

# Meeting Labour Market Needs: Preparing Newcomers and Engaging Employers in Specific Sectors

Pathways to Possibilities Conference 2022

Chair: Christine Alvarez  
Business & Workforce Integration Manager  
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)

**Our Vision**

A community where all can belong and grow.

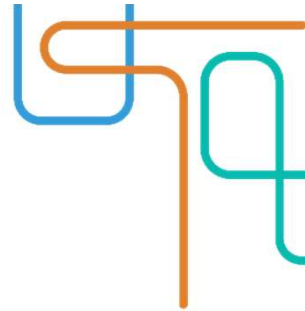
**Our Mission**

To help immigrants build a future in  
Nova Scotia.



**Mi'kma'ki - Land of the Mi'kmaq**

We acknowledge we are on unceded, traditional Mi'kmaq territory, and we are grateful for the Peace and Friendship treaties. At ISANS, as we work to settle newcomers to Nova Scotia, we honour and respect the Indigenous people of this land.

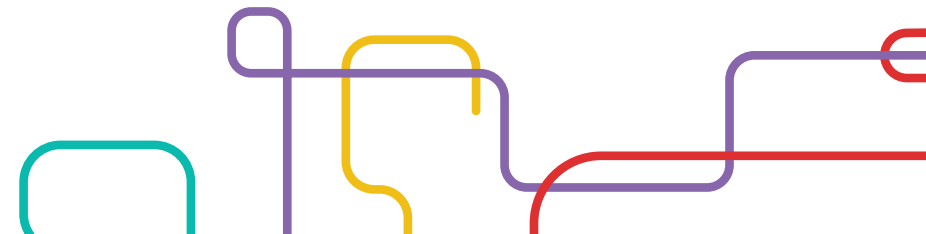


We acknowledge  
the land on  
which we work  
and live



## During our time with you, we will:

- Share information about ISANS
- Talk about how ISANS' wrap-around services are helping new immigrants launch their careers in Nova Scotia
- Talk about how ISANS supports employers to meet their labour needs
- Highlight success stories and employer best practices





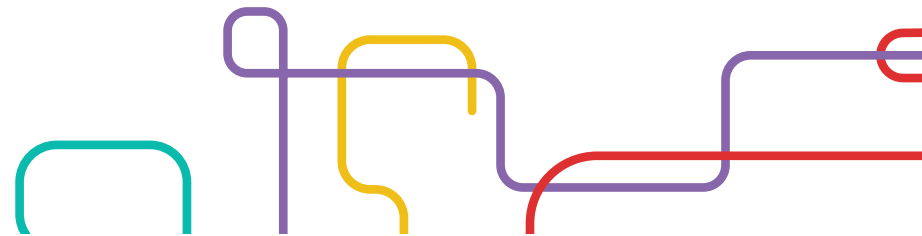
## ISANS

### **Mission**

Helping immigrants build a future in  
Nova Scotia

### **Vision**

A community where all can belong  
and grow



2021  
2022

**11,484** Immigrants received  
ISANS services

### LANGUAGE SERVICES

**3,700+**

Language learners in over 100  
active classes

**20**

Specialized language programs  
offered

**900+**

Immigrants were supported  
through language advising

### EMPLOYMENT & BRIDGING SERVICES

**2,938**

Employment counselling services were provided  
to 1,777 immigrant clients

**807**

Immigrant clients secured employment this year.  
73% of which became employed in their field or  
related one

**355**

Refugees received employment services. 102 of  
whom secured employment

### EMPLOYER SUPPORT SERVICES

**583**

New employers connected with our  
employer support services

**1,605**

Nova Scotian employers overall were  
engaged in employer supports

**13**

Online Recruitment and Information  
sessions delivered with participation of  
150+ job ready candidates

# Local impact, global connections

258

Full-time staff

70

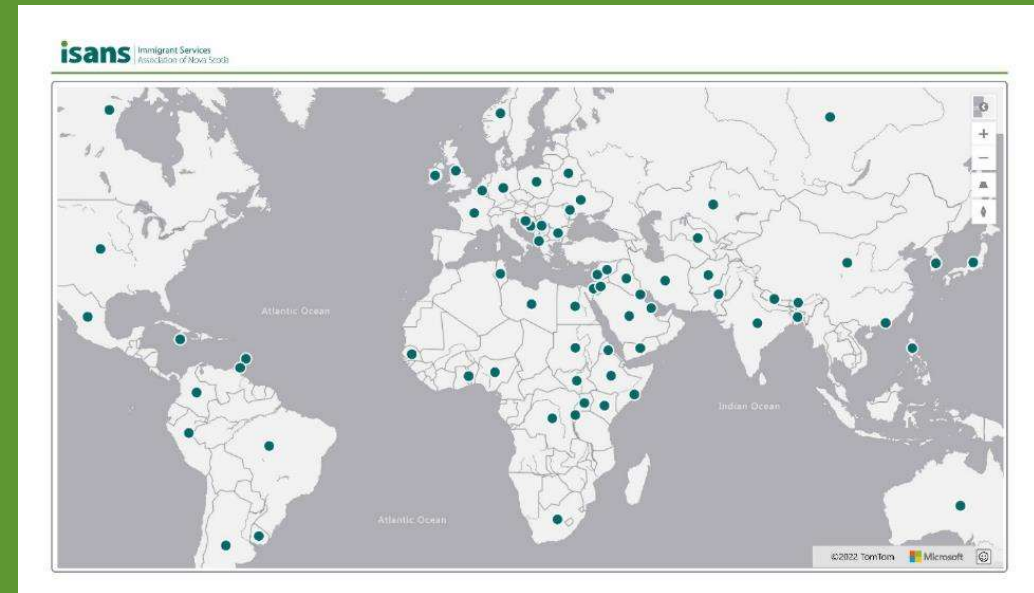
countries  
represented

175

casual/on-contract  
staff

57

languages spoken



# Sector-Specific Communications Courses: Concept, Creation, Implementation

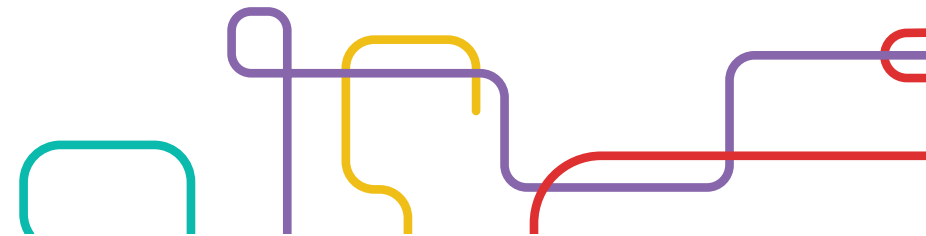
David Neilsen  
Language Services Supervisor  
ISANS





