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Canadian Immigration & Refugee Law

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PROVINCIAL NOMINEE PROGRAM

International Entrepreneur Category

Requirements and Process

Client Information Guide

Prepared August 2026

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This guide is for general information only and does not constitute legal advice.

Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Nominee Program (NLPNP)

International Entrepreneur Category

Client Information Guide – Requirements and Process

Prepared by Kabir & Alam Lawyers | August 2026

1. Overview

The International Entrepreneur category of the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Nominee Program (NLPNP) is a pathway to Canadian permanent residence for experienced business owners and senior managers who intend to settle permanently in Newfoundland and Labrador. To qualify, you must start or buy a business in the province, actively manage it every day, and run it for at least one full year before you can be nominated for permanent residence.

The category operates through the province's Expression of Interest (EOI) model: candidates submit an EOI (currently open, with no provincial fee), receive a score, and the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism (OIM) periodically issues Invitations to Apply. Priority is given to applicants focused on regional development or the province's high-demand sectors, such as agriculture, aquaculture, technology, and natural resources. Successful applicants operate their business on a temporary work permit under a Business Performance Agreement, and nomination follows once the Agreement's terms are met. The full cycle from EOI to permanent residence typically spans two to four years.

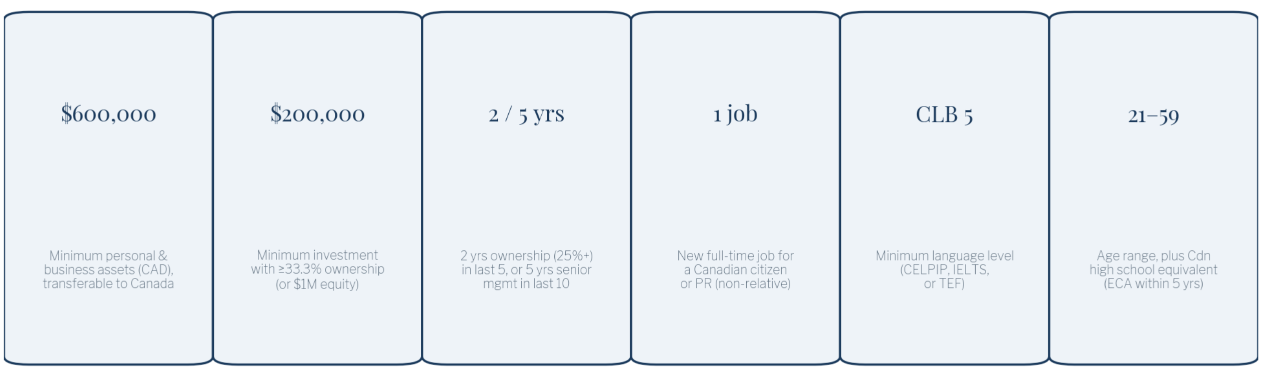

Figure 1: Core requirements at a glance.

2. Eligibility and Requirements

To qualify under the International Entrepreneur category, you must meet all of the following criteria, as published by the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism:

Requirement	Details
Age	Must be between 21 and 59 years old.

Requirement	Details
Personal assets	Minimum CAD $600,000 in personal and business assets that can be transferred to Canada, legally obtained and verifiable through a Net Worth Verification Report prepared by an OIM-designated verifier.
Investment	Minimum CAD $200,000 invested in the business with at least 33.3% ownership – or, alternatively, an equity investment of CAD $1 million or more (in which case the 33.3% ownership requirement does not apply).
Business experience	Either (a) at least 2 years of business ownership and management, with 25%+ ownership, within the last 5 years, or (b) at least 5 years in a senior management role within the last 10 years.
Education	A Canadian high school diploma or its foreign equivalent, verified by an Educational Credential Assessment (ECA) completed within the last 5 years. Additional points are available on the assessment grid for college or university education.
Language	Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) level 5 or higher in English or French, demonstrated through CELPIP, IELTS, or TEF. Note this is higher than some other provinces (e.g., B.C. requires CLB 4).
Job creation	Create at least one full-time job for a Canadian citizen or permanent resident (non-relative) if starting a new business; if purchasing an existing business, retain existing staff on the same wages and conditions.
Business plan	A comprehensive business plan with supporting financial documentation verified by recognized third-party professionals, at the applicant's cost.
Active management	Must intend to live in Newfoundland and Labrador permanently and actively manage the business day-to-day from the place of business in the province. The business cannot be managed remotely from another province or country. Passive investors are not eligible.
Exploratory visit	Mandatory if applying from outside Newfoundland and Labrador; the visit must occur before submitting the official application. If purchasing an existing business, you must meet the current owner during this visit.
EOI / ITA	Must submit an Expression of Interest and receive an Invitation to Apply before a full application can be made. The EOI system is currently open.

