

**WELCOME TO**  
**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**  
**ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORTS**  
**INFO SESSION**

---

# SDAS



## INFO SESSION

### 2025

- Please feel free to ask questions whenever they arise.
- This Info Session presentation will be available on TEAM Work's website.
- Resources discussed in this presentation are also available on TEAM Work's website.
- Please feel free to contact me (SD Coordinator) at any time for questions, thoughts and concerns.

# OUTLINE

- **Introduction to SD & SDAS**
  - **SDAS Roles and Responsibilities**
  - **Eligibility**
  - **Applying for SDAS**
  - **Accessibility Supports**
  - **Overview of Equipment and Services**
  - **Q & A**
-

# **INTRODUCTION TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORTS**

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (SD) PROGRAM

- **Overview**

- The SD program targets unemployed, Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) eligible Nova Scotians who need to learn basic or advanced skills to secure employment in NS.
- LMDA - a yearly Government of Canada investment that helps Canadians get the training they need to find good jobs.
- SD is a funding program that provides customized levels of non-repayable funding to individuals based on their income.
- Individuals on EI may be eligible to continue EI during training as a living allowance. Those not on EI may be eligible for a similar living allowance.

- **Target Participants**

- Unemployed individuals lacking marketable skills for improved employment prospects.
- Canadian citizen or permanent resident. Resident of Nova Scotia.
- LMDA eligible (Open/previous EI claim or accumulate work hours/earnings).
- Job-ready but unable to find employment with current skills.

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (SD) PROGRAM CONT'D

- **Program details**

- Full-time study/training required.
- An industry recognized program is required.
- Training must be provided by a registered institution that leads to a certificate or diploma. No university degrees.

- **Benefits**

- Enhances employability and job prospects for unemployed individuals.
- Supports participants in finding sustainable employment.

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORTS (SDAS) PROGRAM

- **Overview**

- To be eligible for SDAS, clients must be enrolled in the Skills Development (SD) program and have a permanent disability.
- SDAS financial assistance supports the costs of equipment and/or services to reduce educational barriers directly related to the disability and training program.

- **Target Participants**

- Lives with a permanent disability.
- Enrolled in Skills Development.

- **Program Details**

- Full-time may not be required (Accommodated Reductions).
- An industry recognized program is required.
- Training must be provided by a registered institution that leads to a certificate or diploma.

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORTS (SDAS) PROGRAM CONT'D

- **Benefits**
  - Enhances successful participation of training for people with disabilities.
  - Enhances employability and job prospects for people with disabilities.
  - Greatly supports people with disabilities in finding sustainable employment.
- **More Information on Skills Development Accessibility Supports (SDAS)**
  - Contact the SDAS Coordinator at TEAM Work Cooperative.
  - Access latest SDAS Go-To Guide on TEAM Work website.



# QUICK OVERVIEW

**SDAS is a financial assistance program aimed at supporting students with permanent disabilities who are approved for the Skills Development (SD) Program.**

**Purpose:** SDAS supports the cost of necessary equipment and/or services that can help overcome educational barriers directly tied to a student's disability and the training program.

**Process:** Students will submit an application package with help from their Case Manager, a Student Accessibility Specialist (SAS) from their educational institution and/or TEAM Work's SDAS Coordinator.

# SDAS ROLES OVERVIEW

# 1: CASE MANAGERS

- Support clients through the SDAS application process.
- Assist in the early identification of disabilities.
  - Encourage and support clients to pursue documentation by a qualified professionals to confirm suspected disability.
  - Contact SDAS Coordinator to help in the early identification process.
- Help coordinate external assessments alongside SDAS Coordinator (if required).
- Provide ongoing support through the Case Manager process.

# 1: CASE MANAGERS (CON'T)

- Receive referrals from Student Accessibility Specialists (SAS) at training institutions (mainly NSCC).
- Sign privacy releases on behalf of students/clients to speak directly with SAS at training institutions.
- Submit the SDAS application through LAMPs or email.
- Notify the client when ENS makes a decision on an SDAS application.