## Course Creation Stages

1. Identify Need/Gap
2. Course Development
3. Course Implementation





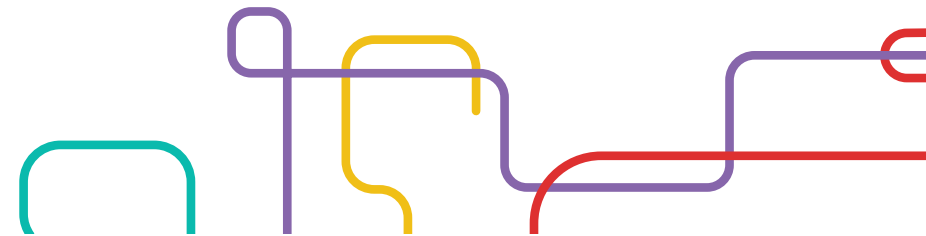


## Identify Gap/Need

**Recommended Practice:**  
ongoing, healthy, relationships  
with external stakeholders in  
various sectors

### **Consult:**

- External stakeholders





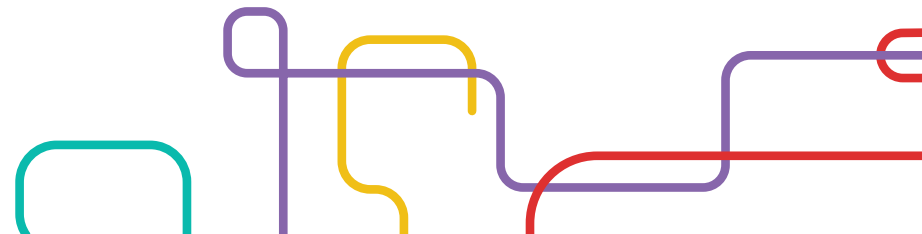
## Course Development: *Approach*

Recommended Practice:

Teach language in the context of real-world tasks

Consult:

- Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs)
- Skills for Success
- Subject Matter Expert (SME) Input



## Course Development: *Skills for Success*

Recommended Practice:  
Reference Skills for Success

Our process includes:

- Locate the Skills for Success Profile
- Consider language and non-language skills
- Group related skills into lessons and units
- Identify which can be realistically taught and which require coping strategies

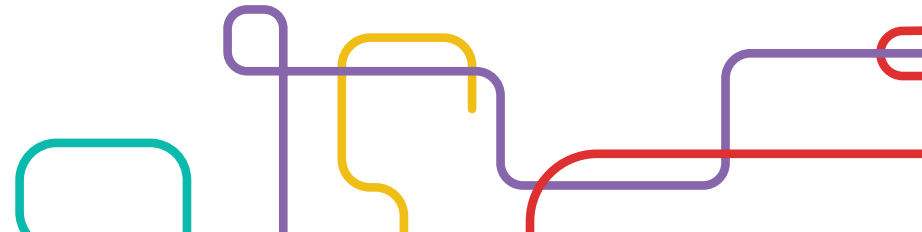




## Course Development: *Subject Matter Expert (SME) Input*

Our process includes:

- Request input
  - At the beginning: guide and select content
  - Throughout: ensure the curriculum is valid, relevant, and accurate
- Ask targeted questions, e.g. *Knowing what you know about the sector:*
  - *Is anything included that should be omitted, or omitted that should be included?*
  - *Are all the terms and contexts reflective of the sector?*
  - *Does anything require rewording?*
  - *Are there any other changes you suggest?*

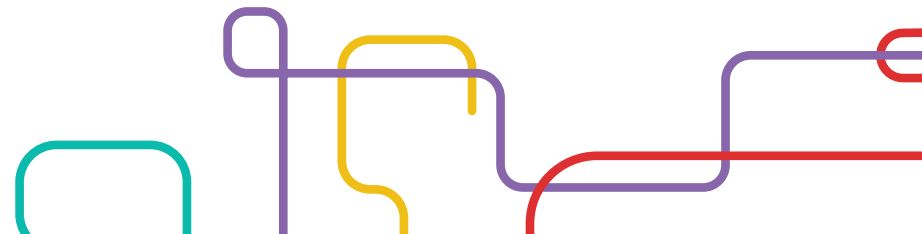




## Course Development: *Asynchronous/Synchronous Format*

### Recommended practice: Apply adult education principles

- Discussion – involve their prior knowledge and experience
- Teaching Points – ensure we're all on the same page
- Practice – give authentic, real-world examples
- Assignment – demonstrate a Skills for Success task

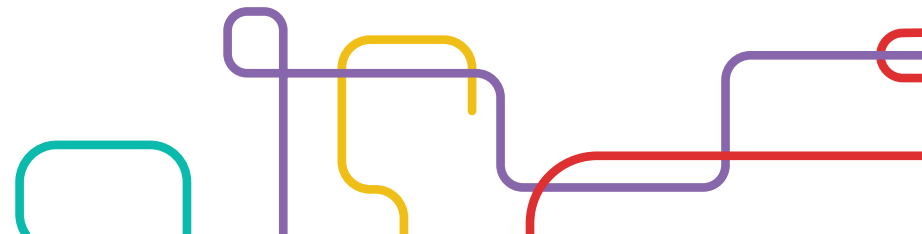




## Course Implementation: *Synchronous Tasks*

### Recommended Practice: Complement asynchronous materials

- Engage in discussions to highlight cultural practices/norms
- Incorporate additional activities to address common challenge areas
- Identify related role-plays/tasks to expand on skills taught
- Provide targeted feedback on what learners should continue to do and what they can improve on for the future





## Course Implementation: *Meeting Clients' Needs*

### **Recommended Practice: Be modular**

- Provides easy access
- Is more learner-centred

### **Recommended Practice:**

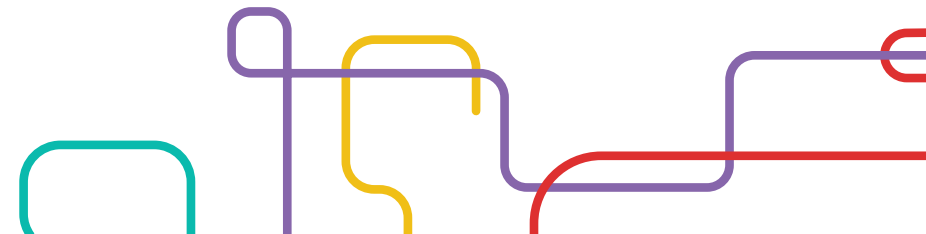
- Keep synchronous portion online
- Provides easy access
- Eliminates common concerns
- Allow for optional in-person meetings





## Successes: Big and Small

- 70% of job-seekers became employed in their field or a related one
- All 16 Long-term Care Assistant project participants are completing final language instructions, and all 16 are starting on-the-job training on February 28 with Northwood
- 73% of engineers are retained by their host employer
- 7 out of 9 IPGs passed OSCE on first try, while 100% passing rate for those taking Qualifying I and II







## Successes: Big and Small

- Clients having to travel home overseas, are still joining us on Zoom twice a week for the language classes and completing required independent work in a timely manner.
- Significant increase in digital competence for staff and clients
- Flexibility, Innovation, and expertise allows for quick and efficient service delivery



# Attract and Retain Immigrant Talent: Supporting Newcomers in their Journey to Employment

Tanja Mathews  
Pre-employment and Bridging  
Supervisor  
ISANS

Anna McBeth  
Youth and Bridging Programs  
Supervisor  
ISANS



## ISANS Employment and Bridging Team

**60+** staff who are dedicated, diverse, highly professional, qualified and experienced in their field

Certified Career Practitioners

Certified Essential Skills Assessors

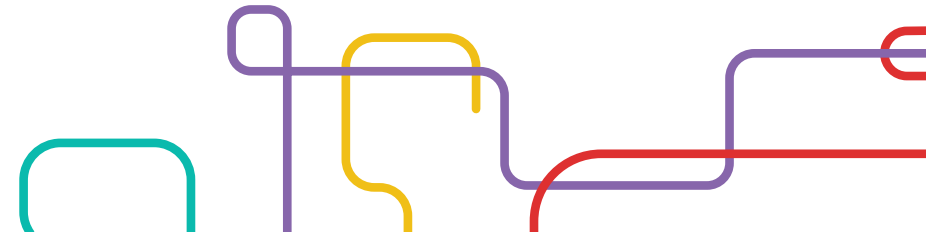
Bridging Program Coordinators who are subject matter experts

