

# Employer Innovation Fund Evaluation Report

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March 2014

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EMPLOYER INNOVATION FUND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Employer Innovation Fund (EIF) was a one-time initiative that funded 11 projects throughout the province from February 2013 to March 31, 2014. This 1.4 million dollar fund was announced by the Province of BC in September 2012 at the Leaders' Summit on Immigrant Employment in Vancouver, BC. The Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) was awarded funding to design, implement and manage this new initiative to provide funding to British Columbia employers, business associations, and industry/sectoral organizations to deliver innovative demonstration projects and to develop initiatives and resources to support the hiring, retention and labour market integration of new immigrants. Funding for EIF was through the Government of Canada and the Province of BC and through the Canada-BC Immigration Agreement.

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

At the onset of the project, IEC-BC and the evaluation consultants developed an evaluation framework based on the program design outlined by IEC-BC in its procurement documents and on the requirements for a logic model approach described by the representative of the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training. Individual logic models were developed for each of the 11 projects. This evaluation utilized qualitative and quantitative data from the following main sources:

- Written mid-term and final reports submitted by each project to IEC-BC
- Interviews with project managers at the beginning, middle and end of the project - Total of 33 interviews
- Interviews with stakeholders at the end of the project - Total of 22 interviews
- Observation of project networking meetings hosted by IEC-BC
- Review of tools and resources

## FUNDED PROJECTS

The following is the list of funded projects - individual project information is provided in Section 5 of this report.

### LEVEL ONE REGIONAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION CATEGORY (up to \$200,000)

- Prince George Chamber of Commerce

### LEVEL ONE REGIONAL INDUSTRY/SECTORAL ORGANIZATION CATEGORY (up to \$200,000)

- BC Construction Association (BCCA)
- Northern Lights College (NLC)

#### LEVEL ONE MAINLAND/SOUTHWEST CATEGORY (up to \$200,000)

- British Columbia Trucking Association (BCTA)
- Surrey Board of Trade

#### LEVEL TWO REGIONAL EMPLOYER CATEGORY (up to \$100,000)

- Tolko Industries

#### LEVEL TWO REGIONAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION CATEGORY (up to \$100,000)

- Kitimat Chamber of Commerce

#### LEVEL TWO REGIONAL INDUSTRY/SECTORAL ORGANIZATION CATEGORY (up to \$100,000)

- Central Interior Logging Association (CILA)
- go2 Tourism HR Society
- Initiatives Prince George (IPG)

#### LEVEL THREE REGIONAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION CATEGORY (up to \$50,000)

- Campbell River & District Chamber of Commerce

## FINDINGS

### THE BIG PICTURE

The evaluation revealed several observations that help to contextualize the activities, outputs, and outcomes of the EIF project.

1. The task of immigrant employment was shown to be advanced by “boots on the ground.” This approach takes time and messages must be persistently reinforced through a range of approaches to raising awareness, building relationships, and constantly and persistently reinforcing the message.
2. The purpose of the project was in part to enable and activate the innovative potential of the demand side - the employers - of immigrant employment. However, many businesses did not have a clear understanding of current or future workforce demands-the problem- and did not have particular insights into the solutions (or innovative practices) designed to better integrate new immigrants into the workforce.

3. The **economic conditions during the project meant that many sectors involved in EIF were not in hiring mode**. The experience of the projects highlighted that currently, employers are relatively disengaged from the issue of immigrant employment.
4. The **data on new immigrant employment is poor**. There is a lack of a basic understanding of the nature and scale of the problem regarding immigrant employment and, in particular, under-employment.
5. The project revealed **significant differences between urban and rural immigrant integration**. Equally, the project revealed important insights about the necessity to connect urban and rural immigrant serving organizations and business to better facilitate immigrant employment throughout the province.

## PROJECT CUMULATIVE RESULTS

The eleven EIF projects engaged in one or more of four primary areas of activity: stakeholder engagement, workshops and training, resource and tool development and promotion, and skills standards and assessments. Activities in these four areas resulted in the production of tangible materials (outputs) such as training modules, toolkits, guides, standards, assessments, videos, websites, career fairs, tip sheets, information sheets, brochures, etc. These activities and outputs were intended to lead to the anticipated outcomes.

| Activities (Cumulative)                     | Outputs (Cumulative)   | Outcomes (Cumulative)   |
|---|--|---|
| Stakeholder Engagement:                     | 11 industry consultations<br>5000+ industry outreach   | Increased awareness and understanding of new resources and existing promising practices. More strategic direction and support for employers in hiring and integrating immigrants into the workplace.<br>Increased awareness of potential immigrant supply in BC<br>Increased awareness of business case to hiring immigrants<br>Employers are more aware of tools resources and supports to better integrate immigrants.<br>Immigrants get information on communities in BC<br>Employers connected to immigrant talent.<br>Immigrant job applicants can better demonstrate their knowledge and capabilities.<br>Employers can better assess the competency of the individual against occupational standards.<br>Employers are better able to navigate HR so that they can keep their focus on their operations.<br>Employers share information and experiences with other businesses or associates. |
| Workshops and Training                      | 75+ workshops<br>2 two-week trainings  |   |
| Resource and Tool Development and Promotion | 8 new websites<br>40+ videos<br>4 employer guides (online and written)<br>40+ handouts and tip sheets<br>9000+ media release<br>1500+ website visits |   |
| Skills Standards and Assessments            | 5 employer guides and competency assessments   |   |
|   |  |   |

SME internal immigrant hiring capacity will be enhanced.  
Have a strategic approach to sourcing immigrant talent  
5 immigrants hired.

## VALUE ADDED CONTRIBUTIONS

The EIF project produced a number of value-added outcomes that advance both the understanding and readiness to integrate new immigrants into the workforce. The following items represent lines of direct attribution where the project can claim impact.

1. EIF has created a sophisticated **foundation of information resources, workshop modules, and hiring tools** that have, and will continue to elevate the capacity of the province to support new immigrant employment.
2. EIF has created a robust **network of inter/intra-sectoral and inter/intra-regional relationships**. These relationships have bridged cultural and geographical divides (e.g. businesses working with immigrant service agencies, and rural areas working with urban partners) that previously served as barriers to immigrant employment.
3. EIF has created **informed business and business agency champions** throughout the province.
4. EIF has provided an intimate **understanding of the complex relationship between preparing new immigrants for employment and the readiness of employers to hire**.
5. EIF has **challenged assumptions about the willingness of immigrants to seize job opportunities**.

## BEST PRACTICES

The following provides a summary of cross-project conclusions and best practices grouped by emerging themes. The work of many of the projects provides the seeds of innovative practice to facilitate employer-led immigrant employment. As with all best practices, however, and as was clearly reinforced by the projects themselves, these lessons need to be contextualized by both sector and region to become effective. As such, they represent key points of consideration when designing and implementing strategies and tools to help facilitate better immigrant employment outcomes.

### ***Engaging Employer Stakeholders***

- **Persistent messaging and engagement matters.**
- **The format of the message and the messenger matter.**

The EIF project speaks powerfully to the ongoing need to inform and educate the business community about the potential benefits and processes of immigrant employment. The project reveals that good quality information does exist, but it needs to be packaged appropriately and made directly relevant to the contextual circumstances of the employer. Businesses have to want to engage in the immigrant employment process, and once they do, they require the appropriate information.

It is important to get information about immigrant hiring and retention in front of employers on a regular, rolling basis. Innovations in medium (e.g. use of social media) can help facilitate this process, but building relationships and gaining a deeper sense of commitment from employers requires direct interactions (or, “boots on the ground” as articulated above). Businesses require appropriately packaged materials and trust plays a significant role in whether the information is considered meaningful. Business champions and the networking role of Chambers proved effective and trusted sources to expand networks of employers to consider immigrant employment.

### ***Building Community Relationships***

- **Build relationships between employers and service agencies.**
- **Establish immigrant attraction and retention working groups or roundtables that bring together a coordinated dialogue and response capacity in the community, and region.**

The literature on immigrant hiring speaks to the importance of the broader community dynamic which houses the employment opportunity. The EIF project reinforces this finding. It is not an innovative finding in the broader sense, but the highlight is that innovation is something that is context specific, i.e. each region and sector needs to experience this phenomenon before durable attraction and retention takes place. This is particularly true for

rural employment opportunities. New immigrants are likely to have social networks in place within metropolitan regions. This presents two challenges for non-metropolitan companies. First, finding potential immigrant employees can be difficult. Developing strong rural-urban relationships with other businesses and service agencies is very important. Second, the job is not enough. Employers (and community organizations) have to invest in a more sophisticated response strategy to market employment opportunities, promote the community, and define actions to embed new immigrants into the fabric of the community.

### ***Engaging New Immigrants***

- **Engage existing employee diversity within their companies.**
- **Tell stories.**
- **Link language training to skill development and upgrading.**
- **Understand that new immigrants may have arrived with certain expectations about their work prospects in Canada that are not being realized.**

The projects employed a variety of tactics for engaging with immigrants. The employment opportunity itself is only one dimension for attracting and retaining immigrant employees. The extent to which there is a supportive environment within the business *and* a supportive environment within the community is vital to long-term success. Several projects reported strong buy-in with the use of “stories” about immigrants already working in their companies and living in the community. These stories show employers that immigrants are already being successfully integrated in their communities. Several projects reported that English language communication skills are an important aspect of immigrant integration. The focus of training needs to extend beyond just the job skill set to include language training options with each skill development opportunity. Employers should be sensitive to the frustrations associated with new immigrants gaining employment in their area of previous or preferred employment. Projects struggled with the process of matching and assessing international standards. Documenting and presenting employment pathways may help to clearly articulate expectations and ease immigrant frustrations about perceived barriers and broken promises.

### ***Developing Tools and Resources***

- **The process of creating assessment measures and tools may be adapted to other sectors.**
- **Proof of concept is critical.**

A number of the projects designed tools and resources to both build the case for immigrant employment and ease the pressures associated with credentialism by providing resources to help companies more easily and quickly assess the skills of immigrant employees. This included extensive use of digital media platforms such as website development, Facebook and Twitter. The challenge with producing such resource materials is that it takes considerable time and investment to produce a quality product and it may quickly become dated and

irrelevant. A number of findings are informative about ensuring that the materials produced are relevant and durable, i.e. sustainable over the long-term. Specific skill-sets and other indicators may vary by industry, but the process of collecting information, dealing with international standards, and testing the guides holds cross-sector relevance. Businesses want something that is proven to work. Business associations have an opportunity to test materials with select members before scaling-up. Several EIF projects experienced challenges with identifying immigrants to test materials and strategies. More information is needed about why these challenges ensued. Employer and immigrant champions may play a critical role here in terms of promoting the methodology to the broader business community.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The EIF project has created a trove of resource materials and a provincial network of informed champions. The challenge now is to leverage these assets to further improve the immigrant employment system and immigrant employment outcomes.

### *Recommendations*

1. Fostering and enabling an investment mentality on the part of business/industry to support new immigrant employment;
2. Develop communications and education materials to better separate new immigrant employment from the TFW;
3. Better understand the new immigrant employment pipeline, with particular emphasis on initial contact, information sharing, and expectation management;
4. Persistence and perseverance in promoting and educating around the business case;
5. Better information about stats and occupation data for new immigrants;
6. Promoting and facilitating the "whole community" collaborative approach.

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This is a report of the findings of the evaluation of the Employer Innovation Fund, 2013- 2014. This short one year period has seen tremendous accomplishments from IEC-BC and the eleven EIF funded projects throughout the Province. Each of the funded projects documented its project activities, strengths and challenges throughout this period in written mid-term and final reports provided to IEC-BC as well as during three interviews at the beginning, mid-point and end of the project.

The project generated a significant amount of data. A limitation of this report is that it is not possible to convey all of the information shared by the projects and still produce a readable report for a wide audience with a variety of concerns and interests related to immigrant employment in BC. We have addressed this challenge by focusing on the specific areas shown in the individual project logic models and providing both individual project and cross-project findings. The logic models were developed at the onset of the EIF initiative to represent the overall intended activities, outputs, and outcomes of each unique project. Within each of these areas, this report presents findings of the main themes gleaned from analysis of the accumulated data particularly related to project learning and challenges that emerged during the project period. Importantly, the evaluation methodology intentionally sought out and valued the “stories” of those implementing the projects in their communities. Therefore, this report incorporates comments from project managers and stakeholders to illustrate all aspects of the projects’ experiences. Arguably, these comments offer the greatest insight into the individual projects and, together, make an important contribution to the overall assessment of the success of the EIF. We think that the quotations have the potential to be the “spark” that leads to improved practice and policy that makes a difference.

The structure of this report is as follows:

- **Section 1:** Introduction including information about the development of the EIF Project.
- **Section 2:** Cross project findings that document value added contributions of the project and thematically organized lessons and best practices
- **Section 3:** Conclusions and Best Practices
- **Section 4:** Recommendations for sustainability and legacy
- **Section 5:** Individual project reports for each of the 11 EIF projects
- **Section 6:** Appendices

## BACKGROUND TO THE EIF PROJECT

The EIF was a one-time initiative that funded 11 projects throughout the province from February 2013 to March 31, 2014. This \$1.4 million dollar fund was announced by the Province of BC in September 2012 at the Leaders' Summit on Immigrant Employment in Vancouver, BC. The Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) was awarded funding to design, implement and manage this new initiative that provided funding to British Columbia employers, business associations, and industry/sectoral organizations to deliver innovative demonstration projects and to develop initiatives and resources to support the hiring, retention and labour market integration of new immigrants. Funding for the EIF was through the Government of Canada and the Province of BC and through the Canada-BC immigration Agreement.

