

BEVERAGE ALCOHOL SUPPLIER EDUCATION STANDARDS

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Learning & Development team offers suppliers three annual opportunities to apply for opportunities to share education with our frontline team members. The goal of this program is to provide accessible and equitable education across all categories and regions of our business. Through the lens of our internal education platform, we maintain a growing repository of educational resources that team members can access anytime. This program ensures the consistent delivery of informative content for every promotional period, expanding our frontline team's knowledge base and skills over time.

This program is limited to the following spots for each Expression of Interest (EOI), to ensure high-quality content and a focused spotlight for each opportunity during its launch period. Suppliers can apply for multiple education opportunities within a period. Please see the specific educational format criteria's below for compatible opportunities.

Supplier Education Opportunity	Description
Product Knowledge Videos	Microlearning opportunities as stand-alone education, or a supporting resource for other opportunities.
In-Store Sampling Opportunities	Supplier-supported in-store product sampling, team and/or shopper tastings.
Blog Posts/Digital Resource	Open format educational format, either as a stand-alone opportunity, or a supporting resource for other opportunities.
Product Information Sheets	Quick-reference sheets for team members to learn about individual products.
RPS Virtual Masterclass	Specialized topics with high-value education for Retail Product Specialists Team.
RPS In-Person Workshop	Specialized topics with high-value education for Retail Product Specialists Team, accompanied by interactive elements.
Prized Contest	NSLC Store Team opportunities focused on team development and engagement, with educational objectives.

GENERAL APPLICATION PROCESS

Application processes differ between educational formats. This schedule gives a general overview for the upcoming period.

STEP	ACTION	DUE DATE
EOI Application Opens	NSLC opens EOI opportunity to suppliers to apply for next period cycle. At this stage, the supplier will be submitting a proposal for what education they would like to deliver to our team members, but the actual assets are not due until after acceptance to the program.	May 12, 2025
Review our general education standards and associated policies.	Suppliers are expected to review this document and linked policies in full to meet all expectations of this program.	May 12 – June 1, 2025
EOI Application Closes	Deadline for NSLC suppliers to apply for the upcoming series of periods for educational opportunities.	June 1, 2025
NSLC Decision on Application	NSLC to share decision on application to individual suppliers. NSLC will either accept application for the proposed education period and education theme, or recommend another slot based on availability.	June 9, 2025

Deadline to Submit Educational Assets	Approved education assets must have final versions submitted by assigned date.	P4 – June 30, 2025 P4 – August 5, 2025 P6 – September 15, 2025
Education Launch (P7-P9)	For the suppliers approved period, supplier's educational assets will be launched to NSLC retail teams on the following associated dates.	P4 – July 14, 2025 P5 – August 18, 2025 P6 – September 29, 2025

GENERAL EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

For the educational content to be considered for any of the following educational opportunities, it must meet the following criteria:

- **Timeline:** The deadline for submission and other associated deadlines for the application process ahead of the proposed date of launch for the educational content. Please see current [EOI Application Form](#) for upcoming opportunities and deadlines to apply.
- **Content:** Educational topics that will provide value to the overall category. Sensory experience, production process, history of the producer/category, selling points, regionality, and other similar topics are all acceptable content for product education opportunities.
- **Featured Products:** All featured products must be current or upcoming listings with the NSLC.
- **Responsible Retailing:** Educational content must align with our [FY26 Program Guide](#). Including our Social Responsibility guidelines on page 22.
 - Content must be positioned around the taste and appreciation of the product rather than promoting consumption – This can include sharing information regarding the flavours, process of making, savouring, tasting notes, pairings and how to consume (i.e. cocktails if spirit-focused).
 - Any outdoor footage or photography needs to show that the occasion is occurring on private property (i.e. backyard or restaurant patio vs. beach or public park) and never near water.
 - Any picture or video of beverage alcohol must be shown with a 'standard drink' portion:
 - 341ml (12 oz) bottle of 5% beer, cider or cooler
 - 142ml (5 oz) glass of 12% wine
 - 43ml (1.5 oz) serving of 40% distilled alcohol (rye, gin, rum, etc.)

ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST: NSLC Learning uses [WCAG Standards](#) for all its educational opportunities. The following summarizes the basic requirements for the different learning formats:

Virtual Live Sessions:

- ☐ Ensure all materials, such as slides and documents, are accessible. This includes using plain and simple language, providing alternative text for images, and consistent heading structure.
- ☐ Ensure content supports features like screen readers, keyboard navigation, and captioning.

- ☐ Encourage inclusive participation by allowing multiple ways for participants to engage, such as speaking, typing, or using assistive technologies. NSLC host will provide instructions for accessible features on Teams for NSLC team members.