13 profession specific Multi Stakeholder Work Groups in regulated fields

Financial support for immigrant across the Atlantic Region

**11400+** employment counselling services given to 2781 newcomers

**isans** | Immigrant Services  
Association of Nova Scotia





## ISANS Employment and Bridging Team

**3,211** clients participated in one or more employment programs and services

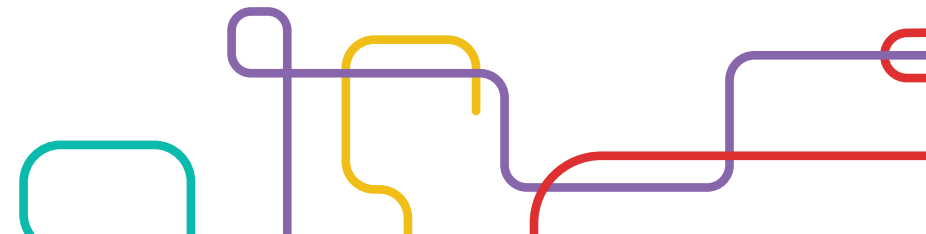
**1,328** clients became employed

**70%** of whom became employed in their field or related field

**60%** of clients require certification / license to practice in Canada

Double the national average in passing license examination

**87%** employment retention after the competency assessment





## Common barriers to employment in regulated fields:

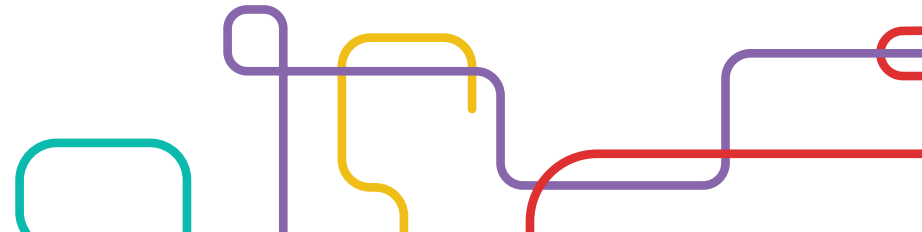
Profession-specific communication skills

Financial challenges to pay for the expensive certification process

Understanding the professional scope and cultural competency in the fields

Difficulty building professional network in their fields

Difficulty identifying meaningful alternative careers without guided support





## How we do it

- Client-centered, strength based – “meet clients where they are”
- Counsel-based on existing skills and experience
- Help clients recognize how prior experience, even informal, applies to the current labour market
- Use Skills for Success and occupation-specific competencies to develop a Return-to-Work Action Plan (RTWAP)
- Trauma-informed and holistic
- Customized and strategic – online, onsite, and blended depending on client preferences and program needs
- Flexible, responsive and accessible

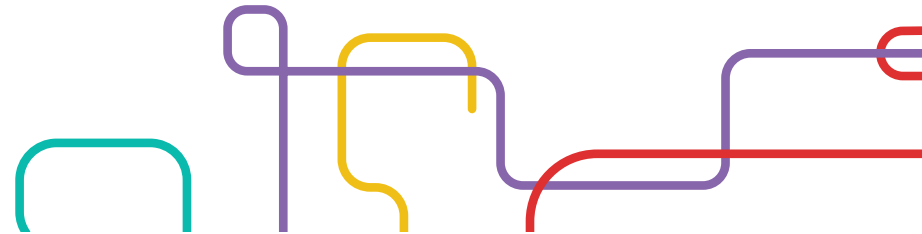


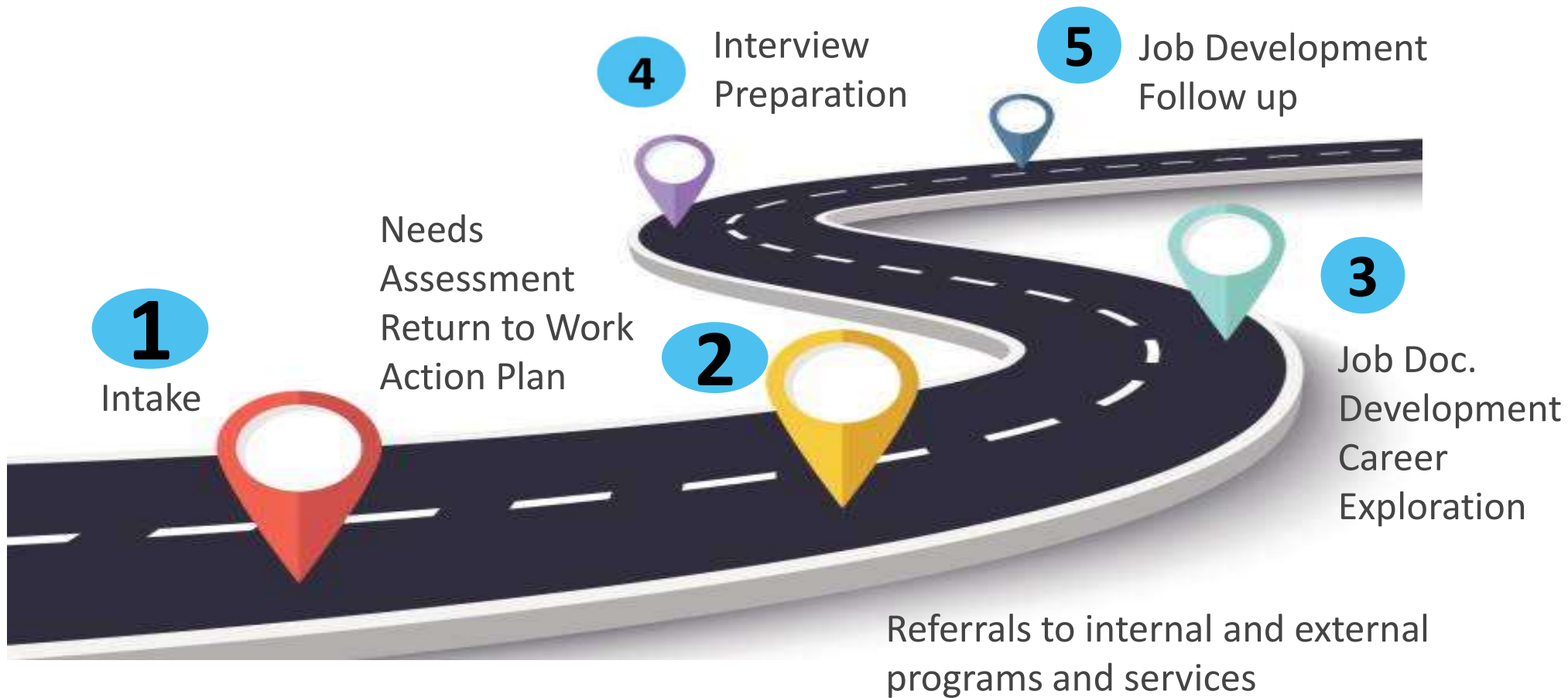


## Labour Market Demands

Partnerships with sector councils, unions, employers, and colleges:

- Development of bridging programs to meet the labour market demand based on clients' needs
- New programs: Internationally Educated Early Childhood Educators (IEECE) Bridging the Gap, Professional Drivers, Long-Term Care Assistants (LTCA)









Funder eligibility criteria



Education – formal and training/courses



Experience – professional and life experiences



English language level



Barriers – health concerns, travel / commute, family concerns, finance, etc.