In announcing this fund, the Honourable Pat Bell, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour described the rationale for this approach: "Employers understand the challenges in hiring, retaining and integrating immigrants into their workplaces, and these projects will help employers engage in the development of programs, resources and tools to allow them to better facilitate immigrant employment in meeting labour market challenges."

## EIF LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The Province of BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training requested that the EIF project be illustrated in a logic model format. This logic model provided a global picture of the intended activities, outputs, and outcomes.

In particular, the Province provided to IEC-BC the following set of long term outcomes:

- People, communities and workplaces are welcoming and inclusive of newcomers
- Employers are able to recruit and retain immigrant workers
- BC communities and workplaces are more economically and culturally diverse
- Immigrants realize the social and economic benefits of immigrating to Canada and BC, which improves our international reputation
- Newcomers have the ability to participate in Canadian society and the economy
- Improved understanding of the dynamics and elements of promising practices
- Skills shortages are addressed through efficient workforce integration of skilled immigrants
- Employers are aware of and use the new Resource Library
- Newcomers have knowledge of the Canadian work environment and are aware of local labour markets.

## PROCUREMENT AND FUNDING ALLOCATION MODEL

IEC-BC designed and implemented procurement and funding allocation model. This model was outlined in the Request for Proposals released on November 13, 2012 with a closing date of

December 18, 2012. IEC-BC stated that the model developed would provide a fair and transparent opportunity for eligible employers and organizations to apply for funding. This model was also designed to provide equal access to funding to all regions of the province while at the same time giving special consideration to encourage and enable participation from regions outside of Metro Vancouver. The following three funding streams were established:

- Stream 1: Individual Employers
- Stream 2: Business Associations (e.g. Boards of Trades, Chambers of Commerce, and local Business Improvement Associations)
- Stream 3: Industry/Sectoral Organizations (e.g. industry-led partnership organizations that address skills development issues and implement solutions in key sectors of the economy)

## PROJECT DESIGN AND SCOPE

The design and scope of the EIF initiative was based on *The Immigrant Employment Council of BC's BC Employer Consultation Report - Recruiting & Retaining Immigrant Talent (April 2012)* which summarized the IEC-BC's recent consultation with 150 employers in the province. This report was chosen as the most recent in-depth analysis of the views and needs of employers on the subject of immigrant workforce integration. Other references used included the BC Jobs Plan and the Province of BC's Immigration Task Force Report.

The EIF project model described in the Request for Proposals outlined four types of potential projects that were within its scope:

1. infrastructure and organizational development
2. sectoral and/or regional planning initiatives
3. employer capacity building initiatives
4. demonstration projects that would test new employer-led approaches to immigrant labour force integration.

## THEMES

The EIF Request for Proposals clearly outlined key themes related to barriers to immigrant employment and suggested opportunities for addressing these barriers within EIF. These themes had been identified during 15 focus groups with employers as part of the BC Employer Consultation. EIF funded proposals were required to address one or more of these themes.

- **Language Proficiency** - employer-led business and sector/occupation specific English language training

- **Credential Assessment and Recognition** - tools or strategies to assist employers to assess the equivalency of foreign credentials and qualifications
- **Canadian Work Experience** - strategies that address employer demand for immigrants to have previous Canadian work experience
- **Awareness and Information** - strategies that address employer challenges with navigating the plethora of information and resources, including existing best practices, related to attracting, hiring and retaining immigrants in the workforce
- **Recruitment and Retention** - strategies that assist employers within sectors or regions to attract and retain immigrants to the local workforce
- **Capacity Building Support** - supports such as on-line tools/tool-kits that are specific to attracting, hiring and retaining immigrants in the workforce

## OBJECTIVES

EIF projects were required to align with some or all of the following objectives:

- Be employer-led, employer-driven, and support employer needs as identified by employers.
- Undertake to strengthen the employer community capacity that aligns with the strategic objectives of EIF.
- Emphasize innovation, while avoiding duplication and/or adding funding to pre-existing initiatives.
- Create strategic approaches that support employers to enhance/build their capacity to attract, hire and retain new immigrants.
- Develop resources and tools that are useful for employers and responsive to the immigrant workforce.
- Test and evaluate new employer-led approaches to immigrant labour force integration.
- Generate results, lessons learned and resources resulting from these projects that will be built into a resource library to support the longer- term capacity of employers to support the labour market integration of new immigrants.

## INNOVATION

Innovation was an important aspect of EIF. As expressed in the *BC Employer Consultation Report (2012)*, many strategies have been used but immigrant employment issues persist. For the purposes of the EIF, projects were deemed innovative if they met the following general criteria:

- The approach has never been tried in BC before or;

- A similar approach has been tried elsewhere but it has been significantly adapted or modified to address unique regional or sectoral characteristics and needs in BC.

During the application process, the EIF assessment team took care to ensure that funding was not allocated to duplicate projects/programs that already exist. It did, however, consider projects that may build incrementally upon existing work.

Innovation as a concept has multiple meanings and applications. Within a business context, people often conflate innovation with new technology; however, innovation as a concept has far broader appeal, including<sup>1</sup>:

- New or enhanced products
- New or enhanced services
- New or enhanced methods of production
- New or enhanced sources of supply
- New or enhanced business models
- Opening of new markets
- Creation of new organizations

Fostering innovation depends upon a variety of key ingredients, including<sup>2</sup>: ideas and knowledge, educated and entrepreneurial people, networks and collaborations, adequate resources, and the ability to learn from experience. This last point is critical to the innovation process and provides a direct link to the importance of evaluation within the innovation system. Innovation is about more than coming up with new ideas - it is also about implementing them; and, until innovations are implemented, they create no benefit or advantage (CIC, 2011). It is critical to learn from innovation initiatives in order to create change that is both impactful and scalable.

In order to capture the outcomes and stories associated with the innovation experience of the EIF projects, these themes were used as lenses through which to view project-specific and cumulative project data and to inform the overall evaluation approach.

- The innovative potential of linking immigrant employment to **employer-led** strategies and initiatives;
- The **geographical context** of the innovation relative to the regional setting (e.g. rural vs. urban);
- The extent to which innovations are **sector specific**; and

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Innovation Centre (2011). Managing Innovation. <http://innovationcentre.ca/>

<sup>2</sup> Government of Canada (2011). Innovation Canada: A Call to Action. Minister of State for Science and Technology: [http://rd-review.ca/eic/site/033.nsf/eng/h\\_00287.html](http://rd-review.ca/eic/site/033.nsf/eng/h_00287.html)

- **Integrative themes** across sectors and regions that offer generalizable findings and

## EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

IEC-BC and the evaluation consultants developed an evaluation framework based on the program design outlined by IEC-BC in its procurement documents and on the requirements described by the representative of the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training. Specifically, the Ministry required the development of a logic model approach for these projects and in support of this approach provided IEC-BC with a draft logic model for the overall EIF project that specified the outcomes that all of the projects would address.

Each of the 11 EIF projects developed its logic model based on the project design described in their project proposal accepted for inclusion in EIF. These individual logic models, together with the overall EIF project model, represented an approach intended to both capture each of the project's unique responses to providing innovative strategies to addressing immigrant employment as well as to allow cross-project learning that would inform future activities and directions. Each logic model was reviewed and confirmed by the project lead, IEC-BC management, and the evaluation consultants.

As outlined in the evaluation framework, the evaluation was intended to address the overall accomplishments of each project of the activities, outputs and outcomes outlined in the project logic model. For that purpose, the evaluation question was, "To what extent did each project achieve its activities, outputs and outcomes?" In addition, the evaluation was intended to document the learning that was expected to emerge from the projects related to best practices. To capture this learning, the evaluation intentionally sought out and valued the "stories" of those implementing the projects in their communities. Therefore, we chose to incorporate selected comments from project participants to illustrate the project's experience, learning and results. Arguably, these comments offer the greatest insight into the individual projects and, taken together with the comments from all of the projects, make an important contribution to the overall evaluation of the Employer Innovation Fund.

The evaluation utilized qualitative and quantitative data from the following main sources:

### **Written Reports Submitted by Each Project to IEC-BC**

Each project submitted both a mid-term and a final written report to IEC-BC. These reports were provided to the evaluators for incorporation into this report. Areas of the questions in these reports included status of activities, outputs, outcomes, and challenges.

### **Interviews with Project Managers**

Three one-hour telephone interviews were conducted with each project manager. A total of 33 interviews were conducted with project managers. The first interview was conducted near the beginning of the project and was conducted primarily as a "conversation." This

conversation was requested by IEC-BC with the intention of familiarizing the projects with the planned evaluation methodology and timing, and confirming and revising the project logic model. This conversation was important to ensure buy-in to the evaluation and particularly to the logic model methodology which may not have been familiar to those from a strictly business environment.

The second interview was conducted at the mid-point of the project. The purpose of this semi-structured interview was to document the projects' progress, success, and challenges. The third semi-structured interview was conducted near the end of the project period. The purpose of this interview was to gather information about project successes, impacts, sustainability, and challenges at the conclusion of the project. Project managers were also asked to describe the most significant aspect of the project or their learning during the project. The "Most Significant Aspect or Change" is a common question in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals generally illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide significant insight into the project success and challenges.

All of the interviews were digitally recorded with permission from the interviewees. These recordings were made as an alternative to note-taking to ensure a complete record of the interview. Interviewees were told that these recordings would not be shared but that a written summary of the interview would be produced. Interviewees were informed that these interview summaries would be part of the public record and not treated as confidential or anonymous. We also explained that quotations from these interviews would be used extensively in the evaluation report. For this report, quotations were edited for brevity and readability.

### **Interviews with Stakeholders**

In addition to project managers, project stakeholders in the EIF projects played an important and varied role across the projects. To gain some understanding of how stakeholders were involved and their perspectives on the projects, project managers were asked to provide the names of two stakeholders that were familiar with the project and had been integral in its implementation. A total of 22 interviews were conducted with project stakeholders.

As expected, the stakeholders had participated in the projects in a wide variety of ways. These stakeholders were interviewed using a semi-structured interview protocol with questions related to their involvement and motivation, their involvement with your project, the impacts of the project on their organization/business and the community, project innovation, sustainability and challenges. Similar to the questions asked of project managers, stakeholders were asked to describe the most significant aspect of the project or of their learning during the project.

All of the interviews were digitally recorded with permission from the interviewees. These recordings were made as an alternative to note-taking to ensure a complete record of the interview. Interviewees were told that these recordings would not be shared but that a written summary of the interview would be produced. Interviewees were informed that these interview summaries would be part of the public record and not treated as confidential or anonymous. We also explained that quotations from these interviews would be used extensively in the evaluation report. For this report, quotations were edited for brevity and readability.

### **Observation of Project Networking Meetings Hosted by IEC-BC**

IEC-BC convened four conference calls for the purpose of networking and information sharing. The evaluator listened to these discussions, made written notes and also reviewed the minutes of these meetings circulated by IEC-BC. IEC-BC also convened an in person meeting to provide an opportunity for EIF project managers to discuss their projects with representatives of immigrant serving organizations in the lower mainland. The evaluator attended this meeting.

### **Review of Tools and Resources**

The evaluators reviewed the tools and resources available from the projects during the evaluation period. This included observing training sessions, viewing websites, and reading project communications and publically available documents. On-site observations were limited to the lower mainland.

## SECTION 2: CROSS-PROJECT FINDINGS

In this section we present cross-project findings in a number of ways. First, we remove our perspective from the immediate and detailed activities of the individual projects to outline some of the larger issues and themes that emerged from the projects - the big picture - that help to contextualize project results. Second, we present the projects' cumulative activities, outputs and outcomes. The results shown are "best estimates" based on the cumulative data reviewed for this evaluation. Third we summarize some of the main value-added outcomes associated with the project that are threaded throughout this report.

### THE BIG PICTURE

The following high level observations are discussed in this section to help contextualize the overall experience of the EIF projects.

- Immigrant employment initiatives were shown to be advanced by "boots on the ground." This approach takes time and messages must be persistently reinforced.
- Businesses do not have a clear understanding of current or future workforce demands, the "problem", and do not have particular insights into the solutions or innovative practices designed to better integrate new immigrants into the workforce.
- Economic conditions during the project meant that many sectors were not in hiring mode.
- Data on new immigrant employment is poor.
- There are significant differences between urban and rural immigrant integration.

First, the task of immigrant employment was shown to be advanced by "boots on the ground" approaches to raising awareness, building relationships, and constantly and persistently reinforcing the message. The thematic lessons that follow this section identify a number of "best practices" related to a variety of approaches and tools. These practice-based innovations help to facilitate and enhance the reach and effectiveness of different techniques. Nevertheless, project participants became aware of how quickly interventions fade from attention and use. They were also clear that direct and personal connections, between businesses and service agencies, between employers and immigrants, and between businesses were necessary once an initial awareness raising step has occurred. The specificity of the context (both in terms of community or sectoral opportunity) and the need to build trust within the dynamic requires a personal touch. Having made these connections, the projects understand the need to "keep at it" in terms of raising awareness and shifting the workplace culture.