The authoritative source is the NLPNP International Entrepreneur Application Guide published at gov.nl.ca/immigration. Criteria are subject to change and should be confirmed before each step.

2.1 Who cannot apply

- Persons living illegally in their country of residence
- Persons subject to a removal order issued by IRCC or the Canada Border Services Agency
- Persons prohibited (inadmissible) from entering Canada
- Passive investors who will not be involved in the daily operation of the business
- Persons without legal immigration status, until that status is restored

2.2 EOI points assessment

Expressions of Interest are scored on a points grid covering six factors: language proficiency, education, business ownership or management experience, alignment with Newfoundland and Labrador's economic priorities, age, and adaptability. Adaptability points can include factors such as relatives residing in the province or prior work experience in Newfoundland and Labrador. Higher-scoring candidates are prioritized in periodic draws; submitting an EOI does not guarantee an invitation.

2.3 The two business streams

The category accommodates two routes, each with distinct conditions. Starting a new business requires establishing a brand-new operation in the province and creating at least one full-time job, directly related to the business, for a local resident who is not a family member, at a fair and competitive wage. Purchasing an existing business requires that the business was operated by the same owner for the past five years, that you meet the current owner during the exploratory visit, that the purchase price reflects fair market value, that the business is active and not in receivership, and that existing staff are retained on the same wages and conditions. In both routes, the business must be a for-profit enterprise with the potential to create significant economic benefit to the province, must be actively managed by you from the place of business in Newfoundland and Labrador, and is liable to pay income tax on taxable income earned from a permanent establishment in the province.

3. Ineligible Businesses

The following are not eligible under the category:

- Businesses operated remotely from outside Newfoundland and Labrador or outside Canada
- Property rental, leasing, or investment businesses
- Real estate, insurance, or business brokerages (unless a compelling benefit to the province is demonstrated)
- Regulated professional services or professional self-employment
- Payday loan, cheque cashing, money exchange, and ATM businesses; pawn shops and taxi companies
- Home-based businesses (unless a compelling benefit to the province is demonstrated)
- Businesses producing, distributing, or selling adult content or services
- Non-profit organizations and co-operatives

- Businesses operated primarily for passive investment income (interest, dividends, capital gains)
- Businesses compensating employees solely on commission
- Any business that could bring the OIM, the NLPNP, or the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador into disrepute

4. The Application Process, Step by Step

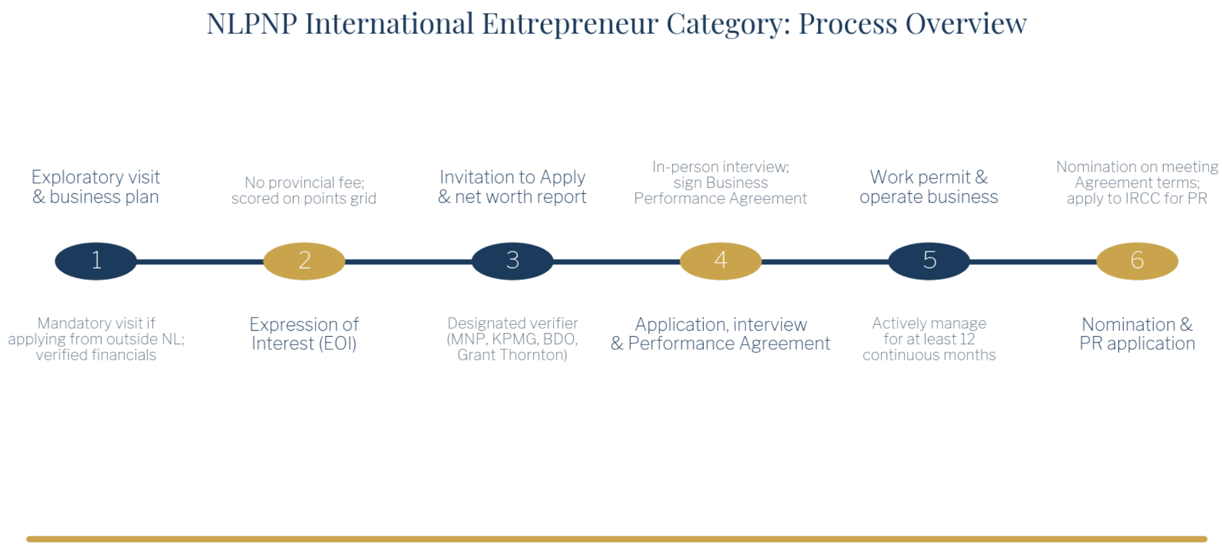

Figure 2: Process overview.