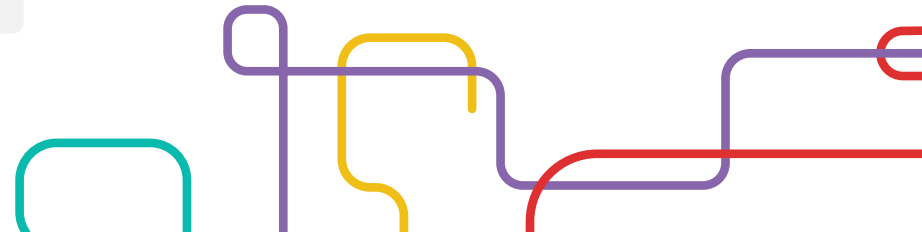
Be interested in **the field/occupation** – long term goals and commitment



Be available to attend a 12-week Communications course



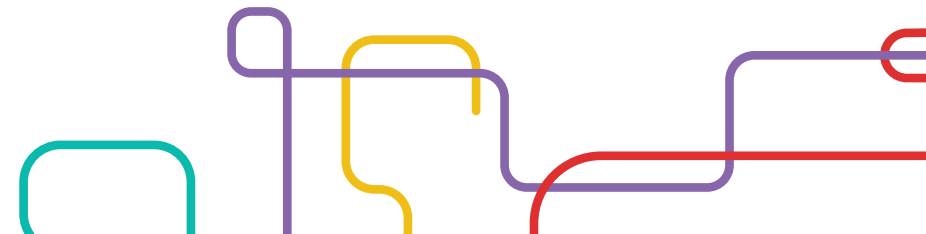
# Bridging Program Eligibility and Interest Assessment





## Bridging Program Structure

- Assessment
- Professional Communication Course
- Job Search Strategies
- Technical/Safety Training
- On-the-job Competency Assessment



# Case Studies

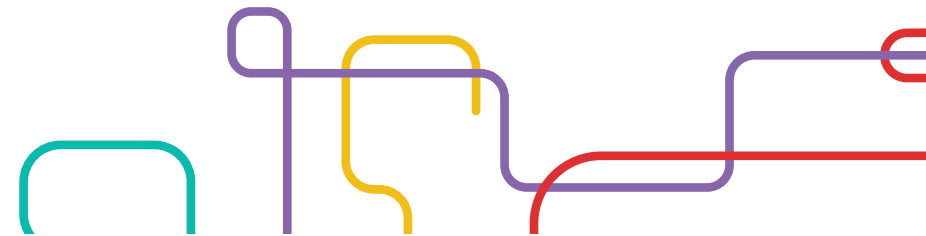




# IE ECE Bridging the Gap Program

Designed to support immigrants to Nova Scotia in joining the provincial workforce and becoming early childhood educators (ECEs) and to increase employer awareness of the benefits of hiring IEECEs who would contribute to diversified and inclusive workplaces.

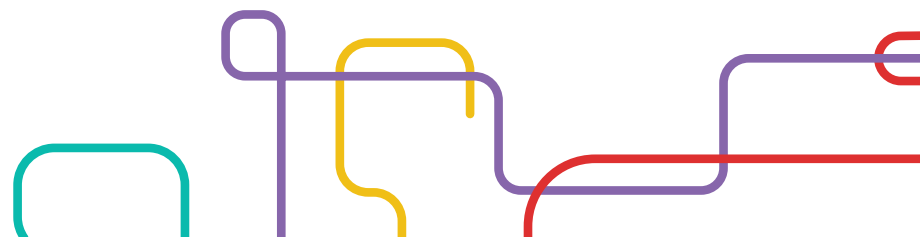
Involved the development and delivery of a *profession-specific communication skills course*, an *employment-readiness course* and *on-the-job competency assessment tools* for immigrant and IEECEs.





## Evaluation Approach

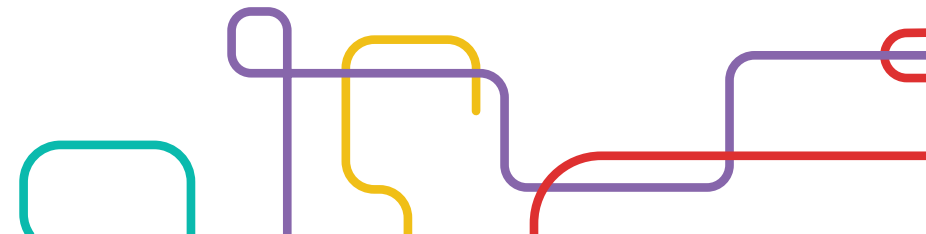
- Based on the **Centre for Community Based Research's** (CCBR's) approach
- **Community-driven, participatory and action-oriented**
- Determined by **evaluation steering committee** (ISANS, EECD, NSCECE, IE ECEs, employers, SMEs, etc.)