# 2: STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SPECIALISTS (SAS)

- Work with students who disclose their disabilities to the learning institution.
- Recommended accessibility supports based on the training program in question.
- Develop an accommodation plan in collaboration with the student and teaching faculty.
- Reach out to Case Managers and/or SDAS Coordinator with questions and concerns.
- **NSCC requires privacy releases** for CMs to speak with SAS regarding students.

### 3: PROGRAM OFFICERS (ENS)

- Receive and assess SD and SDAS application packages.
- Notify clients and Case Managers when a decision has been rendered for SD and SDAS.
- Administer SD and SDAS funding.
- It is not ENS' role to identify or recommend accommodations.

### 4: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACCESSIBILITY COORDINATOR

- Help CMs with the SDAS application and answer questions.
- Assist CMs and clients with early identification of disability and support.
- Connect CMs and clients to other regional, government and community based disability supports and resources, as needed.
- Help SAS with disability supports and answer questions.
- Act as liaison between ENS and CMs/SAS.

# SDAS ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

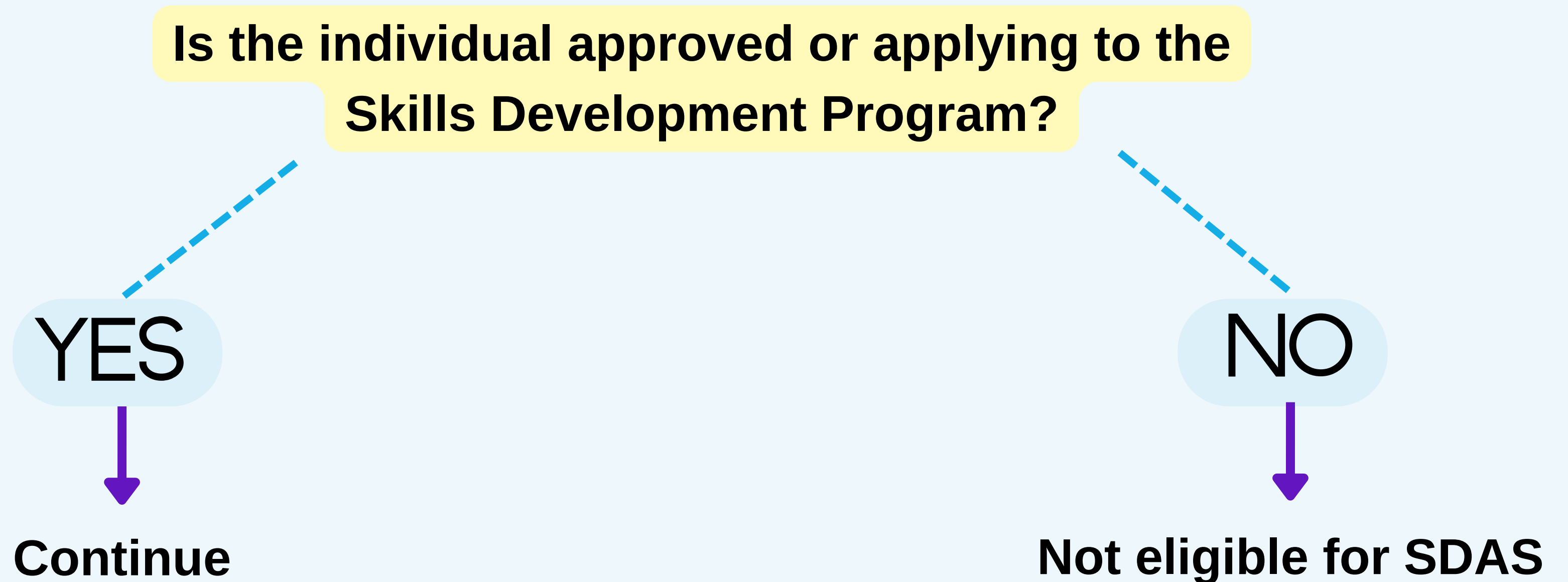


**To qualify for the SDAS program,  
individuals must meet the following criteria:**

- Be approved for the Skills Development program.
- Have a permanent disability as verified by a qualified professional.
- Self-identification is not an option.

