

Celebrating 14 years of Mentorship in Gaelic Nova Scotia



Bun is Bàrr Request for Expressions of Interest for Apprentices



Ceann-latha | Deadline for Applications: Friday, December 1, 2023

“Agus bheir mi fhathast gur robh an céilidh math airson aonachadh nan daoine airson an cumail ann an toileachadh agus gu robh e ‘gan cumail dlùth dha chéile ann an càirdeas agus ‘nam feòil agus ‘nan spioraid.” -- Eòs Nìll Bhig, Sgeul gu Latha

“And I still maintain that the house - visits were good for bringing people together and keeping them happy and they kept them close to each other and in harmony physically and spiritually.” -- Joe Neil MacNeil, Tales Until Dawn.

Geàrr-iomradh | Overview

Bun is Bàrr (*Root and Branch*) is a Mentoring Program managed by the Office of Gaelic Affairs, which provides Gaelic-speakers in Nova Scotia with the opportunity to work with Gaelic mentors and elders as they develop their language and cultural skills. The goal of *Bun is Bàrr* is to help create a new generation of Gaelic tradition bearers: those who are knowledgeable of, and steeped in, Nova Scotia’s Gaelic tradition. *Bun is Bàrr* seeks to achieve three objectives:

- Continued transmission of Gaelic language through culture
- Re-integration of Nova Scotia Gaelic expression, such as song, music, story, tradition, custom, and dance into the social life of Gaels
- Restore collective Gaelic memory and identity

Am Prògram | The Program

Beginning this year, the structure of *Bun is Bàrr* will change, and the program formerly known as *Daltachas* (*Fosterage*) will become *part of Bun is Bàrr*. Previously these were separate programs but now they will function as two different branches in the same program - *Bun is Bàrr*.

A' Chiad Gheug | The First Branch: A' Daltachadh Thàilleabhaich | Fostering Apprentices (Equivalent to former *Daltachas* program)

In the first branch of the program, apprentices' Gaelic-speaking and comprehension is increased by focusing on conversation, idiomatic speech, grammatical structures, and cultural expression through the Gaelic language. As the program is delivered through the medium of Gaelic, apprentices should be comfortable in Gaelic conversation before entering. This doesn't mean apprentices need to be completely “fluent” (and we realize this

term can be somewhat subjective) but it does mean they should have reached at least an intermediate stage in their language acquisition. Time spent in *A' Daltachadh Thàilleabhaich* will assist in expanding apprentices' language ability and cultural fluency, preparing them for the next step in *Bun is Bàrr*, as well other Office supported programming such as *Stòras a' Bhaile*.

A' Daltachadh Thàilleabhaich Structure

Sessions will be held online via Zoom and group size will be determined by the number of program applicants. Sessions will begin early winter and consist of twice weekly sessions (approximately two hours each) lasting about four months.

Sessions will:

- Focus on content related to Gaelic Nova Scotia Seanchas including short stories, anecdotes, songs, local histories, proverbs and Seanchaidhean (Gaelic tradition bearers)
- Facilitate apprentices' comprehension and ability to share Gaelic learning, including conversational language, short stories, song choruses in the group and with others in their families and communities
- Include topics of the day, i.e., weather patterns, contemporary events, persons of note, daily activities, routines, and personal interests
- Include games and creative, interactive activities to assist with language learning
- Have a focus on how Gaelic language is grammatically structured

An Dàrna Geug | The Second Branch: A' Togail Sheanchaidhean | Creating Tradition Bearers

(Equivalent to former *Bun is Bàrr* program)

In the second branch of the program, apprentices will be advanced learners who would like greater practice, guidance, and exposure to idiomatic speech, thereby increasing their confidence, fluency, and cultural skills. Apprentices will work with Gaelic mentors who are exceptional teachers of Nova Scotia's Gaelic language and tradition. Again, while recognizing these are subjective concepts, there is an expectation for this stage that apprentices are very comfortable in Gaelic conversation and can converse at length with mentors staying entirely in Gaelic.

A' Togail Sheanchaidhean Structure

The mentor/apprentice teams will work together in person and on Zoom and will visit, if possible, an elder(s) who grew up in a Gaelic-speaking home and community. This intensive and specialized mentorship will be done in teams of 1-3 apprentices. If visiting an elder is not possible, mentors are encouraged to work with material available in online archives such as *Sruth nan Gàidheal*, *Cainnt mo Mhàthar* or *An Drochaid Eadarainn*. Both mentors and apprentices will be required to check in regularly with Gaelic Affairs on their progress.

Additionally, please note:

- Apprentices should spend 8 hours per week on their Gaelic: a minimum of 5 hours per week with their mentors and a minimum of 3 hours on self-directed learning
- Apprentices must attend a two-hour orientation team planning session with their Mentor to map out dates, activities, and a learning path for the 10 weeks of the program
- Apprentices are required to have reliable transportation
- Apprentices, with their mentor, will visit an elder in his/her home
- Apprentices must track their time and progress in the program
- Upon selection, Apprentices will be required to obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check

Although the plan is for future apprentices to take each branch of the program for one year in succession, we recognize there are many Daltachan in the community (i.e., past apprentices in the *Daltachas* program). These past apprentices are very welcome to apply for either branch of the program and would be most welcome in *A' Daltachadh Thàilleabhaich*. While we encourage applications from any Nova Scotia resident, including past apprentices, we will prioritize new apprentices, if space is limited, for the first branch of the program.

Cinn-uidhe | Criteria for Apprentices (of both Branches)

- Apprentices must be Nova Scotia residents;
- Apprentices must be 18 years of age;
- Apprentices must demonstrate previous commitment to Gaelic language and cultural acquisition;
- Apprentices must have the time to devote to language and cultural learning;
- Apprentices must demonstrate a high level of independence and motivation concerning their language learning;
- Apprentices must demonstrate a strong interest in Nova Scotia's Gaelic oral tradition and cultural expression;
- Preference will be given to candidates who will be active speakers of Gaelic in their family and community or those who plan to teach Gaelic in Nova Scotia;
- Apprentices should have a recording device for the purposes of taping Gaelic sessions for playback at home and Internet access; and
- Apprentices who have already participated in previous *Daltachas* or *Bun is Bàrr* programming may apply to be part of this program but priority may be given to first-time apprentices depending on application numbers for the first branch.

Iarratas | Application Process

Interested Apprentices must send a resumé and cover letter to Kelly.Schlay@novascotia.ca.

Please indicate which of the two branches you are applying to and in the case of *A' Togail Sheanchaidhean* if you have a mentor in mind already.

Your letter should also clearly answer the following:

Explain how you meet the **Criteria for Apprentices** mentioned above. Please address in detail each of the points specifically.

Eile | Other Program Details

Starting this winter, *Bun is Bàrr (A' Togail Sheanchaidhean* Branch) will run for 10 weeks. If teams are working very well together, depending upon budget, we will consider extending the program. Apprentices will be compensated for travel-related costs specific to this program.

Application Deadline (both Branches): December 1, 2023

Please contact Iain MacLeod if you have any questions at (902) 698-2837 or Iain.MacLeod3@novascotia.ca.