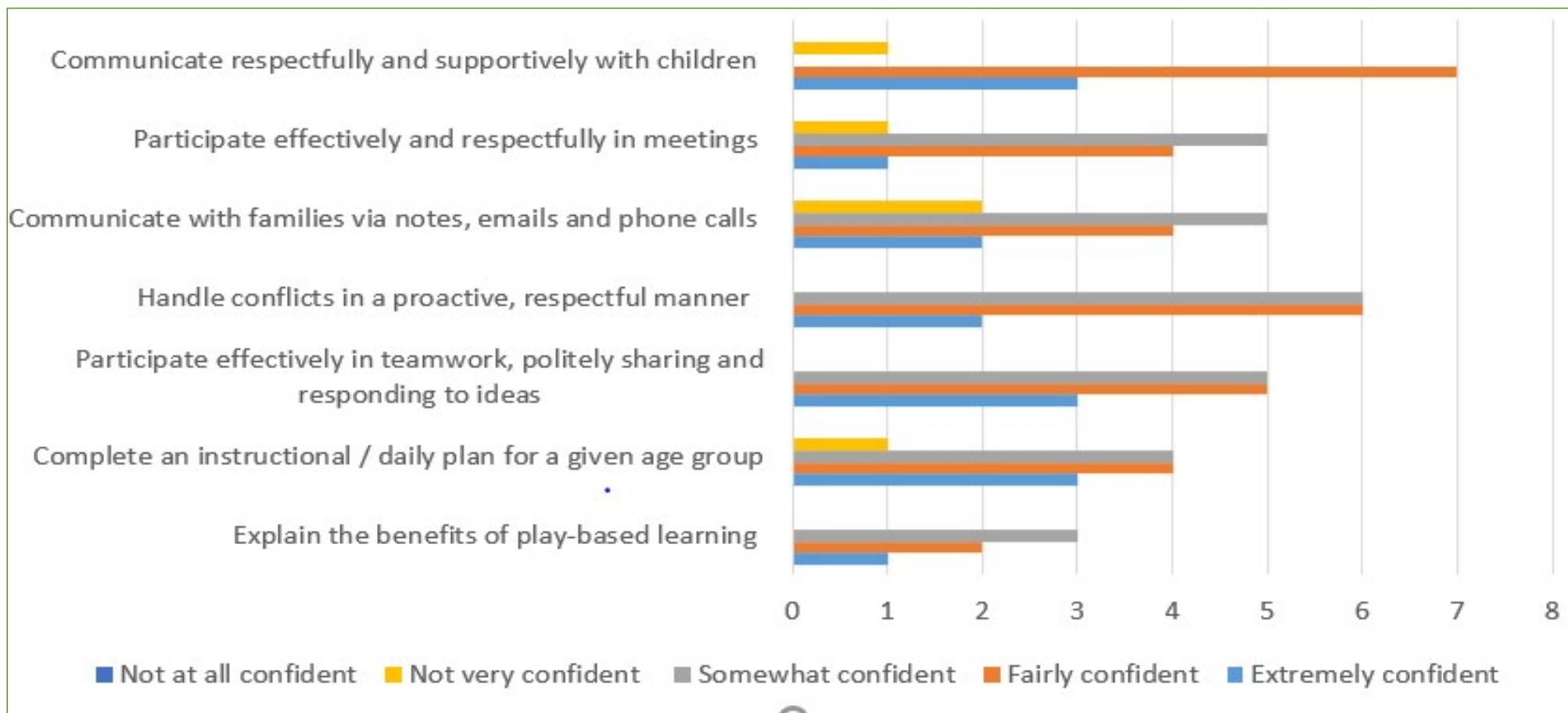


## Course Exit Tasks Results

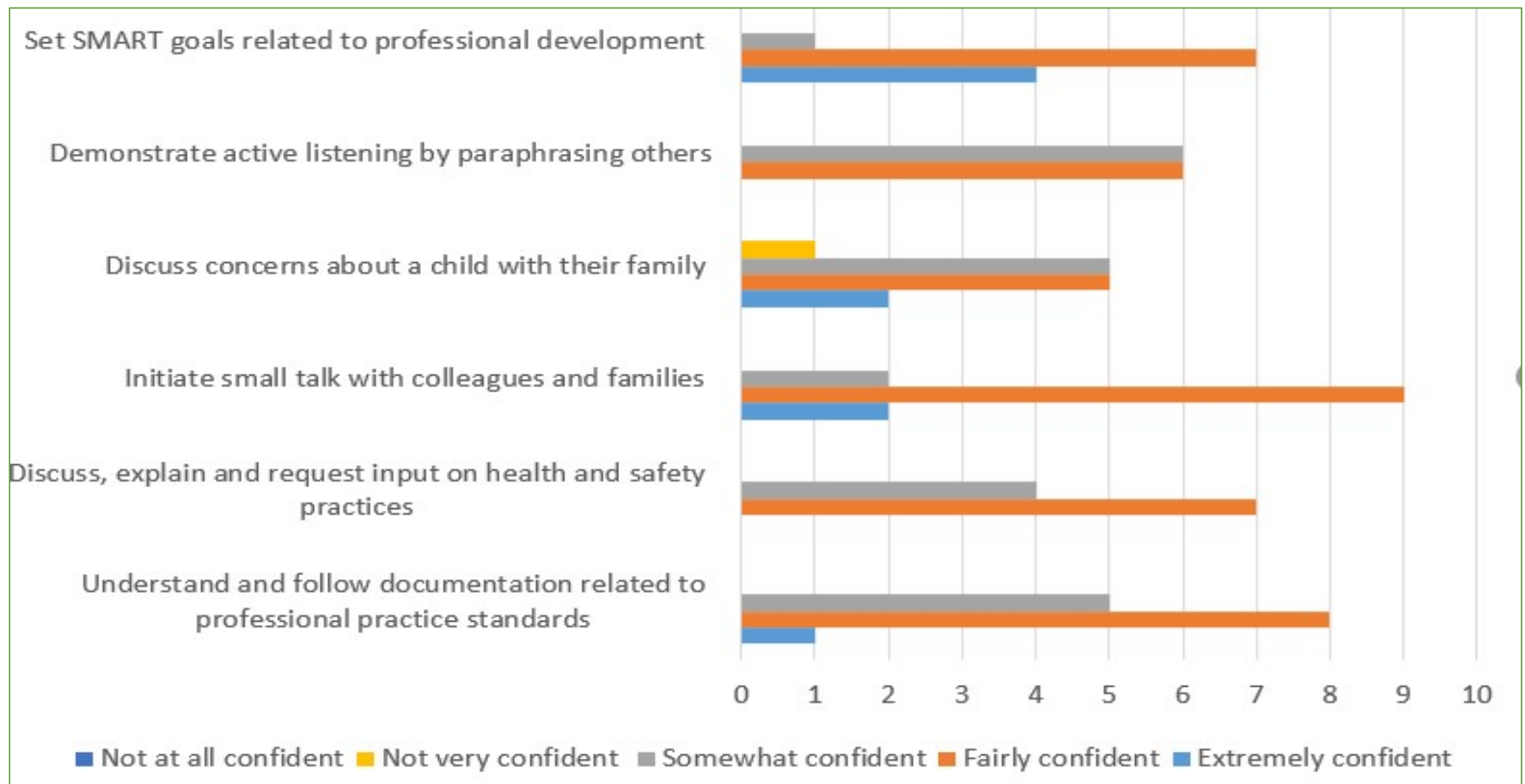
- 80% have had at least one CLB skill improve, and 60% of clients have had two or three skills improve
- 50% improved some skills by 2 benchmarks (Ex. 5/6/7/5 to 8/6/7/6 and 6/6/6/6 to 8/6/8/7)
- One client performed exceptionally, improving all four skills: 5/5/7/7 to 8/8/8/9







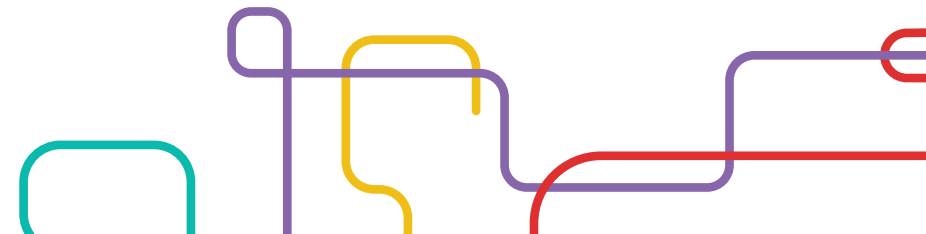






## Employment Results

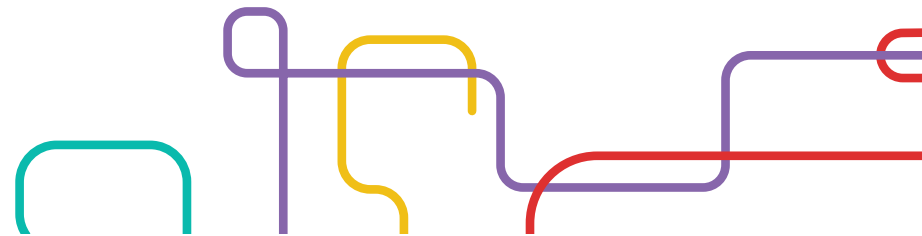
- 14 clients were placed in childcare centres, and 4 IEECE clients continued working at the Halifax Regional Centre of Education (HRCE)
- 11 out of 14 continued working with their host employers past the 12-week placement.
- 3 IE ECEs left the workforce due to either childcare barriers or family emergencies
- 3 IE ECEs started the ECA program at NSCECE