**\*\*Reminder:** Only individuals approved for SD Program will be eligible for support under SDAS.

## IS THE INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBLE FOR SDAS?



### IS THE INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBLE FOR SDAS (CON'T)?

**Does the individual have a permanent disability?**

**YES**



**Continue**

**NO**



**Not eligible for SDAS**

Disability Verification Form must be completed &  
Disability Assessment(s) may be required.

# APPLYING FOR SDAS

# APPLICATIONS - BEFORE YOU BEGIN

**The process of applying for SDAS may vary between individuals, largely depending on when disabilities are identified, accessed and documented**

- **Early Intervention:** the individual is assessed for support before the training program begins.
- **In-Progress Intervention:** The individual is assessed for support at any point while their training program is underway.

**Please note:** Our focus is on early intervention, as this is the most effective way to ensure that necessary supports are provided as soon as possible.

# WHEN TO APPLY FOR SDAS

**Individuals can apply for SDAS at any stage before or during their training program.**

- Can apply with their Skills Development (SD) Program application.
- -or-
- Can apply after their Skills Development (SD) Program application.


**\*\* Please note:** SDAS Applications should NOT be submitted within the final 4 weeks of the training program's end date.

- ENS will only accept a SDAS Application under exceptional circumstances in last 4 weeks.
- Case Manager must contact ENS directly prior to submitting a late SDAS Application Package.

# APPLYING FOR SDAS - THE SDAS APPLICATION PACKAGE

## 1. SDAS Application Form (Required)

Skills Development Accessibility Supports  
Application Form



Before you apply

Skills Development Accessibility Supports (SDAS) provides financial assistance to students who have a permanent disability and are approved to participate in the Skills Development (SD) Program. Financial assistance under SDAS is intended to support the costs of equipment and/or services to help reduce or remove educational barriers that are caused by the disability and are directly related to the delivery of the training program.

You can apply for SDAS at any time during your training program. A Student Accessibility Specialist (or other designated individual) at your training institution and your Case Manager will work with you to complete your application.

Applicant Information

First name

Last name

Case ID

Date of birth

Nature of Disability

☐ Deaf, Hard of hearing

☐ Blind, low vision

☐ Physical

☐ ADD/ADHD

☐ Mental health

☐ Learning disability

☐ Other (e.g., Chronic illness, Head Injury, Cerebral Palsy, Cognitive, Autism Spectrum, etc.).

Please specify:

July 2023

Page 1 of 4

SDAS Request for Equipment or Services

Indicate below the equipment and/or services being requested.

Equipment Request

Your Case Manager will enter the rationale for the request based on the information from the Student Accessibility Specialist (or other designated individual) at your training institution.

Equipment Type	Rationale for the request
<input type="checkbox"/> Computer <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Funding amount: Flat rate \$900</li><li>- Quotes are not required</li></ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistive computer software <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Funding amount – 100% of the cost</li><li>- One (1) quote required</li></ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistive accessories <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 100% of cost</li><li>- Two (2) quotes required</li></ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Noise cancelling head phones <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- \$200 flat rate</li><li>- Quotes are not required</li></ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative format learning materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Funding amount – 100% of the cost</li><li>- One (1) quote required</li></ul>	

Services Request

Additional information is required for each service requested.

☐ Tutor

☐ Academic coach

☐ Note taker

☐ Specialized service

☐ Learning disability assessment

July 2023

Page 2 of 4

Service Request – Tutor

Course Name	Service Start Date	Service End Date	# of hours per week	Hourly rate

Service Request – Note Taker

Course Name	Service Start Date	Service End Date	# of weeks	Course Rate

Service Request – other

Provide details and rationale for other services requested.

July 2023

Page 3 of 4

Notice for Applicants

Do not purchase equipment or services before you submit a SDAS Application Form to Employment Nova Scotia. Equipment and services purchased before you apply are not eligible for reimbursement.