Second, the purpose of the project was in part to enable and activate the innovative potential of the demand side of immigrant employment - the employers. What became apparent in the findings, however, was that **businesses did not have a clear understanding of current or future workforce demands - the problem - and did not have particular insights into the solutions (or innovative practices) to better integrate new immigrants into the workforce**. Clearly, employers need to be a part of the process that solves these problems and eventually applies their innovative capacity to solutions, but employers themselves were not necessarily a driving force for immigrant employment innovation. In general, the EIF project provided an excellent learning process. Employers learned about quality resources, human resource strategies, the business case for diversity in the workplace, and the nuances associated with hiring new immigrants versus the temporary foreign worker program. Once these initial learnings were shared, businesses, in certain cases, then became both enthusiastic supporters of the immigrant employment process and part of the innovation process to make this happen in their industry. This project clearly showed that the business case for hiring immigrants still needs to be communicated and continually reinforced.

Third, the **economic conditions during the project meant that many sectors were not in hiring mode**. The experience of the projects highlighted that currently, employers are relatively disengaged from the issue of immigrant employment. A number of the projects noted that employers were simply not hiring, immigrants or otherwise, despite a general “buzz” of assumption that would indicate otherwise. This speaks to an apparent and complex catch-22 within the immigrant hiring process. Immigrant hiring requires significant lead time to make successful placements, and employers appear ready to make on-demand hiring decisions only. Immigrant hiring requires an investment in readiness. While the advantages associated with this investment would mean that the business and the province would capture more of the economic benefits associated with new economic opportunities rather than leakage to other provinces and jurisdictions, employers do not seem willing to make these investments. Several of the project managers mentioned their disappointment in the low level of interest and engagement on the part of employers to consider immigrant hiring at this time. Similarly, in sectors that purport to be experiencing labour shortages, employers seemed unwilling to make accommodations in wage rates or hiring processes to facilitate immigrant employment. In the select EIF projects where employers were engaged and willing to take extra steps to hire and integrate immigrant employees, the experience was very positive for both the employer and the employee.

Fourth, complicating all of these dynamics and processes is the underlying condition that **the data on new immigrant employment is poor**. There is a lack of a basic understanding of the nature and scale of the problem regarding immigrant employment and under-employment. Further complicating this challenge of information failure is the tremendous diversity of workforce conditions in different regions of the province and in different sectors of the economy. In this regard, the EIF projects were clearly on-target in their implementation of a wide range of place-based and sector-based initiatives.

Finally, the project revealed a number of **significant differences between urban and rural immigrant integration**. Equally, the project revealed important insights about the necessity to connect urban and rural immigrant serving organizations and business to better facilitate immigrant employment throughout the province. For non-metropolitan immigrant hiring, the challenge is, to paraphrase a key business expression, **relocation, relocation, relocation**. In this project, immigrants were reluctant to relocate for employment that was seasonal, paid a lesser wage, despite acknowledgement of lower cost of living, or did not match their skill level. Overcoming these barriers required a number of variables: 1) communicating clear, realistic expectations to immigrants about their employability; 2) establishing trusting relationships between urban and rural service agencies and between urban and rural employers and service agencies; and 3) having a whole community strategy in place to attract and retain immigrants to non-metropolitan regions. Postings and passive marketing proved wholly insufficient. Project proponents also made it clear that in certain circumstances immigrants are highly frustrated and felt resentment about perceived promises of what their employment prospects would be upon arriving in Canada. On the employer side, many wanted to see proven cases of success in hiring immigrants in their communities or had encountered a negative experience with an immigrant employee and would not consider hiring another, regardless of the absence of logic in this approach.

In addition, several projects reported that there was a reluctance of some community members to consider relocating immigrants from the lower mainland if there were unemployed individuals in their home communities.

## PROJECT CUMULATIVE RESULTS

The eleven EIF projects engaged in one or more of four primary areas of activity: stakeholder engagement, workshops and training, resource and tool development and promotion, and skills standards and assessments. Activities in these four areas resulted in the production of tangible materials (outputs) such as training modules, toolkits, guides, standards, assessments, videos, websites, career fairs, tip sheets, information sheets, brochures, etc. These activities and outputs were intended to lead to the anticipated outcomes.

The following chart shows the cumulative results of the 11 projects. The results shown are “best estimates” based on the cumulative data reviewed for this evaluation. While, it is difficult to accurately count outputs as they vary from project to project, the following provides some sense of the EIF project cumulative scope and results. The outcomes shown were realized to varying degrees during the project period. For most projects, the cumulative learning during this relatively short project, along with the tools and resources produced has provided an extensive library to draw from as they move forward to achieve project outcomes.

| Activities (Cumulative)                     | Outputs (Cumulative)   | Outcomes (Cumulative)   |
|---|--|---|
| Stakeholder Engagement:                     | 11 industry consultations<br>5000+ industry outreach   | Increased awareness and understanding of new resources and existing promising practices.<br>More strategic direction and support for employers in hiring and integrating immigrants into the workplace.   |
| Workshops and Training                      | 75+ workshops<br>2, two-week trainings   |   |
| Resource and Tool Development and Promotion | 8 new websites<br>40+ videos<br>4 employer guides (online and written)<br>40+ handouts and tip sheets<br>9000+ media release<br>1500+ website visits | Increased awareness of business case to hiring immigrants<br>Employers are more aware of tools resources and supports to better integrate immigrants.<br>Immigrants get information on communities in BC<br>Employers connected to immigrant talent.<br>Immigrant job applicants can better demonstrate their knowledge and capabilities.<br>Employers can better assess the competency of the individual against occupational standards<br>Employers are better able to navigate HR so that they can keep their focus on their operations. |
| Skills Standards and Assessments            | 5 employer guides and competency assessments   | Employers share information and experiences with other businesses or associates<br>SME internal immigrant hiring capacity will be enhanced.<br>Have a strategic approach to sourcing immigrant talent<br>5 immigrants hired.  |

**VALUE-ADDED CONTRIBUTIONS**

The EIF project produced a number of value-added outcomes that advance both our understanding and readiness to integrate new immigrants into the workforce. The following represent lines of direct attribution where the project can claim impact.

**Foundation of information resources, workshop modules, and hiring tools**

The project created a sophisticated foundation of information resources, workshop modules, and hiring tools that have, and will continue to elevate the capacity of the organizations in the province to support new immigrant employment. The EIF project has placed contextualized resources directly into the hands of employers and service organizations and produced tailored materials specifically targeted to certain sectors and geographic regions. These highly contextualized and persistently reinforced resources have potential durability in the marketplace.

**Network of inter/intra-sectoral and inter/intra-regional relationships.**

The EIF project has created a robust network of inter/intra-sectoral and inter/intra-regional relationships. These relationships have bridged cultural and geographical divides (e.g. businesses working with immigrant service agencies, and rural areas working with urban partners) that have served as barriers to immigrant employment. The attention paid to uniting the supply and demand sides of the immigrant employment equation was a welcomed positive aspect of this project. The development of intra-sectoral and regional relationships meant that businesses were working together to overcome some of the competitive barriers to seeing mutual benefits associated with immigrant employment. This network is poised as a powerful force for advancing the ongoing work of IEC-BC and any targeted follow-up programming supported by the Province or the private sector. This network may be an important project legacy as the proponents are extremely eager to leverage the work completed during the EIF project and not lose momentum.

### **Informed business and business agency champions**

The project has created informed business and business agency champions throughout the province. Project leads and affiliated corporate partners consistently commented on how their personal awareness of the issue has grown, fostering their commitment to stay involved. While the impact of information resources and training workshops likely fade over time unless they are reinforced, EIF project champions represent significant assets for leveraging future immigrant employment related activities. They should be drawn into a network of distributed leadership for advancing the work, and limited resources, of IEC-BC.

### **Understanding the complex relationship between preparing new immigrants for employment and the readiness of employers to hire**

The EIF project provided an intimate understanding of the complex and nuanced relationship between preparing new immigrants for employment and the readiness of employers to hire. Businesses are currently approaching hiring with an immediacy bias, meaning that they are interested in hiring on-demand and not one minute sooner than necessary. This presents a challenge to the pipeline of preparing new immigrants for positions in different sectors. Engaging employers earlier in the process helps to clarify expectations and reduce the current disconnect between the supply and demand for immigrant employees.

### **Challenged assumptions about the willingness of immigrants to seize job opportunities**

The project challenged assumptions about the willingness of immigrants to seize job opportunities. Assumptions associated with “if you post it they will come” approaches to immigrant hiring were proven misguided and ineffective. The complex relationship between job opportunity, expectations, bias, place, and family and community connectedness presents a significant challenge to making successful immigrant hires. There is no single technological or procedural innovation that can solve this complex problem.

## SECTION 3: CONCLUSIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

The following section provides conclusions and best practice recommendations supported by the cross-project findings described in Section 2. The work of many of the projects provided the seeds of innovative practice to facilitate employer-led immigrant employment. This selection of “best practices” was developed from both the successes and challenges experienced by the projects. As with all best practices, the findings reinforced that these lessons need to be contextualized to both sector and region to become effective. As such, they represent key points of consideration when designing and implementing strategies and tools to help facilitate better immigrant employment outcomes.

*Fostering innovation depends upon a variety of key ingredients, including: ideas and knowledge, educated and entrepreneurial people, networks and collaborations, adequate resources, and the ability to learn from experience. Innovation is about more than coming up with new ideas – it is also about implementing them; and, until innovations are implemented, they create no benefit or advantage (CIC, 2011). It is critical to learn from innovation initiatives in order to create change that is both impactful and scalable. (EIF Evaluation Framework April 2013)*

### ENGAGING EMPLOYER STAKEHOLDERS

The EIF project speaks powerfully to the ongoing need to inform and educate the business community about the potential benefits and processes of immigrant employment. The project reveals that good quality information does exist, but it needs to be packaged appropriately and made directly relevant to the contextual circumstances of the employer. Businesses have to want to engage in the immigrant employment process, and once they do, they require the appropriate information. Two important messages emerged from EIF projects to enable this process:

- 1) **Persistent messaging and engagement matters.** It is important to get information about immigrant hiring and retention in front of employers on a regular, rolling basis. Innovations in medium (e.g. use of social media) can help facilitate this process, but building relationships and gaining a deeper sense of commitment from employers requires direct interactions (or, “boots on the ground,” as articulated above). The relevance of information fades quickly in memory and circumstance. Employers must also shift their “on-demand” hiring expectations and engage more deeply - and invest in it - building the relationships with the immigrant employment sector to facilitate on-demand hiring when it is needed.
- 2) **Both the format of the message and the messenger matter.** Businesses require appropriately packaged materials and trust plays a significant role in whether the information is considered meaningful. Business champions and the networking role of

Chambers proved effective and trusted sources to expand networks of employers to consider immigrant employment.

Some best practice lessons for engaging employers are:

- Leverage existing activities (e.g. chamber events). Events do not have to have a specific immigrant focus. Combine quick hits of information and resource sharing to ensure continuity of the message. Immigrant employment requires a cultural shift within the business sector, a process that takes time and continuous re-enforcement.
- Start with champions. Invest resources in establishing deeper engagement with a few “champion” businesses. These businesses then become the test case for success and can play a critical role in piloting and marketing the benefits of immigrant employee engagement.
- Utilize Chamber of Commerce organizations to play a critical, trusted role in sharing information and facilitating relationships between the business sector and service agencies.
- Engage a broad spectrum of sectors. Look for champions within various business sectors and at different scales. Booms and busts within various sectors at different times means that a diversified approach is critical for maintaining pathways for immigrant employment.
- Remember that this is a long game. The projects are viewing their efforts as part of a long-term strategy to promote new Canadians to meet the expected expansion of the BC workforce.
- Approach immigrant employment from an “investment” rather than a “cost” orientation. A foundation of good information and relationships will enable the province to capture more economic benefit when hiring surges occur.

## BUILDING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

The literature on immigrant hiring speaks to the importance of the broader community dynamic which houses the employment opportunity. The EIF project reinforces this finding. It is not an innovative finding in the broader sense, but demonstrates that innovation is context specific. Each region and sector needs to experience this phenomenon before durable attraction and retention takes place. This is particularly true for rural employment opportunities. New immigrants are likely to have social networks in place within metropolitan regions. This presents two challenges for non-metropolitan companies. First, finding potential immigrant employees is a challenge. Developing strong rural-urban relationships with other businesses and service agencies is very important. Second, the job is not enough. Employers (and community organizations) have to invest in a more sophisticated response strategy to market opportunities, promote the community, and embed new immigrants into the fabric of the community. There are two important messages for building community relationships:

- 1) **Build relationships between employers and service agencies.** Immigrant employment efforts should network with service agencies and coordinate directly with business associations and employers. Service agencies hold in-depth information about immigrants, their skills and aspirations, and the nuances of their particular conditions that are often vital to successful (and long-term) employment placements. Projects that have increased their collaboration with a range of stakeholders report that they have seen increasing benefits from broad networking.
- 2) **Establish immigrant attraction and retention working groups or roundtables in the community that stimulate coordinated dialogue and response capacity in the community and region.** Roundtables have the potential to combine limited capacities in individual areas and create considerable efficiencies in designing and implementing a multifaceted approach to identifying, attracting, and retaining new immigrants.