## Professional Driver Bridging Program

- Communication Skills for Professional Drivers Course (3 months)
- Preparation and support with Skills for Success
- Preparation for Air Breaks test
- Required documentation and boarder crossing
- Job development and employer attachment
- Tractor Trailer Training at Commercial Safety College (12 weeks including internship with





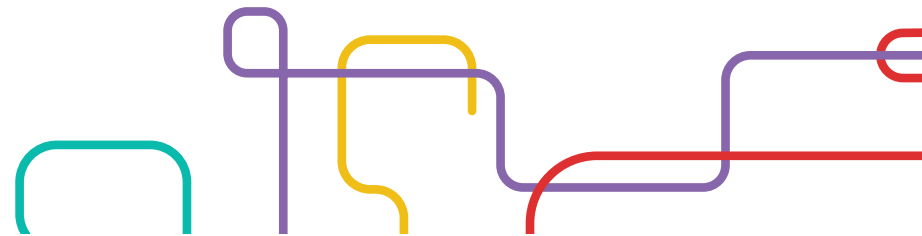
Communication Skills for Professional Drivers Graduation  
Professional Driver Bridging Program



## Long-term Care Aides (LTCAs)

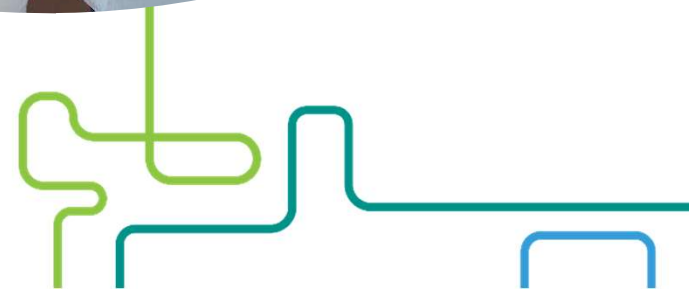


- This program is designed to respond to the high labour-market demand for LTCAs
- Opportunity for ISANS clients who are facing employment barriers or training gaps to be supported while preparing to work in long-term care
- Clients prepare for work in long-term care through a LTCA-specific language course, a job-search strategy (JSS) course, and a paid on-the-job training program



# Goals of the LTCA Program

- Improve LTCA profession-specific language skills
- Develop job-search skills
- Gain work experience and acquire training
- Further education to become a Certified Continuing Care Assistant



# On-the-job Training

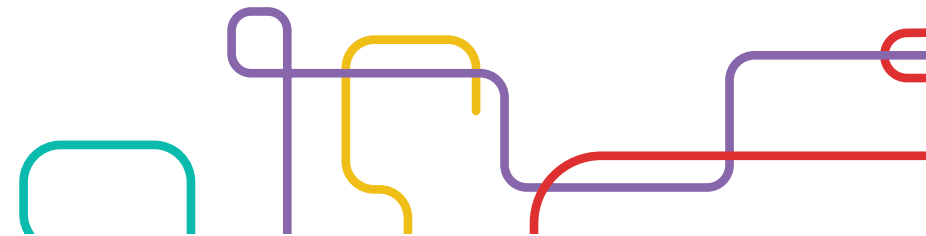
Working in partnership with the Northwood Care Aide (NCA) Training Program, clients will gain work experience and acquire training through the NCA program:

- personal care
- safe client handling
- working with dementia patients
- person-centered care
- dining experience
- First Aid/CPR, and WHMIS

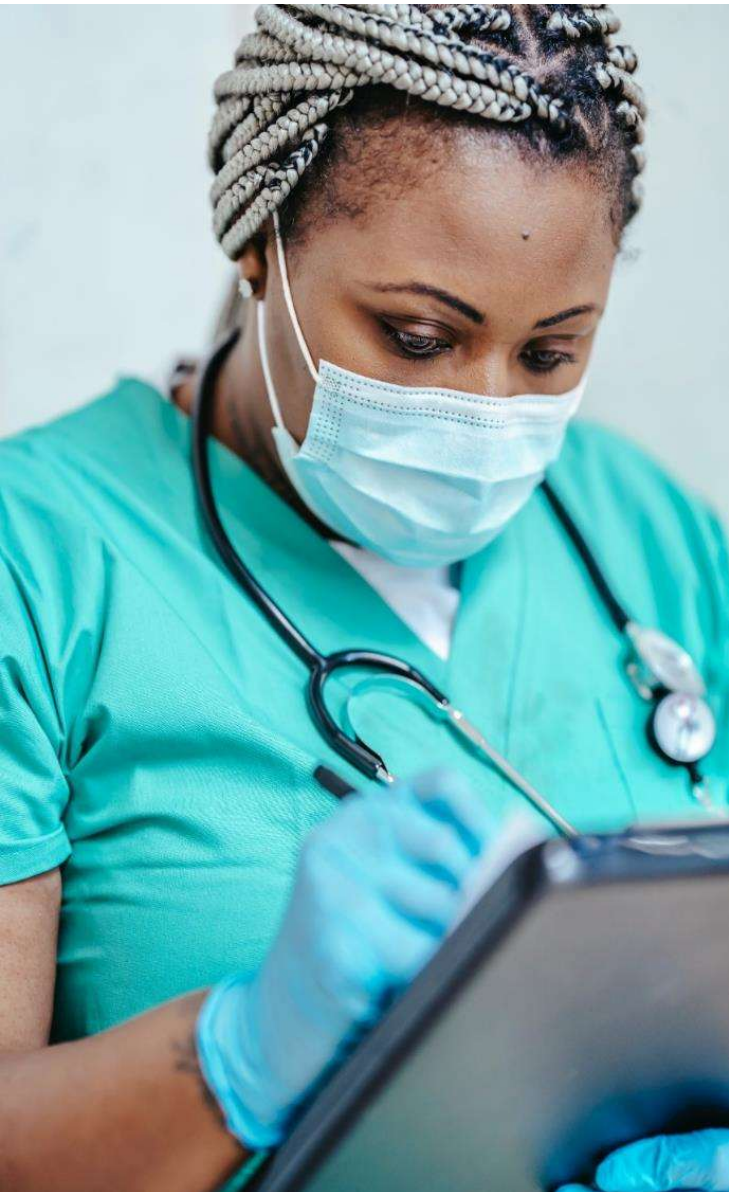




“We [Northwood] wanted you to know we are so very pleased at how well this group of students have done. The entire group is very caring and compassionate about care and this has shown through while doing their clinical. Thank you for the support in this program and we look forward to another group of wonderful students in the future.”