If you purchase equipment and/or services after you apply to Employment Nova Scotia, but before your application is approved, you do so at your own risk. If your application is not approved, you are responsible for the expenses incurred.

If your application is approved, receipts are required to show proof of payment for all equipment and services.

Applicant's Declaration

The financial assistance requested is required to cover the cost of the equipment and/or services related to my disability(ies). I understand that I may be required to repay all or part of this assistance if the information is found to be inaccurate.

I hereby agree that I am required to retain all receipts which must be submitted to Employment Nova Scotia (ENS), and I will repay any funds for which I have no receipts or for funds that were paid to me and that I did not spend.

Applicant's signature

Date

July 2023

Page 4 of 4



# APPLYING FOR SDAS - THE SDAS APPLICATION PACKAGE

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORTS  
Disability Verification Form  
For Students with Permanent Disabilities

**NOVA SCOTIA** **Canada**

**Student Information**

Last Name:	First Name:	File Number:
Name of Post-Secondary Institution:		Program of Study:
		Program Start Date:

Following Sections to be completed by Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Physician

## Section 1: Verification of Permanent Disability

This form is used to collect and verify the student's permanent disability status for Employment Nova Scotia purposes. If verified, the student may be eligible for federal and/or provincial disability grants.

Verify below the student's permanent disability. For Psychiatric and Neurodevelopment Disorders, please use the DSM-5 classifications. Additional information may be requested to support the diagnosis.

For Employment Nova Scotia purposes, a permanent disability is defined as a functional limitation caused by a physical or mental impairment that:

- Restricts the ability of a person to perform the daily activities necessary to participate in studies at a Post-Secondary school level or the labour force.
- Is expected to remain with the person for life.

Does the student have a permanent disability as defined above? Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the disability cause functional limitations as defined above? Yes ☐ No ☐

## Section 2: Nature of Permanent Disability (fill in all that apply)

### Physical Disability / Mobility Impairment

Specify disability:

### Hearing Impairment (to be completed by Audiologist)

Specify disability:

### Visual Impairment (to be completed by Ophthalmologist or Optometrist)

Specify disability:

### Neurological Disability

Specify disability: ☐ Brain Injury ☐ Cerebral Palsy ☐ Epilepsy ☐ Multiple Sclerosis

Other – please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

### Psychiatric Disorder

Specify disability:

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORTS  
Disability Verification Form  
For Students with Permanent Disabilities

**NOVA SCOTIA** **Canada**

**Student Information**

Student Name:	File Number:
---------------	--------------

**Section 2: Nature of Permanent Disability (continued)**

### Neurodevelopmental Disorders

☐ Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder ☐ Autism Spectrum Disorder ☐ Intellectual Disabilities

☐ Other – please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Learning Disability: Student has two options for submission:

1. Uploading psycho-educational assessment (completed in the last 5 years or since the student was 18 years of age) or
2. Answering the three questions below by a physician or a psychologist:

Has a psycho-educational assessment been performed by a registered psychologist? Yes ☐ No ☐

Year of Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_ Was a learning disability confirmed? Yes ☐ No ☐

### Other Chronic Disorders

Specify disability:

Name of Psychologist or Psychiatrist or Physician: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate: Psychologist, Physician (Psychiatrist, Neurologist, Family Physician) or other

City / Town:

Province:

Licence#:

Signature of person verifying Permanent Disability

Date of Signature

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. SDAS Disability Verification Form (Required)

- Completed by qualified professional (i.e., psychologist, physician or doctor).
- If assessment already completed, attach existing assessments to form and have client sign form.



## APPLYING FOR SDAS - THE SDAS APPLICATION PACKAGE - OTHER DOCUMENTS

---

- **Case Manager Statement (Required)**
  - Includes overview of a client, their challenges, and how SDAS will benefit them - a rationale to support funding request. No form. Just a written statement.
- **Disability Assessment (if applicable)**
  - Completed by qualified professional. No form. Just a written statement.
  - May be required as a supporting document to confirm a permanent disability (submit as an attachment to Disability Verification Form).
  - Individuals are not required to share the entire disability assessment to be eligible for SDAS. Shared sections should include an individual's name, assessing professional's name/signature and recommendations, and the date completed.
- **Academic Accommodation Agreement (NSCC Specific)**
  - Completed by NSCC.
- **Receipt Form**
  - Once services or equipment is purchases, a receipt form is required.