Best practices for a coordinated community response include:

- Provide family and partner support to prospective hires. Make immigrant attraction and retention a family process.
- Provide direct assistance with settlement and community integration (housing, community orientation, social connectedness).
- Establish strong relationships between business associations and employers and immigrant service organizations. Communities must engage and leverage all of their organizational and relational assets to understand the problem and design contextually appropriate responses.
- Clarify with the broader community the importance and potential of attracting new immigrants. This includes targeted information that clarifies confusion between new immigrants and other immigrant employment programs. It is important that communities view immigrant hiring as adding value to the community/region, not “taking away local jobs.”
- Use the term “new Canadians” instead of new immigrants, or immigrants to convey citizenship and permanency.

## ENGAGING NEW IMMIGRANTS

The projects employed a variety of tactics for engaging with immigrants. To reiterate the above point, the employment opportunity itself is only one dimension for attracting and retaining immigrant employees. The extent to which there is a supportive environment within the business *and* a supportive environment within the community is vital to long-term success. The projects used a variety of techniques that informed and provided case evidence that furthered an understanding of effectively communicating with new immigrants.

- 1) **Employers should approach immigrant attraction by first engaging existing employee diversity within their companies.** Several projects reported strong buy-in

with the use of “stories” about immigrants already working in their companies and living in the community.

- 2) **Tell stories.** Using graphics and personal story-telling provides necessary detail that will inform immigrants about the conditions they (and their families, if applicable) will encounter in the workplace and in the community. These stories also show employers that immigrants are already being successfully integrated in their communities.
- 3) **Link language training to skill development and upgrading.** Several projects reported that English language communication skills are an important aspect of immigrant integration. The focus of training needs to extend beyond just the job skill set to include language training options with each skill development opportunity.
- 4) **Understand that new immigrants may have arrived with certain expectations about their work prospects in Canada that are not being realized** for a variety of reasons (credentialing, language, bias, etc.). Employers should be sensitive to the frustrations associated with new immigrants gaining employment in their area of previous or preferred employment. Projects struggled with the process of matching and assessing international standards. Documenting and presenting employment pathways may help to more clearly articulate expectations and ease immigrant frustrations about perceived barriers and broken promises. These frustrations also speak more broadly to better communications at point of contact within the immigration process.

Best practices to engage immigrants include:

- Approach immigrant employment using a “whole community” approach.
- Focus non-boom industries (i.e. lower wages) on community stories and a broad family-inclusive approach to communicating with potential immigrant employees.
- Present a more nuanced and contextually relevant picture of wages and cost of living in different parts of the province.
- Clearly articulate the financial incentives associated with gaining appropriate credentials.
- Approach seasonal work opportunities differently than relocation-oriented positions. The poor nature of data about new immigrants severely hinders the ability of employers to target opportunities to appropriate workers.
- Promote quality of life in non-metropolitan regions as part of a holistic approach to encourage relocation.

## DEVELOPING TOOLS AND RESOURCES

A number of the projects designed tools and resources to both build the case for immigrant employment and ease the pressures associated with credentialism by providing resources to help companies more easily and quickly assess the skills of immigrant employees. The

challenge with producing such resource materials is that it takes considerable time and investment to produce a quality product and it may quickly become dated and irrelevant. A number of findings are informative about ensuring that the materials produced are relevant and durable, over the long-term.

- 1) **The process of creating assessment measures and tools may be adapted to other sectors.** Specific skill-sets and other indicators may vary by industry, but the process of collecting information, dealing with international standards, and testing the guides holds cross-sector relevance.
- 2) **Proof of concept is critical.** Businesses want something that is proven to work. Business associations have an opportunity to test materials with select members before scaling-up. Several EIF projects experienced challenges with identifying immigrants to test materials and strategies. More information is needed about why these challenges ensued. Employer and immigrant champions may play a critical role here in terms of promoting the methodology to the broader business community.

Best practices for tools and resources include:

- Make reports easy to understand and quick to use.
- Develop tools and resources with forethought about how they may be modified, updated and expanded over time.
- Provide employers with templates that allow them to fill-in business- specific information.
- Use quick hits and not reports. Shorter, targeted, clear and simple communications are most effective. This strategy is particularly important for reaching small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) who do not necessarily have robust HR staff capacity.
- Use social media to reach potential employers and tap into business associations and networks. Use the medium to re-enforce quick message hits, updates, or announcements. Social media can be effective to keep the issue top-of-mind.
- Recognize that social media may not be effective at reaching potential immigrant employees. New Canadians may not have access to or be familiar or comfortable with social media platforms.
- Engage employer and immigrant champions to gain a better understanding of how best to develop, test, and sustain materials over the long term.

## SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND LEGACY

The EIF project has created a trove of resource materials and a provincial network of informed champions. The challenge now is to leverage these assets to further improve the immigrant employment system and immigrant employment outcomes.

The design of the projects was ambitious within a one-year period. Realistically, it's not surprising that while all of the projects successfully developed the intended tools, most have only recently started to promote and implement the tools. It is likely disappointing to many projects that the project outcomes related to employment are not yet realized. However, the nature of the projects was that foundational tools were developed but these have not yet had a reasonable chance to work and see if they contribute substantially to increasing the recruiting, hiring and retaining of immigrants currently living in Canada.

The findings, best practices, and recommendations provided in this report represent the learning from the synthesized cross-project findings. Overall, the projects spoke about the importance of networking and information sharing. They valued the sector-specific tools and resources they developed and had strong intentions to continue their momentum. They also clearly saw a level of transferability to other sectors and circumstances. That said, the project also revealed the tremendous implications of contextual variability in sector and geography. It could be argued that once the resources are development and shared, successful new immigrant employment requires a place-sensitive approach.

The following recommendations speak to ongoing work to meet the demands raised by the EIF project and to continue to refine and improve immigrant employment outcomes in British Columbia. Each of these recommendations represents an investment in readiness within the immigrant employment system. Given the propensity of firms to hire “on-demand”, implementing these recommendations will help to ensure a robust level of preparedness that will enable the province to capture economic benefits the moment opportunities arise.

### **Convening Partnerships and Collaborations**

1. Given the importance identified in the project to facilitating relationships between the various stakeholders involved in immigrant employment, there is a clear need to support a broad convening role. This lead role can then seek to implement a distributed leadership model of informed champions in different sectors and regions throughout the province. Within an employer-led framework, Chambers of Commerce seem an obvious representative for distributed leadership. Chambers have existing capacity, are trusted agents within the business community, exist throughout the province, and are institutional in terms of being relatively permanent agencies. A main convening organization still has a role to play in terms of providing information and content to these distributed

organizations, and in facilitating relationships with broader stakeholders, including service agencies.

### **Persistent Organization**

2. The combination of entrenched cultural issues associated with immigrant employment, the pace of business and shifting economics requires persistent organization. Shifting cultural norms and maintaining current information and resource material requires more than a pilot project. Core resources and embedded organizational capacity are required to maintain focus on the issue.

### **Research on Employers**

3. Efforts are required to better understand the reluctance of businesses to hire new immigrants. Findings in the project suggest a complicated web of personal, political and contextual issues related to community culture, employment, training and probably much more.

### **Research on New Immigrants**

4. The project received significant feedback (and frustration) about the poor quality of information about new immigrants in the province. More research is required to improve the quality, accessibility, and currency of information about new immigrants.

### **Support for Immigrants And Employers *After* A Successful Job Placement.**

5. The project revealed a variety of issues and barriers associated with relocation. Resources and support mechanisms need to be designed to support immigrants and employers *after* a successful job placement. This is particularly needed in situations of relocation, but lessons learned will also be relevant for in-region employment.

### **Immigrant Employment Community Collaboratives**

6. Support initiatives that establish and maintain immigrant employment community collaboratives. The energy and success of the whole community approach witnessed in the project indicates that this should be a target for ongoing funding and support. Successful strategies in EIF projects included the immigrants currently working and living in BC communities. Engagement with immigrant employees and word-of-mouth strategies are powerful and long-lasting tools. Collaborative efforts yield a variety of benefits including: more efficient use of resources, avoiding duplication, connecting employers with service agencies, and engaging other community resources and services that are critical to successful immigrant attraction and retention.

### **Research On Successful Job Placement.**

7. The projects are situated along a continuum of the immigrant employment pipeline. Research is necessary that backcasts from a successful job placement to point of contact within the immigration system. The extent of frustration witnessed by new immigrants about their expectations for employment, and the extent of frustration expressed by employers about the job readiness of new immigrants may require programmatic changes to immigrant employment at a systems level.

# SECTION 5: INDIVIDUAL EIF PROJECT REPORTS

## INTRODUCTION

Section 2: provides an individual report for each of the eleven EIF projects. These 11 parallel reports address the following seven areas:

- Project description
- Project logic model <sup>3</sup>
- Project activities and outputs
- Project outcomes and learning
- Project results related to specified indicator measures
- Project challenges and learning
- Highlight of a “significant aspect” of the project

The content of these reports is organized to correspond to each of these seven areas and represents a summary of each project gleaned from analysis of the accumulated data. As described earlier in this report, given the short duration of these projects and the nature of the extensive phase required for the development of tools and resources, the reader should be mindful to focus more on the projects’ achievement of the activities, outputs and the short and medium term outcomes. For most projects, the cumulative learning along with the tools and resources produced has provided an extensive library to draw from as they move forward. Progress toward longer-term outcomes remains in process but are as yet mostly unrealized given the EIF project timeline.

As outlined in the evaluation framework and described in Section 1 of this report, the evaluation was intended to address the overall accomplishments of each project of the activities, outputs and outcomes outlined in the project logic model. For this purpose, the evaluation question was, “To what extent did each project achieve its activities, outputs and outcomes?” In addition, the evaluation was intended to document the learning that would emerge from the projects related to best practices. To capture this learning, the evaluation intentionally incorporated and valued the “stories” of those implementing the projects in their communities. Therefore, we chose to utilize selected comments from program participants to illustrate the project’s experience, learning and results. Arguably, these

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<sup>3</sup> Each project developed its logic model at the onset of the project to illustrate and describe its project plans. These models were a requirement for funding. Logic models were first developed by the United Way of America and have been extensively used for program evaluation for more than 25 years. However, the logic model may not have been a familiar tool within the business context.

comments offer the greatest insight into the individual projects and, taken together with the comments from all of the projects, make an important contribution to the overall assessment of and learning from the Employer Innovation Fund.

# BRITISH COLUMBIA CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION (BCCA)

## BCCA Project Description - The Hire Guide

BCCA developed the on-line “Hire Guide” for BC construction employers. This tool describes the emerging labour market and underscores why new Canadians should be a key part of the HR strategy. The Hire Guide takes employers through best practices in recruitment, hiring, and retention with simple, clearly presented, solution-oriented tools and content from experts in the field. The Hire Guide incorporates videos with “real-life” stories about new Canadians.

BCCA is a non-profit organization representing approximately 2,000 companies in the construction industry that employs approximately 140,000 British Columbians. BCCA provides leadership in the presentation and services of BC’s industrial, commercial, institutional and multi-family residential construction industry.

The BCCA EIF project was supported in the Level One Regional Industry/Sectoral Organization Category (Up To \$200,000).

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

## BCCA Logic Model

| Activities   | Outputs                                     | Outcomes  | Indicators   |
|--|---|---|--|
| Develop online Hire Guide for Construction industry.   | Online Hire Guide for construction industry | Increased awareness and understanding of new resources and existing promising practices.                    | # of businesses using Hire Guide                                       |
| Develop online tools that demonstrate best practices for the construction industry to engage, assess, recruit and retain immigrant employees in BC | “How to” videos                             | More strategic direction and support for employers in hiring and integrating immigrants into the workplace. | # of hirings facilitated   |
| Launch Hire  |   | Businesses use hire guide as part of HR activities  | # of retentions facilitated  |
|  |   | Employers modify  | # and type of interest from federal and provincial government agencies |
|  |   |   | # and type of media coverage   |
|  |   |   | # of visits  |
|  |   |   | # of repeat visits   |
|  |   |   | # length of time on website  |
|  |   |   | # of downloads   |
|  |   |   | # of views of videos   |
|  |   |   | # of shares on social media  |

|       |  |   |  |
|-------|--|---|--|
| Guide |  | their workforce policies and practices that support the hiring and retention of immigrants. | # of registrants on website<br># of email addresses obtained<br># of websites on which Hire Guide is hosted<br>Satisfaction of users of the Hire Guide |
|-------|--|---|--|

## BCCA Activities and Outputs

BCCA has successfully developed and launched an online Hire Guide for the construction industry. The Hire Guide is an interactive tool for the primarily small to medium sized businesses that may not have significant capacity in the human resources area. For this development phase, BCCA engaged the four regional construction associations that comprise BCCA in the planning and development of the Hire Guide.

This website was launched in January 2014 and the project is now implementing its planned communication strategy to build awareness of the tool in the construction industry and to engage employers and others involved in the human resource management aspects of the construction industry. The new website was developed with a content management system that allows the site to be easily updated as needed.

