Innovative Approaches to Workforce Innovation and Inclusion: Work-to-date & First-Year Pilots

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Agenda

> DI work on newcomers & the labour market
> Challenges facing newcomers looking for work in Canada
> Challenges in delivering employment-related services
> Workforce Innovation and Inclusion Project (WIIP)
> WIIP preliminary research and launch of pilot projects
> Goals & next steps of WIIP
Newcomers, Work, Barriers
Well-documented Barriers

Many immigrants face unemployment or are trapped in low-wage, precarious survival jobs that often do not utilize their full skillset and pay below their skill level.

- Unrecognized expertise
- Devaluation of foreign credentials
- Lack of access to networks
- Language and communication barriers
- Employer Bias and discrimination
- Lack of “Canadian experience”
Devaluation of Foreign Credentials

Many Canadians face learning recognition challenges

844,000 Canadians face challenges having their education and learning recognized (up from 540,000 in 2001)

524,000 international credential holders (92% are immigrants)

200,000 out-of-province credential holders

120,000 individuals with experiential (hands-on) learning not recognized in a credential
Economic effects of Unrecognized Experience

Unrecognized education and skills in Canada cost billions of dollars in lost earnings

In 2015
$13.4 billion to $17 billion in lost earnings

Unemployed
$8.4 billion to $8.7 billion in lost earnings

Under employed
$5.0 billion to $8.3 billion in lost earnings

In 2001
$4.1 billion to $5.9 billion in lost earnings
All of these issues operate along racialized and gender-specific lines

- For e.g. Immigrant women are particularly at risk of facing social barriers to employment due to gender roles that are related to the household, including childminding and lack of/low spousal support (Premji & Shakya, 2017)
- Immigrant women in Canada receive lower wages and less job security than immigrant men & have fewer opportunities to regain their professional status than men (Shields et al. 2010)
Immigrant women face significant barriers in finding full time work.

Newcomer women (<5 years in Canada) are 3 times more likely to be employed in involuntarily part-time work than their Canadian-born counterparts.
Delivering employment-related services

Service provider challenges:

- Funding restrictions limit access to services or curtail services
  - E.g. international students, temporary workers, asylum seekers without legal status in Canada, and new citizens do not qualify for the same IRCC services as permanent residents
- Fragmentation & silos in the ecosystem make knowledge transfer difficult
- Unequal geographic service distribution, both between and within provinces
- Comparison of settlement services is limited
- Awareness and access to pre-arrival services is limited, especially in the area of employment-related information
- Lack of consistent & comprehensive evaluation of what works & lack of strategy for innovative programs to be scaled in such a way as to improve sector-wide performance
## Perceptions of Barriers

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<tr>
<th>Barrier Identified</th>
<th>Newcomer Perspectives</th>
<th>Employer Perspective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language and communication skills</td>
<td>27% reported as a barrier</td>
<td>95% reported as a barrier</td>
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<td>Educational qualifications</td>
<td>43% reported as a barrier (many were highly educated and likely interpreted this as over-qualification or credential recognition)</td>
<td>89% reported as a barrier</td>
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<td>Identifying employment opportunities and availability of candidates</td>
<td>72% reported challenges finding employment opportunities</td>
<td>47% had no difficulty finding suitable candidates</td>
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Workforce Innovation and Inclusion Project (WIIP)

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada’s (IRCC) Settlement program
Service Delivery Improvements (SDI) funding stream
Three-year project: 2018 to 2021
$1.8 million
WIIP Goals: Research & Innovation

• Identify proven methods for addressing economic and social challenges for newcomers
• Help determine areas for program improvements for underserved newcomer groups
• Broaden the talent pool by scaling effective skill-development programs
• Enhance partnerships between employers and the immigrant-serving sector
• Develop new models, partnerships, tools and programs that have high potential impact
• Increase employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for newcomers
WIIP Activities

- Background research/ evidence review
- Cross-sectoral partnership development
- Identification of key players, programs, and services
- Needs assessment with key informants
- Assessment of innovative models and practices
- Tool development

- Current state mapping
- Identifying gaps & priorities
- Testing of innovative models & practices (pilots)
- Evaluation guide
- Searchable database
- Knowledge dissemination
WIIP Pilot Projects
Regions, Hubs & Partners

Nova Scotia
Ontario
British Columbia

ACCES Employment
Association of Canadian Studies
Bucknell University
Halifax Local Immigration Partnership (Hub)
Halifax Partnership
Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) (Hub)
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)
Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC)
Scadding Court Community Centre (SCCC)
SUCCESS BC
PowerHack

• Managers observe and assess the technical and soft skills of immigrant participants, who work in teams to solve ‘real world’ problems identified by employers.

• PowerHack gives an opportunity for newcomers to showcase their skills and experience

• Aims to assist immigrants to find equitable employment in their field
PowerHack

July 2019 (Beta)

October 2019

November 2019

February 2020

March 2020 assessment

Join us for our next PowerHack event on October 17 - 18! Eager to showcase your programming and project management skills while collaborating with other tech pro's? #PowerHack #Careers #Vancouver
Halifax Pilot

• Start up activities & planning
• Multiple-local partners
• Workshops and Hackathon in Halifax: January to February 2020
• Pilot planned to build on & extend existing entrepreneurship supports for newcomers
Next Steps

• Evaluation of pilot projects/ guide for evaluation
• Current state map
• Prepare for primary research – needs assessment
• Further testing and scaling
• Database and WIIP portal
Thank you!

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