missed when hiring decisions rely too heavily on what's easiest to measure? Career development practitioners often recognize transferable skills, untapped potential, and abilities gained through experiences that don't fit neatly into traditional hiring criteria. As AI reshapes how people apply for work and how employers assess candidates, questions about fairness, access, and the recognition of talent become increasingly important. Drawing on more than 18 years of recruitment experience, Jen explores where hiring decisions can fall short, why practitioner insight matters, and how more thoughtful hiring practices can help people be recognized for what they can do. Discover new perspectives on recruitment, challenge familiar assumptions, and explore how we can help more people have their skills and potential recognized.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

From The Field Conference

Thursday, November 19th, 2026

Beyond Pushing Through: The Cognitive, Emotional & Physical Realities of Staying Well in Helping Professions

Hannah Hefler CCDP® - TEAM Work Cooperative - Nova Scotia Works

Drawing on her lived experience, Hannah explores the cognitive, emotional and physical realities of working while managing our own mental health and/or disability and how these experiences can shape professional identity, boundaries, capacity and career sustainability.

When Career Decisions Become Money Decisions: Supporting Clients Through Financial Stress

Anna Gordon CCDP®, Credit Counselling Society, Manitoba

Financial stress can affect confidence, career decisions, and the choices people believe are available to them. Drawing on her experience, Anna explores how financial concerns influence career conversations and how practitioners can recognize these challenges, discuss them with clients, and connect them with appropriate resources.

Innovative Approaches to Supporting Immigrants in Career Integration and Licensure in HRM and Rural Communities

Ariuna Kostova CCDP® / Amal Reda Holmes / Zohreh Ramin, Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia

This interactive session explores barriers immigrants face entering the Canadian labour market, including credential recognition, language, licensure, and limited networks. Through practical examples, presenters will share approaches that combine employment and settlement services, employer engagement, career planning, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to support meaningful employment, including for internationally educated professionals and newcomers in rural communities.

Beyond the Job: Navigating Barriers, Not Just Placements

Lauren Steeves CCDP® / Aaron Devine CCDP®, Futureworx - Nova Scotia Works

When clients face overlapping barriers like housing instability, mental health challenges, and childcare, getting a job is only part of the puzzle. Drawing on frontlne experience, this session reframes job readiness as an ongoing process and examines how multidisciplinary teams can work together to support sustainable employment.

Lifelong Trials, Tribulations & Triumphs - Being Autistic & Securing Meaningful Employment

Blake Priddle, Nova Scotia / Jo Beyers, Prince Edward Island

From non-verbal to radio announcer… how did one person find their voice and rightful place in society? Through a personal journey shared by the presenters, this session explores the barriers and facilitators involved in finding, getting, and keeping work. From early work experiences to a career in broadcasting and a transition to job coaching for others on the spectrum, they'll reflect on lived experience, the realities of inclusion, and the need for schools, workplaces, and communities to turn good intentions into meaningful action. Grounded in a peer-reviewed case study and evidence-informed frameworks, including Worktopia, the session concludes with an open Q&A.

Under What Conditions: Build Confidence & Capability with AI in Career Development Decisions

Jessie Crabill CCDP® / Ranjit Singh, Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia

AI is changing job search and career development, but effective use takes more than faster tools and better documents. Drawing on their work at ISANS, Jessie Crabill and Ranjit Singh will share practical applications of Skills First, Jobscan, and ATS optimization alongside human-centred AI stewardship. Through reflection and real-world examples, they'll explore how practitioners can help clients build confidence and capability and make intentional choices about when and how to use AI to support meaningful, sustainable career growth.