*The combination of cutting edge technology and unique approach to content (e.g. editorial voice and site structure) make The Hire Guide more easily “consumable” than most websites created for similar purposes. This has presented some unique demonstration opportunities, where audiences have been eager to take the site for a spin and interact with it on their tablets. Comments back include “Wow - this is fun” and “It’s really cool”. This is a big step in our goal of engagement.*

*Almost 7 years ago we started our programming with a program called the Immigrant Skilled Trades Employment Program (ISTEP) to connect new Canadians who were underutilized in terms of their skill set in our economy with opportunities in our construction sector. Even then we were starting to see the skilled shortages, and we saw one of the ways of dealing with that was connecting new Canadians with opportunity. Over the years we have identified concerns and challenges. This BCCA project has captured a lot of the concerns that we had and presented it in a creative and innovative way. They created something that’s unique, interesting, you can blast through it fairly quickly or you can take some time and follow some of the side links and get a more well-rounded explanation of what the situation is and what’s happening.*

The following highlights the project’s key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Development and launch of the new website, [www.hireguide.ca](http://www.hireguide.ca)

- Development of materials for website including promotional video, media release, online advertising - banner, button, written ad copy, embedded videos describing “The Situation” and “The Solution,” and a video guide for using the newly developed Candidate Assessment Tool.
- Outreach within the construction industry to engage employers and confirm industry needs and best practices related to immigrant employees.
- Development of communication strategy to promote Hire Guide

## BCCA Outcomes and Learning

For this project, BCCA identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the promotion and use of the Hire Guide within the construction industry. Now that the development of the Hire Guide is completed, BCCA is poised to promote the Hire Guide and to build the industry’s engagement with the opportunities this resource presents to recruit, hire and retain immigrants in the construction industry.

The following discusses the project’s achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

**Outcome: Increased awareness and understanding of new resources and existing promising practices.**

**(Realized)**

*Even though we are a part of the industry and deal with HR issues all the time, talking to people in this project is helping us clarify what the challenges are and then coming up with new ideas about what we can do about it.*

*Work on The Hire Guide has highlighted the intrinsic connection between the labour force and the issues that come along with economic shifts: hiring immigrants, training high school students, sourcing skilled workers from abroad, managing retirements, seasonality...all these are part of a single picture. The Hire Guide plays an important part in assisting employers looking for new HR strategies and stimulates a strategic conversation that reaches far beyond the immediate message.*

*These are not the kinds of interactions that we would typically have had with a multicultural organization. Normally we talk to employers, government and job seekers, we wouldn’t be interviewing service agencies in depth about their programs and insights. We are engaging with them in a much deeper way than we would typically - this is having a good impact on our overall understanding.*

*One of the biggest things I’ve learned is that there are so many resources out there already and few are using them. I think because of how and where they are presented. Sometimes people spend a lot of time making something and no time selling it.*

*It isn’t really new but it was presented differently. We had an opportunity, for instance, to talk about skill shortages and the way that immigrants play a key role in addressing that shortage today. I don’t think a lot of people think about that.*

**Outcome: More strategic direction and support for employers in hiring and integrating immigrants into the workplace.**

**(Realized)**

*One of the things I like about the Guide is that it points people in our direction, if you need more information or if you are looking for work and are a new Canadian, this is an agency who can help you. Because what we have had trouble with in the past is connecting the right people with the right skill set. So if this helps us in that process, I think it's very valuable.*

**Outcome: Businesses use hire guide as part of HR activities.**

**(Not realized)**

*My suggestion is that, this is reasonably hot off the press; it's just hit our website and others. And I think the next step is how we target this thing so it does have an impact and connects the right players. (Stakeholder)*

*Our approach to doing business, and it's very affective with the immigrant community, is a demand side model. What that means is we spend most of our time talking to employers finding out what their needs are, and then we come back to the unemployed and then connect them with the need.*

**Outcome: Employers modify their workforce policies and practices that support the hiring and retention of immigrants.**

**(Not realized)**

**Outcome: Immigrants are hired and retained.**

**(Not realized)**

## **BCCA Indicator Measures**

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized.

For BCCA, most of the indicators in the logic model related to promotion and usage of the Hire Guide. As described earlier, this has not yet occurred but is expected to occur over the next few months. The following table shows the project’s results related to the indicator measures during the evaluation period.

- # of businesses using Hire Guide: None to date
- # of hirings facilitated: None to date
- # of retentions facilitated: None to date
- # and type of interest from federal and provincial government agencies: None to date
- # and type of media coverage: None to date
- # of visits: 975 visits. 798 unique visits. In Canada, visits have come primarily from BC. Visitors from 87 Canadian cities viewed The Hire Guide. Visits from 18 countries: Canada, France, USA, Ireland, UK, Philippines, Portugal, UAE, Spain, Croatia, Azerbaijan, Germany, India, Italy, Saint Lucia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan.
- # of repeat visits: Not known
- # length of time on website: Average of 4:43 minutes
- # of downloads: Not known
- # of views of videos: Not known
- # of shares on social media: Not known
- # of registrants on website: None
- # of email addresses obtained: None
- # of websites on which Hire Guide is hosted: 61 websites are referring traffic to The Hire Guide.
- Satisfaction of users of the Hire Guide: Not known

## BCCA Challenges and Learning

In this section we outline some of the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate the learning related to these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project activities, outputs, and outcomes, learning about these challenges contributes to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience throughout the project period.

### **The consultation and development phase of the project took longer than expected.**

*We’ve got it produced, it’s kind of like getting a brand new car from the factory and we’ve got the keys but we haven’t turned on the engine yet.*

*It’s got future potential. It’s brand new, and while our team is aware of it and are using it, it’s been more of a passive use than an active use so far. We are now shifting gears.*

*“It has been very hard for us to find and interview employers who have successfully employed and continue to employ immigrants and it has been hard for us to find immigrants who are successfully employed in construction. While this has been a challenge to developing the Guide, it has also validated the need for this conversation.”*

**Employers were not aware of the benefits and potential of hiring immigrants in their workforce.**

*We had an opportunity to talk about skill shortages and the way that immigrants play a key role in addressing that shortage today. And I don't think a lot of people think about that.*

### **There are existing cultural barriers to integrating new Canadians.**

*We have had conversations about prejudices and barriers, and what a typical construction site looks like, and we can't dance around the issue. We are figuring out how to address it.*

*"There are emotional perceptions about immigrant employment. That has been a big challenge in deciding how we phrase things and how we put this information out there, because we are trying to open minds."*

*"We noticed the emotional response when you use the word "immigrant" so we tried to use the word "new Canadian." All of this national dialogue about temporary foreign workers had an influence on our strategy on launching anything to do with the immigrant piece."*

*"Often an employer will say "we tried hiring a woman, and it didn't work out, so we aren't going to do that again" Our HR person will say "have you ever hired a man and it didn't work?" and they'll say "of course" so it's like, are you not hiring men anymore? And it's the same thing with accessing the immigrant labour pool which is, for construction, a non-traditional labour pool. So they might say "I've tried an immigrant, it didn't work out, I'm not doing that again." so then you have people who maybe haven't tried it, or haven't thought about it, or have a bias against it, and then you have people who tried it and it didn't work out for personal reasons, not because it was a new Canadian."*

### **BCCA Most Significant Aspect**

The "Most Significant Aspect or Change" is a common question asked in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals typically illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

Overall, the BCCA project managers and stakeholders pointed to the opportunity provided by the EIF project to uncover and address some of the barriers to immigrant employment. The newly developed Hire Guide is expected to be a "living tool" and to be extensively promoted and utilized within the construction industry.

*We have made choices about the technology with a focus on the ability to update it and add to it so that it remains relevant. This is a living project, not something that is produced, packaged and never changed - this is very important.*

*The project is giving us an opportunity to have new thoughts about where we can give some more, new and focused activity to see that we are untapping the potential of the new Canadians that are arriving in the country and have the skills we need. This is one more tool that can advance that discussion.*

# BC TRUCKING ASSOCIATION (BCTA)

## BCTA Project Description - Tools for Assessing an Immigrant Truck Drivers' Non-Canadian Experience

BCTA developed International Trucking Workforce Reference Guide (ITWRG), *now called International Trucking Reference: Roads, Rules, and Drivers (International Trucking Reference)* This guide provides information about the operating environments of trucking sectors in other countries. The guide also includes information about the business case for hiring qualified immigrants and includes details on recruiting and retaining foreign-trained drivers. BCTA also developed the Immigrant Driver Readiness - Industry Validation and Engagement (IDRIVE) assessment tool to assist employers to assess an immigrant applicant's readiness for employment.

BCTA is a non-profit, non-partisan industry advocacy association that represents its members with all levels of government. Its purpose is to facilitate communications and consultation between the trucking industry and government, raise public awareness about the importance and role of the trucking sector in the economy, and provide programs and services to its members to support their business activities. BCTA promotes a prosperous, safe, efficient and responsible commercial road transportation industry.

The BCTA EIF project was supported in The Level One Mainland/Southwest Category (Up To \$200,000)

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a picture of the project's intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

### BCTA Logic Model

| Activities   | Outputs  | Outcomes   | Indicators  |
|--|--|--|---|
| Develop International Trucking Reference Guide       | International Trucking Reference Guide   | Increased awareness by BC trucking of potential immigrant supply in BC   | # of trucking companies downloading Reference Guide   |
| Introduce Reference Guide to BC trucking companies   | Communication strategy targeting over 500 trucking employers using multiple communication channels | Increased awareness by BC trucking of business case to hiring immigrants | # and type of communications with trucking companies<br># and type of feedback from companies |
| Develop and pilot Truck Driver Skills and Experience | Truck Driver Skills and Experience   | Increased confidence of employers in hiring immigrant drivers            | # and type of uses of Reference Guide<br># of drivers who complete                            |

|            |   |   |  |
|------------|---|---|--|
| Assessment | Assessment developed<br>Truck Driver Skills and Experience Assessment piloted with 25 landed immigrants | Increased demand for and use of Reference Guide and Assessment<br>Broad industry recognition of Reference Guide and Assessment<br>Opportunities to share tools with other jurisdictions in Canada | assessment<br># and type of response by employers to assessment<br># and type of response by immigrants to assessment<br># and type of opportunities to share tool across Canada<br># and type of demand from employers and immigrants<br># of hirings facilitated |
|------------|---|---|--|

## BCTA Activities and Outputs

BCTA completed the development of the International Trucking Workforce Reference Guide (ITWRG), now called *International Trucking Reference: Roads, Rules, and Drivers (International Trucking Reference)* and the Immigrant Driver Readiness - Industry Validation and Engagement (IDRIVE) assessment tool to assist employers to assess an immigrant job applicant’s readiness for employment.

*If I look at all the detail in the reference guides about all the different countries, I thought that was really interesting. The research that was done on that was fantastic. When we get to the point when we are sending out feelers and doing the recruiting side of it, I think it’s really a great tool to understand what their current environment it.*

Several organizations and content experts were involved in the research process and the development of these tools that provide a wide range of information about the conditions for truckers in several countries.

BCTA also worked to recruit immigrant drivers to participate in the pilot of these tools but were ultimately not successful in recruiting immigrants to participate in the pilot. This pilot experience was intended to provide the “success” stories that would encourage industry to learn about this source of employees and to validate the tool that would allow companies to become familiar with the relevance of the applicants’ prior trucking experience.

BCTA conducted an extensive search that included engaging the support of the service agencies, and networking with all of the other projects, but were unable to identify drivers who met the project criteria. Promotion of the tools was started during the project period and the organization has a communications plan to continue outreach and promotion.

The following highlights the project’s key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Completed International Trucking Workforce Reference Guide (ITWRG). Now called International Trucking Reference: Roads, Rules, and Drivers International Trucking Reference
- Completed Truck Driver Skill and Experience Assessment Tool. Including IDRIVE Assessment Tool, Third Party Assessors Guide, Employer Guide for larger companies to conduct own assessments
- Implemented Participant Recruitment and Communication Plan for pilot of assessment tool.
- Outreach and promotion to build employer awareness of Reference Guide and Assessment Tool. Including provincial and regional trucking associations representing 3,000 trucking companies across Canada

## BCTA Outcomes and Learning

For this project, BCTA identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the promotion and use of the Trucking Workforce Reference Guide within the trucking industry. The intention was to develop a comprehensive guide and then to pilot the guide with 25 immigrants.

Now that the development of the Reference Guide is completed, BCTA is poised to promote the Guide and to build the industry's engagement with the opportunities this resource presents to recruit, hire and retain immigrants in the trucking industry.

