



2026-2029

GEO Nova Scotia Strategic Plan



"Strengthening Our Foundation, Expanding Our Impact"



May 2026



Letter from CEO & Board Co-Chairs

Dear Friends of GEO,

We are so pleased to be sharing our new **2026-2029 Strategic Plan: “Strengthening Our Foundation, Expanding Our Impact”** that sets our priorities and direction for the years ahead.

GEO Nova Scotia has seen exponential growth since its inception in 2022. This accelerated momentum speaks to the growing need for digital access and the imperative for GEO to expedite its transition from start-up to a structured and scalable organization with an agile multi-year focus.



This plan incorporates the many voices, insights, and critical perspectives of all who have contributed to the strength of our ecosystem. This included nonprofit partners, participants, government partners, corporate suppliers, GEO staff, and our Board Directors. Our consultant Jane Ouillette, guided us through extensive engagement to ensure expertise, institutional knowledge, and deep understanding of the critical issues GEO was designed to address were at the heart of it.

We knew our strategic trajectory had to be agile enough to adapt to changing external factors without losing momentum while also providing a steady hand for our evolutionary journey. The key was to ensure actions remained aligned with our mission and vision while creating built in mechanisms for flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and challenges.

This plan outlines our mission, vision, and values, and sets thirteen strategic objectives across four key priority areas. Together, these reflect a balanced focus on organizational effectiveness and community impact while furthering our capacity to grow and adapt.

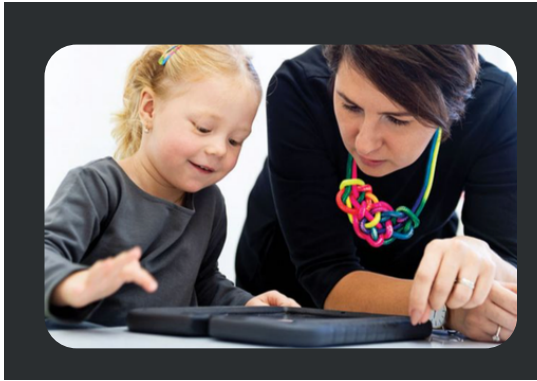
As the GEO Team moves from planning into action, we remain committed to transparency, accountability, and continued collaboration. This strategic direction is not an endpoint, but a shared commitment to ongoing learning, adaptation, and impact. We are grateful to everyone who contributed their time, insight, curiosity and care to this process, and we look forward to working together to bring this plan to life in ways that meaningfully serve Nova Scotian communities.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of the three individuals mentioned in the text below.

Karn Nichols, Kelsey Rioux & Bonnie Ste-Croix
Co-Chairs & CEO

What Guides GEO Nova Scotia



Vision

Everyone thrives with access to the expanding opportunities of the digital world.



Mission

Bridging the digital divide by providing access to the internet, devices, and digital skills to fully participate in the online world.

Core values

Adapting and remaining agile: We are committed to being flexible and creatively adapting and responding to the unique needs of communities we serve.

Working collaboratively: We work collaboratively with government, businesses, non-profits, and individuals to create solutions to shared challenges and celebrate our combined efforts. Strong relationships and mutually beneficial partnerships are the foundation of GEO's success.

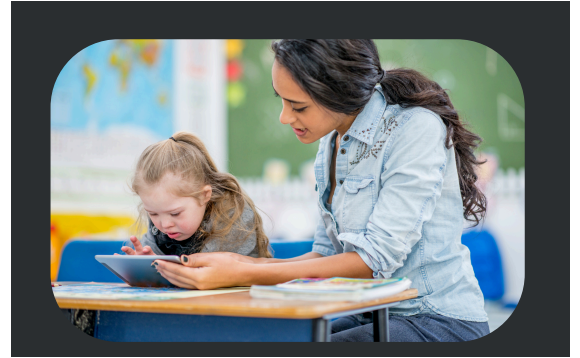
Centring equity and inclusion: We practice what we advocate by fostering a safe and welcoming environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging and respect.

Being compassionate: We show genuine care and concern for another's wellbeing, taking the time to listen actively, problem solve with kindness, and celebrate collectively.

Acting with integrity: We take accountability for our decisions, show transparency in our processes, work diligently to build and maintain trust from our partners.

What Does GEO Do?

GEO works to improve the quality of life for low income Nova Scotians by creating programs, services and partnerships that increase digital equity.