Digital Content and Written Resources:

- ☐ Use of plain and simple language that is clear, simple and inclusive to all viewers.
- ☐ Use of accessible format, proper heading structures and clear lists, and one instruction to a step.
- ☐ For visual content, ensure accessible colour contrasting, consistency throughout the document, and provide alt text for images and applicable descriptive links.
- ☐ For interactive elements, use accessible forms and controls and keyboard navigation.
- ☐ Use sans-serif fonts and a minimum of 12 pt font. Use at least 1.5x line spacing.
- ☐ Must be submitted in an accessible format that allows text selection (avoid scanned images of text).

Videos:

- ☐ High-quality audio and video with clear and concise scripting (voice-overs), using plain and simple language that is inclusive to all viewers.
- ☐ Accessibility features should include image captions and audio subtitles with clear and concise scripting.
- ☐ All visuals and text overlays in the video should be consistent between scenes, if applicable.

Interactive Content:

- ☐ Use clear, plain, simple language.
- ☐ Use text alternatives for non-text content.
- ☐ Ensure all content is consistent in navigation and layout.
- ☐ For any instructional content, limit one instruction per step.
- ☐ Ensure the opportunity is inclusive and accessible to anyone.
- ☐ For in-person activities, provide alternative pathways to success/completion.

FORMAT OPTIONS + CRITERIA

Product Knowledge Videos

These microlearning opportunities will be hosted on our internal education site, as part of a larger repository of content for on-demand education for NSLC Team Members. These videos can be accompanied by [product information sheets](#), [in-store sampling](#), and other related resources.

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can identify products featured in the video • NSLC team members can understand the unique attributes of the production process of the featured products
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can explain to shoppers the difference between featured products or comparable products on shelf • NSLC team members can recommend featured products to shoppers to meet their needs
Delivery Format	Mp4 file (via. E-mail or downloadable link).
Length	Max 20 minutes. (Please note multiple video submissions must not exceed this length total, i.e 2 videos x 10 min each is acceptable).
File Name	“Brand Name_Video Title”. For example: “NS Beer Co_Beer Cocktails for the Summer”
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content must meet all General Education Standards • Content must teach team members about a topic related to the product category and brand. • Content must be related to the period’s education theme (see list below) • Must adhere to accessibility standards: Videos
Available Combined Learning Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product Information Sheets • In-Store Product Tasting • Blog Post / Digital Resource • Prized Contest

Period Category Education Themes

	Wine	Spirits	Beer / Cider / RTD
P4	Sustainable & Organic Wines	Rum	Fall Transitions
P5	Harvest & Terroir	Gin	Traditional Lagers
P6	Food Pairing Fundamentals	Luxury Spirits	Canned Cocktails

Period 4 (Late Summer – August/September)

Wine: Sustainable & Organic Wines – Certifications, farming practices, and market trends

Spirits: Rum – Diverse rum styles and how to use them in cocktails; National Rum Day (Aug 16)

Beer/Cider/RTD: Fall Transitions – Barrel-aged stouts, amber ales, and warming RTD cocktails; IPA Day (Aug 1); International Beer Day (first Friday in August)

Period 5 (Fall – September/October)

Wine: Harvest & Terroir – Exploring vintage variation, vineyard practices, and terroir influence

Spirits: Gin – Classic and modern gin styles and regions

Beer/Cider/RTD: Traditional Lagers – The history and styles of German and European lagers, and Oktoberfest; National Beer Lovers Day (Sep 7)

Period 6 (Holiday Prep – October/November)

Wine: Food & Wine Pairing Fundamentals – Hosting, classic pairings, and crowd-pleasers

Spirits: Luxury Spirits – Cognac, high-end whisky, and sipping rums; National Vodka Day (Oct 4) **Beer/Cider/RTD: Canned Cocktails** – Introduction to craft styles like saisons, sours, and pilsners

RPS Virtual Masterclass

The RPS Masterclass is a coveted opportunity to engage our RPS team on a live virtual call, 3 times per year. This opportunity is designated for suppliers with the resources to develop and deliver an advanced-level presentation on product knowledge. This opportunity will be scheduled live with our RPS, based on a date/time that best fits the operational needs of the RPS team; this will be scheduled after the supplier is accepted to this program.