The following discusses the project's achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

### **Outcome: Increased awareness by BC trucking of potential immigrant supply in BC. (Not realized)**

*We wanted to make immigrants from those countries more accessible to our members and to the industry. We have had great feedback, and we are confident that others will see that immigrants from these other countries will be more accessible by virtue of the fact that there is a greater comfort level, and more information available to the industry about the talent pool and the background of the individuals from those countries.*

*This is the first time we have worked with service agencies and this is a benefit of this project. We already see more awareness of an immigrant talent pool. We hope that this is the beginning of a relationship that we can both leverage to raise awareness in our industry.*

*It allows for the focus on a specific target audience, which allows for a customized solution. When you work on other projects, you are trying to address everyone, which can water down solutions and may provide focus only a traditionally non-immigrant audience, more often youth.*

### **Outcome: Increased awareness by BC trucking of business case to hiring immigrants. (Not Realized)**

*Yeah, our strategy going forward is going to be, what do we think our needs are going to be, how soon, and we already know there is going to be attrition and we already know there is difficulties in getting people that are here right now, you're stealing from one carrier, and someone else takes your guy. So what we need is a larger pool.*

*We are going to have to look and see now that we have these tools. How much does it cost to do that and what's the payback? I mean if I spend \$40,000 recruiting in Europe and I get one guy, there is not payback there and they are blocked because of immigration rules.*

**Outcome: Increased confidence of employers in hiring immigrant drivers.  
(Not realized)**

*"It opened up the eyes of the committee members to the wide variety of countries from which Canada is getting immigrants. I can't say that that has had an industry wide affect yet, but as the resource becomes better known, impact will be felt across the industry."*

**Outcome: Increased demand for and use of Reference Guide and Assessment.  
(Not realized)**

*"The BCTA HR committee is pleased with what has been produced. We have also heard from trucking stakeholders who have said that this information is practical and valuable to employers. We also shared the ITWRG framework/approach with other sectors who agreed that this type of information would be valuable for their occupations and employers as well."*

*"We are already seeing the shortage beginning. Companies want to grow faster than they are, but are limited by people right now. The demand is there, shortage already exists, but we project an even bigger shortage in the future."*

**Outcome: Broad industry recognition of Reference Guide and Assessment.  
(Not realized)**

*The work we are doing is now in development and will have a lot of impact in the future. We have to work on this long term, because of the need for drivers in the future.*

**Outcome: Opportunities to share tools with other jurisdictions in Canada.  
(Not Realized)**

*We are going to ensure that people can suggest other countries to be added. The guide explains how people can conduct their own research and share that with us so that the guide can be updated and expand. We will have mechanisms in place to ensure we can grow and maintain the guide.*

*The framework we have developed with the resource guide has a lot of applications even outside of the industry, and have spoken to other people wanting to copy that framework in other industries that hire immigrants.*

*When I've described the resource guide to people in other sectors and other resource industries that hire immigrants, they thought that this was a very interesting education tool for employers. Because a lot of employers don't know where to even start.*

## BCTA Indicator Measures

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized.

For BCTA, most of the indicators relate to usage of the Guide and the driver assessment tool. As described earlier, these have not yet occurred, but are expected to occur over the coming months. The following table shows the project’s results related to the indicator measures during the evaluation period.

- # of trucking companies downloading Reference Guide: 34 downloads of the Reference posted on Jan 9, 2014.
- # and type of communications with trucking companies: Dec. 9 media release with coverage by *Truck News* (online and tweeted to 5856 followers) and *Today’s Trucking* (online only) would reach thousands of carriers. Also coverage in *Desi Trucking, Road Today*, and online in *Poland Economy News*. Bulletin reaches 1100+ members. 636 of those people are affiliated with trucking companies. Posted blog article in the public What’s New section on our landing page and used that link to promote via Twitter. Including promo postcard in membership packages in February to 413 operating member key contacts. Mailing the postcard to ~ 300 non-member intermodal companies in February. Will mail the complete *Guide* to provincial trucking associations and Trucking HR Canada, inviting them to link to the web version from their websites as well.
- # and type of feedback from companies: None to date
- # and type of uses of Reference Guide: None to date
- # of drivers who complete assessment: None to date.
- # and type of response by employers to assessment: None to date.
- # and type of response by immigrants to assessment: None to date.
- # and type of opportunities to share tool across Canada: None to date. Upon completion of pilot, will share tool widely throughout the industry.
- # and type of demand from employers and immigrants: • As a result of the participant recruitment process, we received 12 completed applications. Six of the applicant did not have a Class 1 License which made them ineligible to participate. The others did not participate for a variety of reasons.
- # of hirings facilitated: None to date

## BCTA Challenges

In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate the learning related to these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project activities, outputs, and outcomes, learning about these challenges contributes to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience throughout the project period.

### **Many immigrant drivers do not have Class 1 licence making them ineligible for employment in the industry or for participation in this pilot project.**

*As a result of the extensive participant recruitment process, we learned that many new Canadians that have non-Canadian driving experience and are interested in a career as a truck driver in BC do not have their Class 1 license. This is primarily due to the personal investment required to gain the credential before seeking a driving job.*

*BCTA is currently exploring alternative uses to the tool including offering the IDRIVE assessment tool to employers interested in identify gaps and then providing training to fill those gaps or as pre-screening for a Class 1 license.*

### **The short timeline of this project was artificial and not realistic to develop, pilot and promote the Guide and the assessment tool.**

*We understand the need for the short timeline in regards to IECBC, but it is artificial in a sense. We have a multi-year strategic plan, and the resources we have developed have been designed to be useful for years to come, so we aren’t going to see immediate results. In part because our industry is so diffuse, there are 23000 trucking companies in BC alone, so trying to reach all of them is difficult. But we see this as the opportunity to create a range of resources that are available to the industry so that as the labour shortage in our industry becomes more acute, those resources are available.*

*BCTA and the HR Committee are very much committed to this tool beyond the length of the funding agreement. The short timelines for development and implementation have definitely been a challenge.”*

### **It was difficult to recruit immigrants for the Pilot Skills Assessment.**

*The great opportunity in this pilot is that we have service agencies as partners who will help us to identify potential recruits but we still need to find those individuals.*

*We have developed a communications plan to work with those individuals who are interested. These participants can be from anywhere in BC. We will work to coordinate assessment activities where we can. And we will either travel to them, or have them travel to us. We have a budget set up for travel, but it’s still an unknown.*

*We are aware, however, of the real challenge of finding and engaging immigrant pilot participants to test the Truck Driver Skill and Experience Assessment Tool. These challenges have also been realized by other EIF projects.*

## It was difficult to compare Canadian information with information from other countries.

*This project is providing information to an industry sector about other countries in a way that hasn't been done before. But specific information was unique and challenging to find; for example, BC driving conditions is not something other industries would be interested in.*

*Accessing information is challenging because of language problems, or blocked information to Canadian users.*

## The Development of Guide and Tools was complex.

*The development of the assessment tool was much more complex than we had expected. The draft from the consultants had 7 parts and we've reduced it to 5. We want the tool to be comprehensive, but also practical. Short enough but also comprehensive enough. We struggled with that balance.*

*We have to translate from academic language to colloquial language.*

## BCTA Significant Aspect

The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question asked in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals typically illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

Overall, the BCTA project managers and stakeholders pointed to the opportunity provided by the EIF project to target immigrants as a viable source of workers in the trucking industry. The newly developed Trucking Reference Guide and assessment tool are expected to interest stakeholders and to be a catalyst to increased consideration of recruiting and hiring immigrants within the trucking industry.

*We've had an HR strategic plan since 2008 and one aspect of it was to figure out a way to encourage more participation in our industry by immigrants and we have never been able to operationalize that until we received this IECBC funding. So without that funding, we wouldn't have been able to develop the resource guide, we wouldn't have peaked the interest in our HR committee as to the number of countries with immigrants available, so without this funding we would not have opened this door at this point.*

# CAMPBELL RIVER AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (CAMPBELL RIVER CHAMBER)

## Campbell River & District Chamber of Commerce Project Description - Successful Integration Project

Campbell River & District Chamber of Commerce project used a partnership approach to build on the existing knowledge and connections within its business community to assist local employers in recruiting and retaining immigrant employees. The newly developed Council of Champions guided the project to develop and conduct a readiness audit and then to develop a suite of tools and resources to build awareness among employers about the benefits and feasibility of increasing immigrant employment in their communities.

The Campbell River & District Chamber of Commerce provides leadership that actively promotes a positive business climate that facilitates and nurtures a prosperous community and quality of life. The Chamber is committed to serve as a positive catalyst with tools, resources and services that focus on business and employer success, leading to sustainable community growth and development.

Campbell River & District Chamber of Commerce EIF project was supported in the Level Three Regional Business Association Category (Up To \$50,000)

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

## Campbell River & District Chamber of Commerce Logic Model

| Activities   | Outputs   | Outcomes   | Indicators   |
|--|---|--|--|
| Establish Employer Council of Champions<br>Champions will act as mentors for in-house workplace mentor program<br>Professional language and communications skills and cultural diversity training<br>Develop inventory of tools, resources, supports | Employer Council of Champions<br>Mentor program<br>Training programs<br>Inventory of tools resources and supports | Broad stakeholder buy-in<br>Increased awareness among employers of existing promising practices<br>Employers are aware of tools resources and supports to better integrate immigrants<br>Employers use tools, resources and supports to modify workforce | # and type of tools, resources and supports promoted<br># and types of tools used by employers<br># and types of activities of Council of Champions<br># of immigrants integrated in community and region<br># and type of business strategies |

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Develop new online searchable database tool to profile skills of local area immigrants and the needs of local employers</p> <p>Develop and implement strategy to secure labour market supply, partnerships and funding to support business to integrate immigrants</p> |  | <p>policies and practices.</p> <p>Employers hire and integrate immigrant talent in the workplace</p> <p>Partnerships and funding</p> <p>Workplaces are more welcoming and inclusive and have better understanding of why this is important</p> | <p>implemented to support integration of immigrants</p> <p># and type of business strategies planned to support integration of immigrants</p> <p># and type of partnerships</p> <p># and types of funding secured</p> |
|---|--|--|---|

## Campbell River Chamber Activities and Outputs

Campbell River & District Chamber of Commerce built capacity within its organization and in the community to increase the awareness amongst business of the potential to recruit, hire and retain immigrants in the workplace. This project conducted extensive outreach and drew upon the strengths in the community to form the Employer Council of Champions that guided the project during the past year and which intends to continue to build on the increased interest in the community regarding immigrant employment. Using the knowledge and interest contributed by the Council, this EIF project developed tools and resources, including both in-person networking and workshops and on-line resources, that focus on best practices and address the specific interests and needs identified as important and relevant to the SME's in that community.

*Also, for our own staff, we have incredible depth now, I feel, to be able to respond to questions after the project ends. I am very confident that we have great tools, great resources, great material. It's really built a greater depth of why and how the chamber is linking into businesses and employers. If we hadn't have done this project, we wouldn't be there.*

The following highlights the project's key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Established a fourteen member Employer Council of Champions that provided employer input throughout the project.
- Facilitated two training sessions for the Employer Council of Champions.
- Conducted a communications audit and research to develop in-house tools, resources and supports, specifically designed through the lens of SME's.
- Developed a partnership strategy between three key organizations and the Chamber to support businesses to integrate immigrants. The partnership is among the Chamber,

NIEFS (North Island Employment Foundation Society), NIC (North Island College) and CRMISA (Immigrant Welcome Centre of Campbell River).

- Planned a series of networking opportunities in 2014 to enable local employers to meet area newcomers/immigrants in a social setting.
- Developed communication campaign to promote the project, project workshops, the project website, employer's tools, resources and supports.
- Developed a project website that is integrated into the Campbell River Chamber website. Includes easy access to project specific materials and links to resources and information.
- Held four workshops for employers on how to find, hire, retain and integrate immigrants and newcomers into the workplace.
- Developed handouts and worksheets to support workshop content including employer tip sheets which were distributed at the workshops, profiled on line and through social media and distributed through the Chamber to interested employers and businesses.
- Developed two-page info graphic as a tool to support building greater awareness among employers, businesses and organizations on the business case for finding, hiring, retaining and integrating newcomers and immigrants into their workplace.
- Developed local resource provider tip sheet promoting local organizations that are available to help employers and businesses on an ongoing basis (during and after the project concludes) so they continue to develop strategies to find, hire, integrate and retain newcomers.
- Produced twenty-one individual videos and seven project videos from original edited content.
- Developed fifteen best practice documents as employer self-assessment tools to determine current HR strategies, to inform gaps, and to promote best practices.

## Campbell River Chamber Outcomes and Learning

For this project, Campbell River Chamber identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the formation of the council of champions and the implementation of a range of initiatives including workshops and tools and resources that would be integral to the resources and services offered by the chamber to its members.

During the project period, a council was formed, workshops were provided and resources were developed and integrated into the Chamber website. The presence of these tools on the website signifies to the business community that the Chamber supports immigrant employment in its membership. As a result of the project initiatives, many employers are more aware of the availability of tools and resources to support their integration of immigrant employees. The project expects its reach to grow significantly in the near future and for employers to use these tools and resources in their workplace.