# SUBMITTING SDAS APPLICATION

- **LaMPSS** – if SDAS Application Package is being submitted at the same time as the SD Program application.
- **E-mail** – if SDAS Application Package is being submitted after the SD Program application has been submitted to Employment Nova Scotia.
  - **Cape Breton:** *LMDA-CB-Programs@novascotia.ca*
  - **Halifax:** *LMDA-HRM-Programs@novascotia.ca*
  - **Northern Nova Scotia:** *LMDA-Nrth-Pgms@novascotia.ca*
  - **South Shore Valley:** *LMDA-SSV-Programs@novascotia.ca*

# OVERVIEW OF EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

# ELIGIBLE COSTS

### Equipment

- Computer
- Assistive Computer Software (e.g., Dragon Naturally Speaking, JAWS Screen reader)
- Assistive Accessories (e.g., mouse or keyboard alternatives, digital recorder)
- Alternative Format Learning Materials (e.g., Braille products)

### Services

- Tutor
- Note Taker
- Academic Coach
- Specialized services (e.g., Attendant care for studies, readers, interpreters, specialized transportation)

# INELIGIBLE COSTS

**SDAS cannot be used to cover or contribute to the following costs:**

- Tuition, books or any other items that are considered general requirements for the program.
- Costs that are not related specifically to attending post-secondary training.
- Daily living equipment and services (e.g., glasses, hearing aids, watches, physiotherapy, adaptive furniture, etc.).
- Equipment or services purchased before applying for SDAS.
- Equipment or services supported through ENS's Technology Measures.
- Items or services that are available at no cost through the training institution (e.g., Microsoft Office).

# ACCOMMODATED REDUCTIONS

- **Accommodated Reduction (AR)**
  - A reduced course load extends a program, allowing a student more time to finish. An AR prolongs the program with no penalty to the student.
  - AR is for students with verified, permanent disabilities only.
  - Based on eligibility, SAS approves the need for an AR and initiates the process.
  - A student with an AR is considered full-time status regardless of course load.
- **Application Process**
  - Schedule and plan provided by SAS from NSCC or other training institution.

# ACADEMIC COACH

- An Academic Coach is an eligible service under SDAS.
- This service may be helpful if a student requires additional support from a third-party provider that cannot be provided by the SAS or training institution.
- Request for financial assistance under SDAS for an Academic Coach must include:
  - Qualifications of the individual providing service
  - Detailed rationale from an SAS or SDAS Coordinator.
- When to look for an academic coach?
  - For a specific disability, such as learning.
    - e.g., Autism coaches, ADHD coaches, etc.

# NEW TECHNOLOGY

**What can we do for clients who don't know how to use their required assistive technology?**

- Student Accessibility Specialists - Nova Scotia Community College
- Libraries and Learning Commons - Nova Scotia Community College
  - <https://www.nsccl.ca/library/>
- Occupational Therapists
- Neil Squire Society
  - Digital Jumpstart
  - Computer Comfort
  - Technology Assessments
- Internet, YouTube, and free 30-day trials to learn new software and technology.



### TEAM WORK WEBSITE

- SDAS Go-To Guide
- Application forms
- Employment Nova Scotia's SD and SDAS Guideline PDFs
- This SDAS Info Session Presentation
- Link to ENS Skills Development website
- Contact information for TEAM Work and Employment Nova Scotia.