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can identify products featured in the presentation • NSLC team members can understand the unique attributes of the production process of the featured products • NSLC team members can explain to shoppers the difference between featured products or comparable products on shelf • NSLC team members can understand how to pair the featured product with food and experience and appropriately recommend products to shoppers to meet their needs • NSLC team members can understand the overall category in terms of its production process, main regions, taste profile, quality distinctions, labelling terms and any other unique identifiers.
Delivery Format	Live on Microsoft Teams with our entire RPS Team. Call will be moderated by NSLC Learning & Development team. Presentation deck must be submitted for review in advance in Powerpoint (or equivalent slide deck presentation software in PDF) via. e-mail or downloadable link.
Length	30 mins – 1 hour
File Name	“Brand Name_Presentation Title”. For example: “NS Beer Co_Beer Yeast Deep Dive”
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenters must be subject matter experts in content • Content must go beyond foundational category knowledge • Content must comprise mainly of general category education • Content must meet all General Education Standards • Must adhere to NSLC accessibility standards: Virtual Live Session
Available Combined Learning Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Store Product Tasting • Product Information Sheets • Product Knowledge Video • Blog Post / Digital Resource

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prized Contest
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RPS In-Person Workshop

The RPS In-Person Workshop is a coveted opportunity for suppliers to connect with our Retail Product Specialist team in-person. This opportunity is designated for suppliers with the resources to develop and deliver an advanced-level presentation on product knowledge and a guided tasting experience. This opportunity will be scheduled by the NSLC, based on a date/time that best fits the operational needs of the RPS team; this will be scheduled after the supplier is accepted to this program.

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can identify products featured in the presentation • NSLC team members can understand the unique attributes of the production process of the featured products • NSLC team members can explain to shoppers the difference between featured products or comparable products on shelf • NSLC team members can understand how to pair the featured product with food and experience and appropriately recommend products to shoppers to meet their needs • NSLC team members can understand the overall category in terms of its production process, main regions, taste profile, quality distinctions, labelling terms and any other unique identifiers. • NSLC team members can understand the expected and desired taste profile of the featured products and can replicate a product knowledge and tasting session with their store teams.
Delivery Format	This opportunity must include a live product tasting opportunity. Presentation deck must be submitted for review in advance in Powerpoint (or equivalent slide deck presentation software in PDF) via. e-mail or downloadable link.
Length	30 mins – 1 hour
File Name	“Brand Name_Presentation Title”. For example: “NS Beer Co_Beer Yeast Deep Dive”
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenters must be subject matter experts in content • Presenters must be on-site for RPS in-person event, virtual presentations will not be accepted • Content must go beyond foundational category knowledge • Content must compromise mainly of general category education • Content must meet all General Education Standards • Product Tastings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NSLC will determine sample sizing ○ Suppliers may request to bring in non-NSLC listed products for the purpose of educational representation of their topic • Must adhere to NSLC accessibility standards: Virtual Live Session

Available Combined Learning Opportunities	REQUIRED: In-Store Product Tasting & Product Information Sheets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product Knowledge Video • Blog Post / Digital Resource • Prized Contest
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Product Information Sheets

Product information sheets, aka ‘sell sheets’, are standardized to get the best results for Suppliers and our Retail teams. Sell sheets will be shared with our team members in an updated Product Information Library on our internal site.

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can visually identify featured products, price, and SKU • NSLC team members can understand the unique attributes of the featured products
Timeline	Content due 2 weeks prior to period start: P7 – Oct 27, 2025 P8 – Dec 15, 2025 P9 – Feb 2, 2026
Delivery Format	Accessible PDF. File naming formats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For single products: “Brand Name_Product Name_Article Number”. E.g “NSBeerCo_EastCoastLager_0000001”. • For multiple products: “Brand Name_Product Category_Article Numbers”. E.g “NSBeerCo_Beer_0000001_0000002_0000003”.
Length	1-2 pages (8.5’ x 11’ max size)
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand name & logo • Pack size(s) • Retail price • Date created • Can feature multiple products on a single document but cannot include products not listed by the NSLC • Minimum 12-pt, simple and clear accessible font • Content must meet all General Education Standards • Must adhere to NSLC accessibility standards: Digital Content and Written Resources

In-Store Sampling Opportunity

The NSLC acknowledges the learning benefit of providing product tasting opportunities to our team members. These opportunities must be open to all NSLC stores. These opportunities can be limited to team-only offerings or can be expanded to included shopper-sampling offers, hosted by our store teams at their discretion.

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can understand the unique attributes of the production process of the featured products
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can explain to shoppers the difference between featured products or comparable products on shelf • NSLC team members can recommend featured product(s) to shoppers to meet their needs • NSLC team members can identify overall sensory profile of the product(s)
Delivery Format	This learning opportunity requires a combined submission for Product Information Sheets .
Length	Offers are active for the duration of the period.
File Name	N/A
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content must meet all General Education Standards • Guided tastings (must follow our Allowable Sample Size guide on page 23 in the Alcohol and Cannabis Programs Guide FY26). • A maximum of 4 products may be listed as sampling options • Sampling opportunity must be available to all NSLC Teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Products listed for sampling options do not have to be listed in every store but it is recommend to list larger-assortment products • All product sampling options must include a submission for a product information sheet.
Available Combined Learning Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REQUIRED: Product Information Sheets • Product Knowledge Video • Blog Post / Digital Resource • Prized Contest

Blog Post / Digital Resource

Blog posts can range from a news article about your company, worksheet, an FAQ list, a summary of a related educational opportunity, or any text-based opportunity you want to share with NSLC Teams as a resource. This is a great addition to a Video, In-Store Tasting, or RPS Masterclass to summarize it's content and strengthen its message with users.