The following discusses the project's achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

**Outcome: Broad stakeholder buy-in  
(Realized)**

*The project is resonating with our employer champions who feel strongly that this will create the awareness and understanding that will help prepare our business community, particularly SMEs.*

*The heightened awareness of why this is an important strategy for SME's is having an impact on SMEs collaborating to address this issue and seek solutions that will benefit the community.*

*We are looking at it as an interactive process which allows us to better respond to the needs of the employers. It has been fluid, and allowed us to ensure that it is meaningful to the employers by ensuring that they get to participate.*

*We are building awareness in the community. There are people in the community who say that there are people in the community that are unemployed so why would we look beyond who we already have in our community. Our tools show people that immigrants are a population that have the skills and experience we need."*

*Its unbelievable. Its one thing to read it in a report, its not the same as when you see it in a workshop, people come in with a defensive attitude, defending their position why they don't hire immigrants, to at the end of the workshop saying "how short sighted". "This will be a strategy we use in the future, I've learned so much," "you've made it so easy with the tools," "I feel so much more confident now to look beyond the usual way I go about hiring*

**Outcome: Increased awareness among employers of existing promising practices.  
(Realized)**

*We have produced eleven videos with immigrant and new comer employers and local resource providers. These videos will be posted on the Chamber's social media and project webpage to enhance awareness of the benefits of recruiting, and retaining immigrant employees. Also to overcome resistance that some employers identify that stops them from looking at newcomers.*

*We have developed templates and tips sheets with best practices for local employers to use in developing their human resource and business strategies.*

*People are under the impression that it takes too much time and energy to immigrants. This project has shown that many already have skills and also that there are lots of resources available to assist employers with training to better integrate immigrants into their workforce.*

**Outcome: Employers are aware of tools resources and supports to better integrate immigrants.  
(Realized)**

*We hosted a workshop as part of our employer feedback and auditing on the tools and resources. 14 individuals represented employer champions and local resource providers. This workshop set the tone for how the Chamber will move forward. Through one-on-one meetings, presentations and*

*information sessions, our business community will become aware of the messages and support we provide.*

*Some of the things we heard were: it's just too hard to hire immigrants." We now have tools and resources that make this easier.*

**Outcome: Partnerships and funding.  
(Realized)**

*I think there was trust there, because it was the chamber hosting it and we've already built trust with the business community. Because of the pre-workshop work we did to predispose the business community to why this was important. I think that created a very safe environment.*

*It was very beneficial to have the organization, the chamber, the employers, and the businesses who have already experienced hiring immigrants all sitting around the table, discussing this project, auditing the materials. The feedback I have from the employer champions is a greater sense of trust of the organizations that were involved.*

**Outcome: Employers use tools, resources and supports to modify workforce policies and practices.  
(Not realized)**

*Our employer champions are excited and anticipating the shifts that will result from employers heightened understanding of welcoming and inclusive workplaces.*

**Outcome: Employers hire and integrate immigrant talent in the workplace.  
(Not realized)**

*There are still key businesses in this community who said that they would be interested when they are closer to being ready to hire. So there are still many businesses who have not had the opportunity to participate, so this can't be a one time thing. It has to be a continual process, we are looking at 5 year plans, so the worse thing we could do is not continue this conversation in the community.*

**Outcome: Workplaces are more welcoming and inclusive and employers have better understanding of why this important.  
(Not Realized)**

## **Campbell River Chamber Indicator Measures**

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and

retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized.

For Campbell River Chamber of Commerce, most of the indicators related to usage of the new tools and resources and the subsequent changes that would occur in the workplace as employers use these resources to seek out and hire immigrants. As described earlier, these changes have not yet occurred but are expected to occur over the coming months. The following table shows the project’s results related to the indicator measures during the evaluation period.

- **# and type of tools, resources and supports promoted:** Project Website. Six project videos, four Employer/Business workshops with presentation material binder, four Employer Tip Sheets - Finding, Hiring, Retaining, Integrating, Info graphic - Business Case for Hiring Immigrants/Newcomers, One local resource provider tip sheet - accessing local organizations who can continue to provide ongoing support to Employers/Businesses, Fifteen ‘best practice’ documents, Employer self-assessment tool
- **# and types of tools used by employers:** Project website, Project videos, workshop presentation materials, Info graphic, Tip sheets, Employer self-assessment tool. Numbers used is not known.
- **# and types of activities of Council of Champions:** Three Employer Council of Champion meetings, provided feedback and recommendations for materials, workshops and presentations, participated in videos, participated in workshops
- **# of immigrants integrated in the community and region:** None to date.
- **# and type of business strategies implemented to support integration of immigrants:** The resource materials provided through the workshop including the tip sheets are being used by the workshop participants to develop their business HR plans and strategies to support integration of immigrants
- **# and type of business strategies planned to support integration of immigrants:** The resource materials provided through the workshop including the tip sheets are being used by the workshop participants to develop their business HR plans and strategies. Numbers not known.
- **# and type of partnerships:** Three partnerships with local providers of resources for immigrants.
- **# and types of funding secured:** Contribution of gift in kind support from three local service providers.

## Campbell River Chamber Challenges

In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate the

learning related to these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project activities, outputs, and outcomes, learning about these challenges contributes to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience throughout the project period.

**More buy-in is needed from community to benefits of immigrant employment in their communities:**

*There are people that think that immigrants are taking away local jobs. We want people to see that we need more people including immigrants.*

*Some people think that government resources should go to training local people over immigrants. They are a voice that is there. So it was important to be able to spend time to talk to them, and to make sure this project was presented in good light, whoever the interest group was.*

**Stakeholders represent a wide range of HR needs that require a wide range of tools and resources.**

*The Chamber represents a wide range of types and sizes of business. They all need something tailored to their specific issues.*

**Employers have a wide range of business seasons and schedules so outreach needs to be flexible to meet their needs.**

*Everyone is overworked. We went from having 5 meetings to having 3 very constructive meetings. We were also asking them to attend the workshop, to be taped, to be interviewed, so it was a large time commitment. We had to make sure that we balanced what we were asking of people in terms of their time.*

*The biggest challenge was the fact that it was summer and people were on holidays. This complicated the progression of some aspects of this project. This, though, is a common problem.*

## Campbell River Chamber of Commerce Significant Aspect

The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question asked in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals typically illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

Overall, the Campbell River Chamber of Commerce project managers and stakeholders pointed to the importance of community engagement in understanding

*You can prepare the best materials and have the best intentions but if the businesses weren’t engaged, and weren’t participating in a way that allows them to hear the messages then it would not be successful.*

*The aha moment for me was to watch the progression. I was able to see the employer champions and the participants in the workshop validating each other’s reasons for why this was important. The employers would say, this is why this is so important, we need to speak to city council, we have got to think more about how we can support each other, we’ve got to share our experiences with the tools.*

the importance of immigrant employment. The newly developed workshops and website content are expected to provide ongoing tools and references for those considering recruiting and hiring immigrants within their own industry and workplace.

# CENTRAL INTERIOR LOGGING ASSOCIATION (CILA)

## CILA Project Description - Gateway to the Forest Industry

The aim of the CILA EIF project was to directly link immigrants with forestry contractors and to provide specialized orientation and safety training and on-the-job experience and mentoring that would enable immigrants to be successfully integrated into this industry. The project also developed resources to build capacity for employers related to the benefits and feasibility of hiring immigrants and to link forestry employers with potential immigrant workers.

CILA represents some 200 members in the forest harvesting sector across the central and northern interior regions of BC. CILA members include independent logging, log-hauling, road building, bio-mass producers and processors, woodlot owners, silviculture contractors, and service and supply companies from 100 Mile House in the south, to the Northwest Territories in the north, and from the Alberta border to Hazelton in the west.

The CILA EIF project was supported in the Level Two Regional Industry/Sectoral Organization Category (Up To \$100,000)

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

### CILA Logic Model

| Activities  | Outputs   | Outcomes   | Indicators  |
|---|---|--|---|
| Develop Gateway to Forestry for Immigrants toolkits for employers | Gateway to Forestry for Immigrants toolkits and resources for employers             | Immigrants gain work experience  | # of toolkits distributed                             |
| Market Gateway program to Immigrants                              | Job readiness training for immigrants   | Immigrants are applying for forestry industry jobs                                     | # of requests for toolkit                             |
| Provide “job-ready” training for Canadian work environment        | Training tools/curriculum   | Employers are hiring immigrants  | # of workers who received job-readiness training      |
|   | A recognized "gateway" and processes to help immigrants gain access to the industry | Employers are aware of the viability of recruiting immigrants for forestry sector jobs | # of types of different job training topics# of hires |
|   |   | Recognition by employers of skills and training from other countries                   | # of employers hiring immigrants                      |
|   |   |  | # of referrals to program                             |

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  | 25 job ready immigrants for the forestry industry<br>5 immigrants placed in industry |  | # of contacts from support service groups<br># of inquiries from immigrants |
|--|--|--|---|

### CILA Activities and Outputs

CILA conducted extensive outreach within the forestry sector to better understand the needs of employers and to build awareness of the benefits and feasibility of hiring immigrants. The first step for CILA was to identify industry partners interested in being involved in this pilot project and to determine from them, the types of training needed as well as potential on-the-job mentoring experiences that might be available. To this end, CILA attended industry events to meet employers and also tapped into staff’s informal networks within the community. Based on information gathered CILA developed a suite of potential training that would provide gap training for immigrants and would allow them to effectively integrate into the industry. The industry also showed interest in being involved in the project if they were convinced that there were some “success stories” to draw from.

*We have jobs, we just need workers. So we really believed that the immigrants would be easy to find, the challenge would be convincing forestry contractors who have historically never used immigrants, and breaking that barrier. But instead it was the other way around, because we are short on people, there was an open willingness to engage with immigrants, and we couldn’t find any, which was surprising. This was the first effort to bridge those two worlds, anywhere in BC that*

At the same time BCTA worked to recruit immigrants with relevant skills and experience. In spite of extensive outreach and support from immigrant serving organizations, ultimately the project was not successful in recruiting immigrants to participate in the pilot and training was not offered as planned.

The following highlights the project’s key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Consulted with industry to identify labour needs and ways CILA can support industry goals.
- Completed toolkit for employers including Employer Guide, Immigrant Guide, and Immigrant Services Directory.
- Identified and prepared to offer training for Canadian work environment including, Level 1 First Aid, Transportation Endorsement, Bear Aware, WHIMIS, and S 100 Fire Training.

- Worked with several EIF projects and immigrant serving organizations to identify immigrant candidates for the program. These included Initiatives PG (IPG), Prince George Chamber Of Commerce, Tolko Industries, BC Trucking Association (BCTA), and Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society (IMSS).
- Promoted project at conferences, job fairs, and local community organizations.

## CILA Outcomes and Learning

For this project, CILA identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the training of immigrants and the on-the-job experience of industry and immigrants. The intention was to pilot this initiative with 25 immigrants and to use these “success” stories to encourage industry to both learn about this source of employees and to engage them as employees in the forestry sector.

CILA completed the toolkit for employers including an Employer Guide, Immigrant Guide, and Immigrant Services Directory. They conducted an intensive search to identify immigrants for on-the-job training but were not able to find suitable candidates for this pilot initiative.

The following discusses the project’s achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

**Outcome: Employers are aware of the viability of recruiting immigrants for forestry sector jobs.**

**(Realized)**

*The program has developed an awareness of potential opportunities for contractors to look and think outside the box when trying to fill their employment needs. We have been talking with employers about these opportunities.*

*Some contractors are coming to us looking for specific people, but we have never presented them with immigrants before. They are thinking about this opportunity.*

*Previously loggers wouldn’t have even considered immigrants. We did do what we set out to do, which was break down that barrier in the industry, and they were very willing to take immigrants, we just couldn’t find any immigrants. So in some senses it was a success.*

*We built awareness in the community. We went from no awareness to a complete willingness to participate.*

*The forest industry is a very tight community. Some contractors were very weary of the idea of bringing immigrants into the industry. The bottom line was they need people so they were willing to give it a try. I also spoke with contractors who were very frustrated with the process of the system to take on new immigrants. The forest industry is seasonal and when the work starts they need people now, not eight month or a year from now when they have gone through the process. Contractors were encouraged to try taking immigrants and some were willing to give them a try.*

*We could not produce anyone so they don't see any change and unfortunately we appear incompetent in our role.*

*We'd have to do it with a fly in approach, but in the forestry industry, there are long hours and employers would really like people to live there, so they put down roots and stay, and that was the model we were trying to pursue.*

**Outcome: Immigrants gain work experience.  
(Not realized)**

*We really believed that the immigrants would be easy to find, and that the challenge would be convincing forestry contractors who have historically never used immigrants, and breaking that barrier. There are immigrants in the saw mills, but that has never gotten into the forestry contractors. But instead it was the other way around, because we are short on people, there was an open willingness to engage with immigrants, and we couldn't find any, which was surprising.*

**Outcome: Immigrants are applying for forestry industry jobs.  
(Not realized)**

*“One key learning from this project is that most immigrants that are already in Canada are not interested in employment in the forest industry. I believe that immigrants have strong family ties in the lower mainland and they don't want to relocate to other areas.”*

*We have spoken to immigrant societies and other stakeholder groups in the project through IECBC who had access to immigrants, and were certainly advertising and recruiting. Part of what we found is that it's tough to get immigrants to come north because of the weather and the difference of rural vs. urban society. The places that we were trying to place people for work are really small with no support network.*

*We have a guy who studied here at UNBC on a student visa. Then he wanted to get it switched to a work visa and he stayed on a visitor visa while he is trying to renew the working visa. We have a job for him, we need him, and we can't hire him.*

**Outcome: Employers are hiring immigrants.  
(Not Realized)**

*Logging is a seasonal industry. Currently the local mills have a moderate log intake until winter freeze up. This could be a detriment to the program as contractors are not experiencing a labour shortage at this time. At this time, some contractors are advertising for equipment operators with a preference for experienced operators.*

*We are struggling with trying to put it together. There are two sides: need to find an individual that meets the criteria, but also need to find a contractor to take the immigrant. Many contractors are saying that they don't need people.*

*There seems to be a need, but the need isn't great enough yet to just take anybody. They need to have the right skills, and those people are hard to find.*

*If you are Canadian, to take the First Loggers course, you can't have been on EI for 3 years and you can't have any post-secondary education. But if you are an immigrant, there are no restrictions - you can have a 4 year degree or be on government assistance - this can create bitterness.*

*The project shows that we are on the right track. Contractors did respond and are willing to take new Canadians. The key ingredient would be training. Everyone is nervous about it and if the immigrant came with training and could prove they can do the job then it would open more opportunities. This would then grow and develop. One of the key statements I heard was "Why would I go to the trouble of training immigrants when I can go to the local High School and train a local people with roots in the community."*

**Outcome: Recognition by employers of skills and training from other countries.  
(Not Realized)**

### CILA Indicator Measures

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these "future-oriented" indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project's intended results even if these are not yet realized.