1. **Exploratory visit and business plan:** Review the Application Guide, research the market, and – if you are outside the province – complete a mandatory exploratory visit before your official application. If purchasing an existing business, you must meet the current owner during this visit. Prepare a comprehensive business plan with financial documentation verified by recognized third-party professionals.
2. **Expression of Interest:** Submit an EOI through the province's online system (currently open; no fee). Your EOI is scored on the six-factor points grid, and the OIM conducts periodic draws.
3. **Invitation to Apply and net worth verification:** If selected, you receive an Invitation to Apply. You must then select a designated Net Worth Verifier – currently Grant Thornton LLP, MNP LLP, KPMG LLP, or BDO Canada LLP – submit your financial documents to them, and authorize the verifier to send the Net Worth Verification Report directly to the OIM. Only reports sent directly by the verifier are accepted, and all verification costs are yours.
4. **Application, interview, and Performance Agreement:** Submit the complete application with all required documents, including the federal IMM 0008 forms and your Business Establishment Plan. You will attend an in-person interview. If approved, you sign a Business Performance Agreement with the province setting out your investment, employment, and operational commitments.
5. **Work permit and business operation:** With the province's support letter, apply to IRCC for a temporary work permit, move to the province, establish or purchase the business, and actively manage it on a day-to-day basis for at least one continuous year.
6. **Nomination and permanent residence:** Once you have operated the business for at least 12 months and satisfied the terms of your Business Performance Agreement, you may be nominated for permanent residence. The nomination supports a permanent residence application to IRCC under the Provincial Nominee Class for you and your dependent family members.

5. Fees and Costs

Item	Cost
Provincial application fee	None – there is no fee to apply under this category
Supporting documents (language tests, ECA, translations)	Applicant's cost
Net Worth Verification Report (designated verifier)	Applicant's cost
Travel for exploratory visit and in-person interview	Applicant's cost
IRCC fees (work permit; permanent residence)	Federal fees apply

Unlike most provincial entrepreneur programs, Newfoundland and Labrador charges no provincial fee for this category.

6. How This Compares to Other Streams

For reference against the other provincial entrepreneur programs:

Criteria	NL Intl Entrepreneur	NS Entrepreneur	BC PNP Base
Net worth	$600K (transferable)	$600K HRM / $400K outside	$600K
Minimum investment	$200K (or $1M equity)	$150K HRM / $100K outside	$200K
Language	CLB 5	CLB 5	CLB 4
Age	21–59	21+, no cap	No limit
Education	High school + ECA	High school equivalent	Not required if experience met
Exploratory visit	Mandatory (if outside NL)	Required for purchases	Recommended only
Provincial fees	None	$2,000 (from Sept 1, 2026)	$300 + $3,500
Operating period	At least 12 months	At least 1 year	18–20 months

7. Practical Considerations

- The exploratory visit is not a formality – it is a strict precondition for applicants outside the province, and for business purchases it is where you must meet the vendor. Plan the visit carefully and document it.

- The $600,000 asset threshold refers to assets transferable to Canada; illiquid or non-transferable holdings may not assist. As in all business streams, the accumulation of funds must be fully traceable and legally obtained.
- For business purchases, the five-years-same-owner rule and the staff retention condition are designed to prevent artificial transactions; a valuation supporting fair market value is essential.
- NL's market is smaller than the major provinces and business development timelines can be longer; the business plan should reflect realistic local market conditions rather than big-city assumptions. Aligning the concept with the province's priority sectors (agriculture, aquaculture, technology, natural resources) and regional development improves EOI competitiveness.
- The one-year operating requirement is a minimum; the nomination depends on demonstrating the Business Performance Agreement has been fulfilled, not merely on the passage of time.
- Note the language threshold (CLB 5) and the education requirement (ECA within the last 5 years) – both should be arranged early, as test results and assessments take time to obtain.

Important Notice

This guide is provided for general information only and does not constitute legal advice for any specific case. It summarizes the requirements of the NLPNP International Entrepreneur category as published by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism (gov.nl.ca/immigration) as of August 2026. Program criteria, points grids, designated verifiers, and processes change from time to time and should be verified against the current Application Guide before any step is taken. Please contact our office to discuss how these requirements apply to your circumstances.

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