## Bridging Programs – exam prep and resources

Licensure process for regulated occupations:

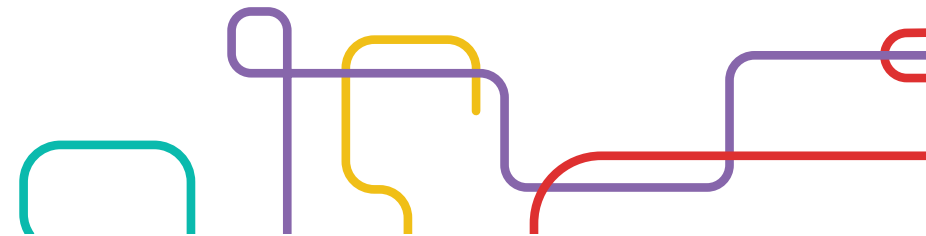
- The cost offset
- Cancellations, delays, lower number of sites
- Study groups, practical prep
- Reliable resources





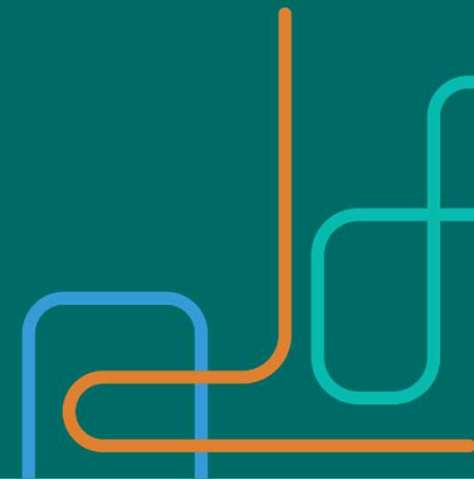
## Town Hall – Nursing and ECE

- Educational Institutions
- Regulators
- Service Providers
- Internationally Educated Professionals
- Program Delivery Professionals



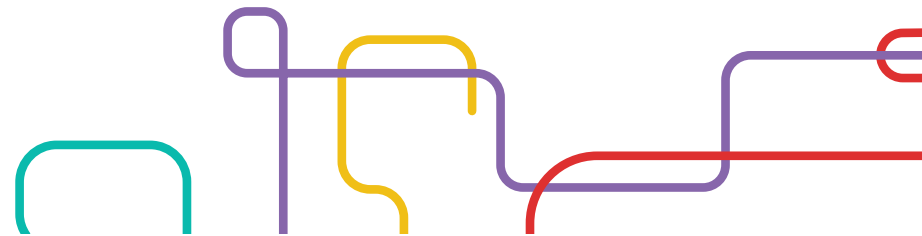
# Attract and Retain Immigrant Talent: Supporting Employers at all Stages of Employment

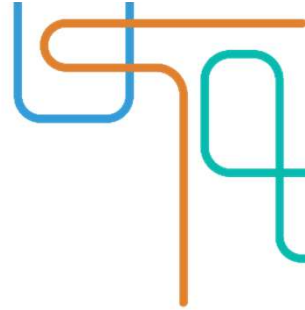
Kyle Turner  
Employer Engager  
ISANS





ISANS helps bridge employment gaps by connecting NS employers with internationally educated, job-ready immigrants.





# Employer Engagement

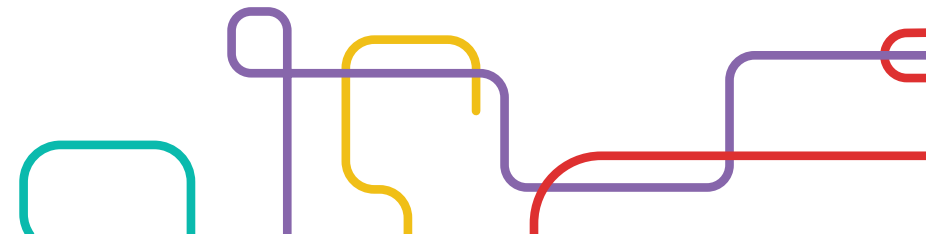
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- Provide support to Nova Scotian employers to build capacity to hire and retain international talent
- Act as the liaison between employers and ISANS' Employer Support programs and services
- Promote the benefits of hiring immigrants (including refugees and AIP participants) to strengthen and diversify their workforce
- Employer Engagers across Nova Scotia



**ISANS helps employers build strong and diverse workplaces through:**

- Qualified candidate referrals
- On-site and online recruitment
- SkillsMatch online recruitment tool
- Intercultural Workplace program
- Professional Practice program
- Information sessions on Atlantic Immigration Program (AIP)
- English in the Workplace
- Bridging programs



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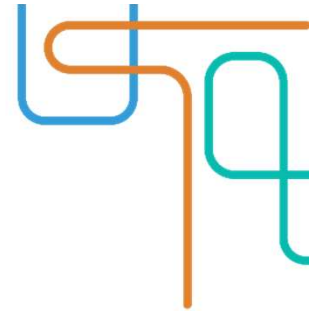
**Be Innovative!**  
Engaging employers in  
specific sectors

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- **Engagement /  
Feedback**
- **Technology**
- **Support**
- **Awareness**



# Be organized!



isans Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia

Web Content Settings Logout Change Password Support

Home Contacts Events Mail Reports Files Dashboard

**New Contact**  
Please select a group  
Create  
Full Intake Form

**Search**  
Find  
Advanced Search  
File Sharing Admin  
Surveys/Forms  
Reports

**Contact View**  
Standard Summary Print Face Sheet

Contact Code: 57730 Contact #57730 Status: Active Add Flag

**Contact Info:** Map  
Recruitment & Retention Advisor  
Halifax Regional Centre for Education  
33 Spectacle Lake Drive,  
Dartmouth, NS B3M1X7  
Canada

**Work Phone:** [Redacted]  
**Home Phone:**  
**Cell Phone:**  
**Fax:**  
**Source:** Old DB  
**Assigned To:** ISANS  
**Type:** Business

**Role:** Employee  
**Email:** [Redacted]  
**Comm Pref:**

**Reminder:** Please ask clients if their contact information, emergency contact information and immigration status needs to be updated on the system.

**Contact Info Updated:** 4/28/2020 10:36:22 AM  
**Photo:**  
**Current Age Range:** No Birthday provided  
**Birthdate:**  
**Settlement Stage:** No Landing Date on Record  
**Primary Language:**

**New Event**  
EE - Communication New Event

**Groups**  
Select from list... Save  
WC - Employer Active Remove  
EE - Employer Remove  
Employer Remove  
EC - Employer Remove

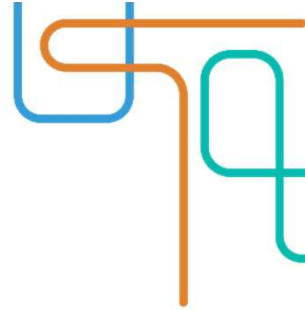
**Funding Sources**

Date	Event Name	AssignedTo	Type	Names
10/05/2022	ORIS - Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)	Kyle Turner	EE - ORIS	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
05/04/2022	ORIS - Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)	Kyle Turner	EE - ORIS	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
11/25/2021	Employer Engaged - EE	Kyle Turner	Program Start	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Roxanne Manning
10/30/2021	EC-Employment Status	Kelly Weaver	EC - Employment Status	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
10/28/2021	Networking (Partnership Event)	Kyle Turner	EE - Networking	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
10/27/2021	Testimonial - Employer	Kyle Turner	Testimonial	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
10/27/2021	ORIS - Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)	Kyle Turner	EE - ORIS	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
08/19/2021	EC-Employment Status	Kelly Weaver	EC - Employment Status	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
07/15/2021	ORIS - Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)	Kyle Turner	EE - ORIS	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
01/14/2021	Employed HRCE: Excell Group Leader	Jessie Palmer	EC - Employment Status	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
12/02/2020	Employed as a sub EPA with HRCE	Jessie Palmer	EC - Employment Status	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
10/23/2020	EC client secured part time job as lunch monitor with HRCE - schools	Magda Lynch	EC - Employment Status	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
10/16/2020	EC client employed part-time as a school lunch monitor with HRCE.	Magda Lynch	EC - Employment Status	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
07/30/2020	ORIS - Halifax Regional Centre for Education	Kyle Turner	EE - ORIS	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie
07/28/2020	Job Posting via Email	Kyle Turner	Program Start	Halifax Regional Centre for Education: Sheila Christie