[www.teamworkcooperative.ca/sdas](http://www.teamworkcooperative.ca/sdas)

# QUESTIONS?

**Jarett Burke**

**Skills Development Accessibility Coordinator**

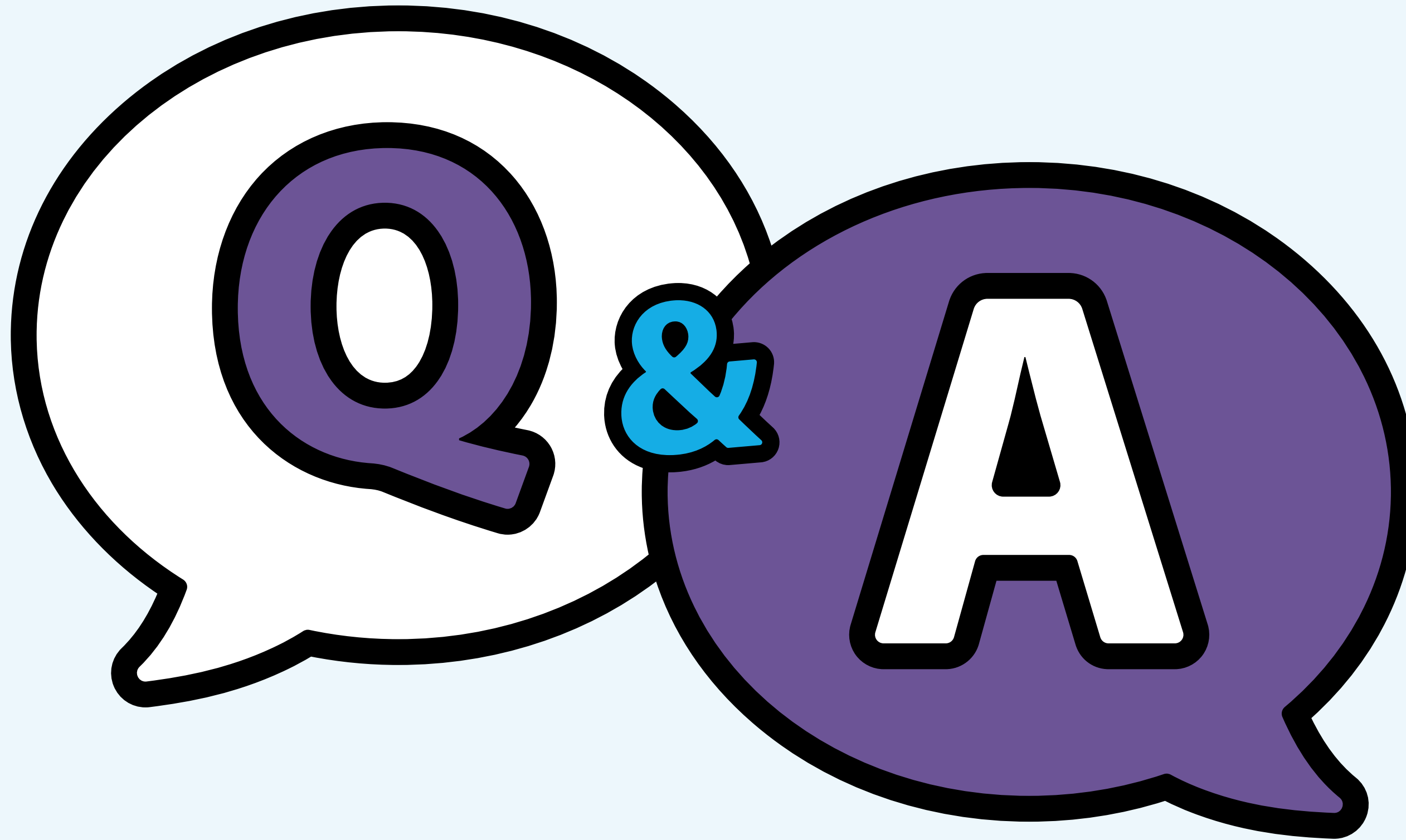
**TEAM Work Cooperative / Nova Scotia Works**

Email: jburke@teamworkbridge.org

Phone: 902-422-8900

[www.teamworkcooperative.ca/sdas](http://www.teamworkcooperative.ca/sdas)

Suite 501, 7051 Bayers Road, Halifax, NS B3L 2C1



**Please feel free to ask any questions!**