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can identity the featured brand/products • NSLC team members can repeat and/or paraphrase the overall message of the content to shoppers • NSLC team members can compare the featured brand/products to others within the category based on unique attributes listed in the content
Delivery Format	<p>Editable PDF, Word Doc, and / or website link. Images should be shared in JPEG or PNG, with descriptive captions for accessibility.</p> <p>Text-based sources will be converted to our internal education site's webpage platform, except for external links, which will be shared in a direct link. *Provide instructions if specific fonts / colours are required for delivery if applicable.</p>

Length	250 – 500 words and/or 1 web link
File Name	File naming format: “Brand Name_Doc Title”. E.g “NSBeerCo_Beer FAQ”
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content must meet all General Education Standards • Must adhere to NSLC accessibility standards: Digital Content and Written Resources
Available Combined Learning Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product Information Sheets • In-Store Product Tasting • Prized Contest • Product Knowledge Video • RPS Masterclass

Prized Contest

An internal contest for NSLC team members must be for the primary purpose of incentivizing an educational opportunity; thus this must be combined with one of the learning opportunity: [Product Knowledge Video](#), [In-Store Product Tasting](#), or [Blog Post](#).

Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSLC team members can identify the featured brand/products • NSLC team members are encouraged to collaborate with team members • NSLC team members are recall key takeaways from educational content (video, tasting, or blog post) to be successful in this opportunity • NSLC team members are encouraged to apply their key takeaways to shopper experience
Delivery Format	Submit secondary application after approval to this opportunity HERE . Prize distribution is the responsibility of the supplier, unless otherwise determined with NSLC.
Length	1 page overview of instructions, accessible pdf or Word doc format.
File Name	File naming format: “Brand Name_Doc Title”. E.g “NSBeerCo_Beer FAQ”
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content must meet all General Education Standards • Must adhere to NSLC accessibility standards: Interactive Content • Prizing: all prizes are subject to approval by NSLC Learning, prizes must be less than \$50 in value per individual prize, with a maximum of \$200 per store. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational tools • Swag (no added value items) • Appliances • Experience • Food • Gift card (province-wide availability) • Non-Permitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added value items • Clothing • Alcohol or cannabis products

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prizes and contests must be accessible to all NSLC team members equitably. Suppliers must ensure that participation is open to everyone, regardless of role or location, and that there are no barriers to entry. • The selection of prize winners must be conducted using a fair, transparent, and unbiased process. Suppliers are encouraged to use objective criteria or random selection to ensure impartiality. • Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in penalties or the suspension of supplier privileges when interacting with NSLC team members in future educational initiatives. • Contest types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store-Prized: Store teams must work collectively to qualify for prizing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be accessible to all stores and team members • Must be equitable opportunity to qualify, regardless of store size or assortment • Must foster team engagement and collaboration • Individual-Prized: Store team members must work individually to qualify for prizing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be open to all NSLC team members • Must be available on demand • At least one prize draw for every region (4) • Prize Delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered to store: company representatives can deliver prizes to store within 2 weeks of the contest closing. • NSLC delivery: at the request of the supplier, NSLC can send prizes to stores directly if needed. Prizes must be delivered to NSLC Support Centre before the contest has closed.
Available Combined Learning Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REQUIRED: Product Knowledge Video, In-Store Product Tasting, or Blog Post / Digital Resource • Product Information Sheets

DELIVERY METHOD

If accepted, content will be featured on our internal education sit which is accessible for all team members by browser and mobile.. All content will be featured on the homepage of this site for the entire duration of the accepted period and directly communicated to our Retail Product Specialist team a week prior to the start of the period. It will also be available to view indefinitely in our education library. Library content will be sorted by category (wine, beer/cider/rtd, and spirits) and chronologically within those groups.

SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

All final selections will be at the discretion of the NSLC Category and Learning teams.

Submission Considerations
Relevance to period theme or in-store promotions

Quality of content
Education value to NSLC Team Members
Submission

RESULTS

All education will live on its own page on our internal NSLC intranet. This approach enables us to measure overall viewership and engagement, including likes, comments, views, and average time spent. Results of these educational opportunities can be shared upon request after the end of the period in which the education is featured. Please allow for 5 business days for the Learning team to respond to requests.

KEY CONTACTS

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