# Manage employer expectations

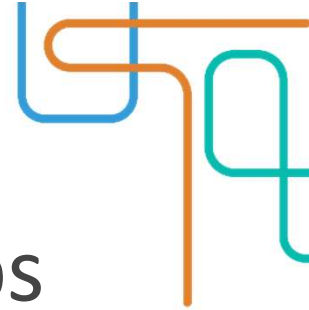


# Engaging employers in specific sectors – what's in it for them?

- Network Partnership events
- Social Media
- **Pick up the phone!**

Use	Be	Get	Find
Use plain language, Don't overwhelm employers with resources, you want to make the process as easy as possible in terms of recruitment and onboarding immigrant job seekers	Be a resource, not a burden	Get connected! Join councils and committees, industry associations, partner with other community serving agencies, Universities, Community Colleges, Business Associations, Government, City Councils, HR Associations	Find champions within organizations



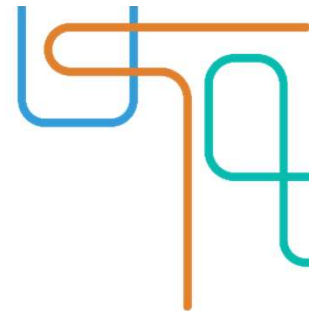


# Community Partnerships

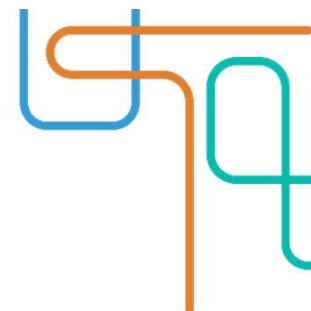
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- Conducting regular labour market research, and working closely with other community-serving agencies and decision-makers within government are essential best practices to keep talent in your region!
- Don't want to duplicate services
- It should always be the bigger picture: your region's economy, its people, a place where all can belong and grow

# Collaboration – Ukraine Initiative



# Engaging Employers in specific sectors – bridging the gap to meet labour market needs



## Online Recruitment and Information Session Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)

Join us for this online information session presented by Halifax Regional Centre for Education, taking place over the Microsoft Teams Web Conferencing platform! This session will provide an overview of available Non-Teaching Casual positions with HRCE.

### Who is Halifax Regional Center for Education?

Halifax Regional Center for Education (HRCE), is the largest Centre for Education in Atlantic Canada with over 10,000 full-time, part-time, and casual employees serving over 56,000 students in 135 schools.



### HRCE maintains Non-Teaching Substitute Pools for the following positions:

- Early Childhood Educators
- Educational Program Assistants
- EXCEL Before and After School Group Leaders
- School Based Administrative Assistants

All postings can be viewed at <https://www.myhrce.ca/functions/hr/jobz/resume/jobpostings/>

At this session, you will learn about the application process and requirements you need to be a successful applicant. A question and answer period will follow the presentation.

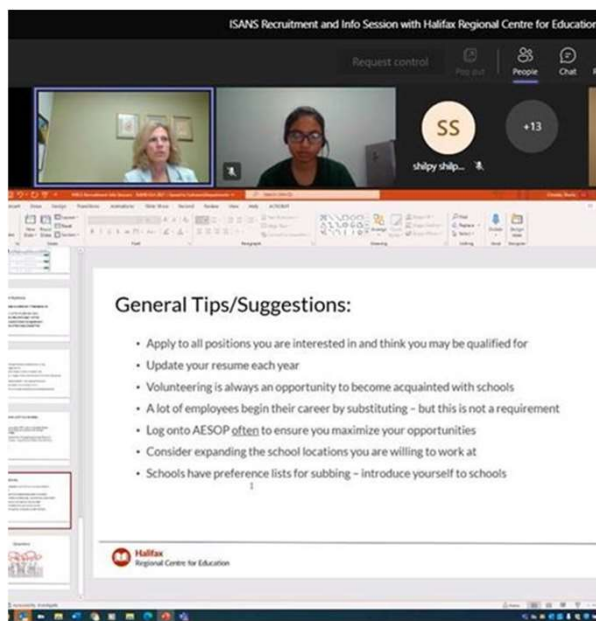
### To register for this information session:

- Contact your ISANS employment specialist to see if you are eligible to attend.
- Once you are registered, you will receive a Microsoft Teams meeting link by email.

**Wednesday, October 5**

**1:00 pm - 2:00 pm**

Microsoft Teams Web Conference



## Join our upcoming cohort:

## Bridging the Gap for Internationally Educated Early Childhood Educators (IE ECEs)

Are you looking to work in the field of Early Childhood Education in Nova Scotia? Do you want to improve your communication skills and job-search techniques? Would you like to demonstrate your skills and knowledge to a local employer? If so, this program is for you!

Bridging the Gap for IE ECEs will help you:

- Improve your profession-specific communication skills
- Learn job-search techniques
- Learn about Canadian workplace culture in the Early Childhood Education field
- Gain paid work experience in a regulated childcare center in Nova Scotia
- Expand your networks and obtain local references
- Understand the pathway to apply for ECE classification in Nova Scotia
- Have access to Level 1 training with Nova Scotia College of Early Childhood Education (NSCECE)

To be eligible to attend, you must:

- Have a minimum Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) of 5+
- Be a permanent resident (PR), a refugee, or an immigrant Canadian citizen
- Have a background, experience, and/or an interest in working with young children
- Commit to attend and complete a 12-week ECE communication course, a 4-week job-search workshop, and an on-the-job, paid competency assessment

For more information, and to register, please contact your employment specialist or the program coordinator:

Navdeep Parmanand | 902-406-8601 | [pparmanand@isans.ca](mailto:pparmanand@isans.ca)

**Register now!**

**Program begins Tuesday, September 6**





**VISION  
MISSION  
VALUES**

**VISION** A community where all can belong and grow.

**MISSION** Helping immigrants build a future in Nova Scotia.

**VALUES**

**DIVERSITY**

We demonstrate diversity through valuing and respecting differences in experiences and perspectives, believing in everyone's ability to enrich Canadian society through their unique contribution.

**COLLABORATION**

We demonstrate collaboration by building relationships where we can share responsibilities and ideas and work together to enhance opportunities for all.

**INCLUSION**

We demonstrate inclusion by welcoming and respecting the diversity in our community and fostering a sense of belonging in all.

**INNOVATION**

We demonstrate innovation through service excellence, by being creative and flexible, responsive to clients and partners and continually seeking new opportunities.

**RESPECT**

We demonstrate respect by encouraging an environment of fairness, honesty and integrity for all clients, partners and colleagues.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

We demonstrate accountability by acknowledging responsibility for our services, tools, actions and decisions and by being transparent and principled in our approach to people and situations.



# Success Story and Employer Best Practices



Kelly Henderson  
Executive Director  
Trucking Human Resources Sector Council  
Atlantic



# Thank You

**isans** | Immigrant Services  
Association of Nova Scotia