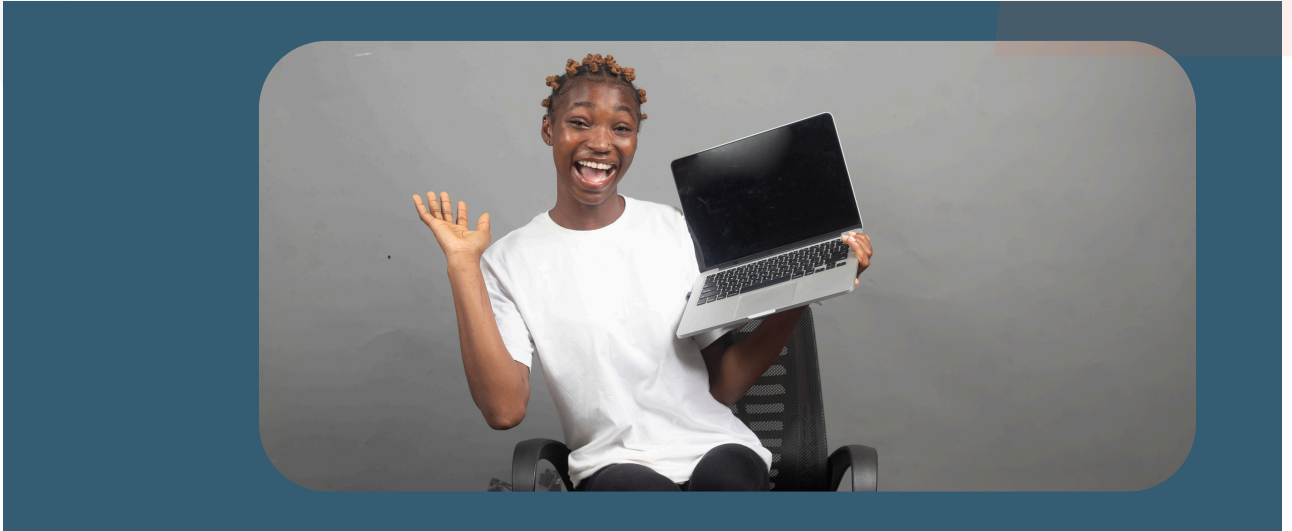
GEO Nova Scotia is a nonprofit organization that provides affordable access to devices, digital skills, home internet and phone data plans. GEO works collaboratively with more than 100 nonprofits, as well as the public service and business sector. Together, we have been removing barriers for people who cannot afford devices or phone/internet connections to ensure they can meet their essential needs and take advantage of online opportunities.

By providing these services, GEO has been able to connect with people across Nova Scotia and hear stories about how our support has improved their wellbeing. The role digital access has in addressing the social determinants of health becomes clearer and clearer with each story. People have described transforming their lives by being able to:

- Apply for and secure housing through online listings
- Complete online training and secure a job
- Communicate with their non-verbal child by using an iPad and an alternate communication program.
- Use **Your HealthNS** and **Maple** Apps to help with their health care without the difficulties associated with finding childcare and reliable transportation.
- Apply for benefits, make appointments, and access essential services.
- Be in contact with family, friends, and community.
- Reach out to get support when in crisis or fleeing gender-based violence.

We showcase these compelling stories to highlight the profound and transformative impact that digital equity can have on individuals, families and communities. They serve as powerful testaments to how access, affordability, and digital capacity can unlock potential, bridge socio-economic divides, foster innovation, and ultimately strengthen community outcomes.

About this Plan



Overview

GEO's strategic plan lays out a path of action to guide the organization through a shift from a start-up to an established organization with a refined purpose and direction. This plan presents our mission, vision, and values. It also establishes thirteen strategic objectives across four key priority areas. To remain agile, we will revisit the plan regularly to ensure we are responsive while also demonstrating accountability toward advancing these objectives.

Development of this plan was led by the strategic planning subcommittee of the Board of Directors and was informed by a rigorous process of engagement and dialogue. We are greatly appreciative of the effort from staff, board members, program participants, and over 50 partners from government and non-profit organizations who shared their perspectives on the current state of GEO and ideas for how we can grow our impact.

Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities outline four key focus areas for the next three years, guiding how GEO allocates resources and capacity to achieve the plan's thirteen objectives.

1. Strengthening internal systems
2. Deepening our reach and impact
3. Establishing structure for fund development and improving reliability in GEO's funding
4. Influencing & leading change

Strategic Priorities

Priority 1

Strengthening Internal Systems

We will improve efficiencies in operations and processes within the organization.

Objectives

- 1.1** Optimize workflows to increase efficiencies and impact.
- 1.2** Define roles, responsibilities, and procedures to increase effectiveness of GEO's programs and Governance.



1.3 Strengthen collaboration and communication between GEO and Referral Partners.

1.4 Implement assessment processes to improve decision-making and impact.



Digital Equity

Digital equity is when everyone has access to the technology and skills needed to fully participate in digital society. As long as some populations are unable to fully benefit from digitalization, digital equity has not been achieved.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 2

Deepening our reach and impact

We will adapt our approaches to be more supportive and culturally responsive, and strategically expand our outreach to specific populations.



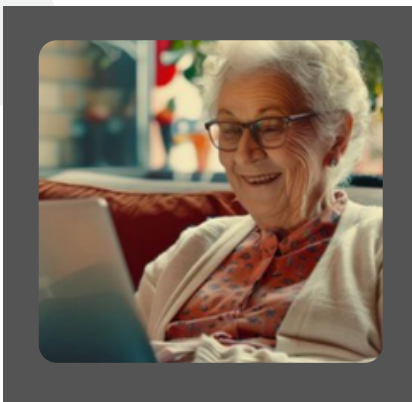
Objectives

2.1 Evolve GEO Connects to increase the long-term impact for participants.

2.2 Assess how effectively GEO's programs and initiatives meet the needs of marginalized populations.

2.3 Build and deepen relationships to increase GEO's reach and address gaps.

2.4 Revitalize and develop GEO's digital skill-building.



Digital Inclusion

Digital Inclusion encompasses activities, policies, and programs designed to help people learn how to use devices, navigate the online world, and gain access to reliable Internet or cellular service. Digital inclusion helps everyone, especially those who are disadvantaged or historically excluded, so they can benefit more equitably from opportunities available online.

Strategic Priorities

Priority 3

Establishing structure for fund development and improving reliability in GEO's funding

We will build strong funding relationships and work toward a structured long-term model for sustainability.

Objectives

- 3.1** Fostering strategic relationships with provincial government partners to improve GEO's capacity to meet the needs of marginalized Nova Scotians.
- 3.2** Deepening engagement with the private sector, philanthropists, and foundations to pursue investment in GEO.
- 3.3** Assessing and growing opportunities for GEO to self-generate revenue



Strategic Priorities

Priority 4

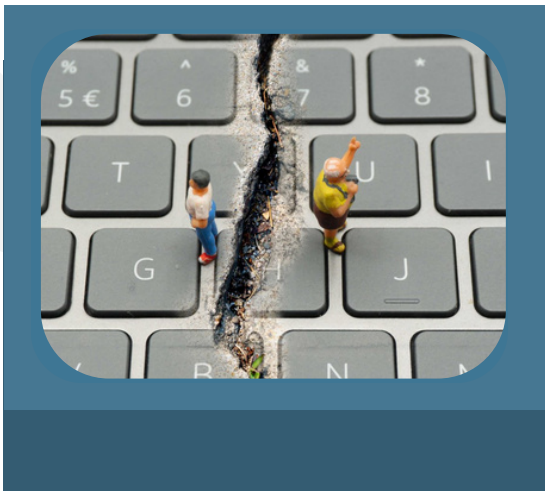
Influencing and Leading Change

We will grow awareness about digital equity and inclusion so GEO will be included in policy decisions and Nova Scotians can understand and recognize the essential nature of digital equity and inclusion.

Objectives

4.1 Increase public and institutional awareness in Nova Scotia about the consequences of the digital divide and the importance of digital inclusion.

4.2 Work to be actively engaged in provincial and national policy discussions to influence decisions that impact digital inclusion.



Digital Divide

The **Digital Divide** is the gap between those who have access to devices, internet, and the opportunities they offer; and those who do not. Statistics Canada reports that experiences related to the digital divide are driven by income, education, language, culture, gender and age.

Looking Ahead

The world is changing quickly and technology has the potential to be a great equalizer. For this to be realized, everyone must be able to access and navigate the digital world.

The Business Sector and most levels of Government have invested in the digitization of services; adopting technologies to provide faster, more intuitive services. However, those who are offline, or have low digital capabilities, cannot access these online services. Service digitization without deliberate attention to digital inclusion, exacerbates existing barriers and perpetuates social and economic inequalities.



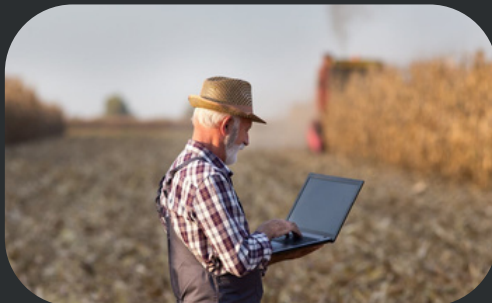
As online platforms become the primary method of accessing services, GEO has a key role to play in policies and programming that ensure those who are the most marginalized can share in opportunities the online world has to offer.



From improved educational attainment, enhanced healthcare access, new economic opportunities, stronger civic participation, and communication with family and friends - digital access isn't just a convenience, it is the bedrock of contemporary life.

GEO is committed to helping Nova Scotia achieve digital equity. This plan sets our compass for the next few years ensuring organizational stability is achieved so GEO can meet the increasing demand for digital access and fulfil our commitment to improving inclusion and quality of life for Nova Scotians.

About GEO's Collaboration Work



GEO works collaboratively with more than 100 nonprofits as well as the public service and business sector. Together, we have been removing barriers for people who cannot afford devices and phone or internet connections to ensure they can meet their essential needs and take advantage of opportunities the online world can offer. We could not do it without them.

Contact Us



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Thank You

Thank you so much to everyone who has invested time, insight, effort, and dedication into working alongside us to serve communities. We look forward to continuing to work together in the upcoming years as we grow and adapt to better meet our shared goals.