For CILA, the indicators were focused on increasing employers' awareness of the viability of recruiting immigrants and then hiring immigrants during and following the pilot period. As noted above, the project raised awareness within the industry but was not able to create the anticipated "success" stories through the pilot.

The following table shows the project's results related to the indicator measures during the evaluation period.

- # of toolkits distributed: Forty tool kits distributed.
- # of requests for toolkit: None to date
- # of workers who received job-readiness training: None to date
- # of types of different job training topics: Six topics identified.
- # of hires: None to date
- # of employers hiring immigrants: None to date
- # of referrals to program: None to date
- # of contacts from support service groups: Four resumes sent.

- # of inquiries from immigrants: Through the IPG Virtual Job Fair there were 15 to 20 calls asking question about jobs and about Prince George but resumes were not received.

## CILA Challenges and Learning

In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project outcomes, learning and innovation, these challenges contribute to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience and results throughout the project period.

### Immigrants who responded to project outreach were not qualified to participate in this project.

*We have received some resumes from immigrants but none of them have any experience or they do not have working status in Canada. The process to obtain working status is very long.*

*Immigrant serving societies all have some of the same information as we do. The difference is that we have information for immigrants who are already here, and they have information about how to become a landed immigrant.*

### Employers wanted to see successful cases before hiring.

*We are currently looking for immigrants to place in the program. We have had some conversation with contractors. They are interested but unwilling to commit until they have a clear profile of the specific immigrant. The contractors don’t want to make assumptions or give expectations without seeing the credible applicant.*

*In the future we would go more the logger way, which is more about a hand shake and a reputation than a PowerPoint. I think we would have identified a few people and worked with them individually instead of trying to broad brush it. More on a case management model, and then providing support once they are in the job.*

## CILA Significant Aspect

The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question asked in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals typically illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide

*At the beginning, we had a couple contractors say “yeah we’ll take immigrants” and we thought “wow” we did not expect that, that’s where we thought the fight was going to be. But we couldn’t find workers to place with them. And then on the flip side of it, even talking to immigrants who are employed here for things like group homes and hospitality was considered poaching. They are in such demand.*

insight into the project success and challenges.

Overall, the CILA project managers and stakeholders pointed to the importance of having actual examples of successful immigrant employees in the forestry sector. They mention the industry's culture of building personal relationship within the communities as the reason they are more interested in attracting people who will become part of the community than they are of attracting fly-in workers. The project showed that employers are receptive to hiring immigrants and they already do so. Apparently, there is already demand for those workers who have successfully integrated into the community. The newly developed Employer Guide, Immigrant Guide, and Immigrant Services Directory are expected to provide ongoing tools and references for continued recruiting and hiring of immigrants.

# GO2 TOURISM HR SOCIETY (GO2)

## Go2 Project Description - Professional Cook Placement Program

The Go2 Tourism HR society delivered an innovative pilot project to support the hiring, retention and labour market integration of new immigrants. The *Professional Cook Placement Project* trained ten professional cooks in an intensive, two week gap-training session at the Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts in Vancouver. Training included occupation-specific, English language upgrading, skills gap training, and the opportunity to complete the Red Seal exam. Employers were targeted in the provincial tourism regions of Kootenay Rockies and Northern BC as these regions had identified a need for chefs in their tourism industry.

Go2 is BC’s tourism and hospitality human resource association responsible for coordinating the BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy, a key component of the industry’s growth strategy. Tourism is one of the largest resource industries in BC comprising 18,000 mostly small to medium-sized businesses which directly employ close to 128,000 British Columbians.

The GO2 EIF project was supported in the Level Two Regional Industry/Sectoral Organization Category (up to \$100,000)

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

### Go2 Tourism HR Society Logic Model

| Activities  | Outputs   | Outcomes                          | Indicators   |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 20 professional cooks will be trained for jobs in the Kootenays and the North<br>Identification of 20 job opportunities in the Kootenays and the North<br>Training for BC Cook credential, Professional Cook 2.<br>20 professional cooks are provided skill and | Gap training program for professional cooks<br>List of job opportunities<br>Up to 60 people recruited and screened<br>Initial assessment of up to 40 candidates<br>20 professional cooks are provided skill and occupation-specific language training and receive BC cooking credentials<br>20 professional cooks employed in Kootenays | Skilled labour gaps are addressed | 20 positions identified in the Kootenay and North regions<br># of candidates that enroll in occupation-specific language and skill gap training<br># of candidates that complete occupation-specific language and skill gap training<br># of candidates that complete challenge credential assessment process<br># that received |

|                                       |           |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| occupation-specific language training | and North |  | credential<br># of candidates hired into available positions |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|--|

## Go2 Activities and Outputs

*Go2 Professional Cook Placement Project* recruited, screened and trained professional immigrant chefs at the Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts in Vancouver. A fall and a spring session were offered. These individuals received a newly developed, highly intensive, two-week gap-training program that included English language upgrading, cooking skills gap training, and the opportunity to complete the Red Seal exam.

In tandem with the training program for immigrants, Go2 extensively promoted the program and the specific trainees to industry employers in the Kootenays and Northern BC with the view to supplying the trained cooks that industry has consistently stated they needed in their communities.

The following highlights the project’s key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Completed two, 2-week gap training sessions for new immigrant cooks using specially designed curriculum. Training presented by Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts.
- Developed specialized training program for immigrants including specific English language and terminology for cooking and the food services environment.
- Conducted broad communications and outreach strategy to recruit candidates. Conducted personalized calls with Immigrant Service Organizations in the Lower Mainland. Presented to social service agencies at an event organized by IEC-BC. Sent a personalized e-blast to culinary colleges in the regions, Colleges included: Selkirk, College of the Rockies, College of New Caledonia, Northern Lights College and Northwest Community College.
- Recruited, interviewed and assessed applicants. (Screened 89 applications. Conducted 41 interviews to find eligible candidates. Enrolled 10 trainees. Organized and participated in the practical assessment of 10 candidates at the Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts.
- Created and implemented a marketing strategy to recruit candidates and employers. This strategy targeted a wide range of mediums including job boards and other on-line sites. Promoted to Prince George Chamber of Commerce to distribute messaging to their employer network. Searched job boards twice weekly for eligible job postings from employers in Northern BC and the Kootenays. Promoted the program and available candidates to employers at the regional Northern BC Tourism Industry Conferences in the Fall. Sent a personalized e-blast to targeted employers from the

go2 database. Personalized phone meetings with 43 potential employers in the regions.

- Organized 22 candidate interviews with prospective employers.
- Placed 3 immigrants with employers in the North and Kootenays.

## Go2 Outcomes and Learning

For this project, Go2 identified one important outcome - that skilled labour gaps would be addressed. Achievement of this outcome would reasonably and logically result from the successful development and implementation of the innovative culinary training program for immigrants and the matching of these Canadian trained individuals to employment opportunities in the Kootenays and Northern BC. Go2 posited that this pilot could reasonably achieve this outcome with 20 matchings of employers with Canadian trained immigrant cooks.

At the end of the project period, the program trained 10 individuals and placed two of these in positions in Northern BC. While disappointed in these results, GO2 experienced significant learning about the need for cook gap training and the tourism industry's need for workers. Based on this learning, GO2 will be implementing cook gap training for a wide range of candidates and will be working to place these individuals in all areas of the province.

The following discusses the project's achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

### **Outcome: Skilled labour gaps are addressed (Not Realized)**

*The majority of jobs posted for cooks in the Kootenays and Northern BC were seasonal in nature and therefore did not qualify for the pilot program. These jobs may still provide opportunities for trained cooks.*

*We've seen benefits to candidates and benefits to some employers, and in a small way, some labour market issues addressed. We've seen life changing events for the candidates who were placed.*

*We have new immigrants obtaining Canadian credentials and attaining positions aligned with their skills and experience. This is the first time the Pacific Culinary Institute has formally linked upgrade training to the cook assessment process.*

*Nobody has done language training as a part of upgrade programs. Candidates have found that language and terminology training for cooking is an extremely valuable aspect of the training they need to be successful in the workplace.*

*The written Red Seal exam was extremely challenging for ESL challengers.*

*Immigrant Services Organizations were helpful in referring candidates. These relationships took time to navigate and build.*

## Go2 Indicator Measures

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized.

As described earlier, Go2 was surprised and disappointed that they did not meet all of the targets for this pilot project due to unanticipated challenges and barriers. The following table shows the project’s results during the project period.

- 20 positions identified in the Kootenay and North regions.
- 10 candidates enrolled in occupation-specific language and skill gap training.
- 10 candidates completed occupation-specific language and skill gap training.
- 9 candidates challenge credential assessment process.
- 9 received credential.
- 3 candidates hired into positions in the North and Kootenays.

## Go2 Challenges and Learning

The project experienced challenges that affected the implementation and results of the project. In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project outcomes, learning and innovation, these challenges contribute to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience and results throughout the project period.

### **Recruitment of immigrants required an intensive and broad communication strategy.**

*It was difficult to recruit immigrants for this training. We have an extensive network. We posted everywhere: go2 Job Board, go2 Twitter, go2 Facebook, Craigslist Job Board, Indeed Job Board, Raisin Jobs, BC Chefs Job Board, WorkBC Facebook page, and the Kootenay Career Development Society Job Board. We also talked with immigrant serving organizations.*

*Our participants came from referrals from Back in Motion, SUCCESS and ISSBC. We also had successful word-of-mouth referrals from other immigrants already participating in the program.*

## Few immigrants enrolled in the training as they already had satisfactory employment conditions or did not want to re-locate outside the lower mainland.

*We are offering moving assistance funds. We tell them about the benefits to moving such as lower cost of living, but still people don't want to move. Offering more to relocate or offering housing has just not been helpful.*

*The majority of candidates were currently working for large employers in the Lower Mainland (e.g. UBC) that offer extended health benefits as part of their total compensation package. In contrast, the majority of employers in the Kootenays and Northern BC, are small in size and do not have extended benefits plans. This was a non-negotiable term for many of the candidates that are supporting families.*

## Employers had considerable barriers to their interest in hiring immigrants.

*Many employers were wary of immigrant candidates, despite communicating that these candidates were permanent residents of Canada. There is an obvious need in industry to educate employers of new immigrant hires.*

*A few employers were unwilling to offer an employment opportunity to a new Canadian, when they realized the program was not open to Canadian citizens. They felt that this was unfair.*

*Despite being "desperate" for staff, employers in the tourism and hospitality industry are still looking for the "right" fit for their culture. They were not willing to settle for a candidate that was not the right fit.*

*English communication skills were reported as being extremely important to employers. At an advanced level were a requirement of most employers. Many of our candidates had an intermediate level of English language.*

*Businesses are generally small or casual style cooking (e.g. pub style food) with the total compensation offered being \$12-15/hour. Employers in these regions could not match the \$18-20/hour that candidates are earning in the Lower Mainland.*

## Go2 Significant Aspect

The "Most Significant Aspect or Change" is a common question asked in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals typically illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

*It was wonderful to see how life changing it was for the people that were placed in Prince Rupert, and how great it was for the business who was struggling and now had a great chef. Everyone was so appreciative and that really makes it all worthwhile.*

*I know the employers need people, but they are just not yet willing to adjust their expectations about what the candidate looks like or how much they're willing to pay. In the lower mainland it might be a lower level cooking job, but they're being paid more to do it. For example, there was a candidate working in an airline catering job, but he is making \$20 per hour, plus benefits and RRSP. So for him to get a sous chef position that pays him \$12 - \$15 per hour, it is not enough to entice them away.*

Overall, the Go2 project managers and stakeholders described a greater understanding of the needs and challenges related to hiring immigrant cooks in communities throughout BC. Through the learning from this project, GO2 expects to have greater organizational capacity to address the employment issues in this area of the hospitality industry in BC.

# INITIATIVES PRINCE GEORGE (IPG)

## IPG Project Description - Prince George Online Job Fair

IPG developed and implemented two Online Virtual Job Fairs. These on-line fairs were designed to connect new Canadians living in Metro Vancouver with employment and lifestyle opportunities in Prince George. The virtual Job Fair showcased a wide range of community aspects including employers, housing, schools and settlement services to help encourage full family relocation. In essence, the project’s virtual career fair provides Lower Mainland immigrants the opportunity to “experience” Prince George without having to travel there.

IPG is responsible for economic development in the City of Prince George. The organization aims to facilitate the growth and diversification of the Prince George economy and create new opportunities for local businesses.

The IPG EIF project was supported in The Level Two Regional Industry/Sectoral Organization Category (Up To \$100,000)

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

## IPG Logic Model

| Activities   | Outputs  | Outcomes  | Indicators   |
|--|--|---|--|
| Prince George and region Virtual Career Fair focusing on immigrants                              | Virtual career fairs developed and implemented | Immigrants get information on all aspects of the community of Prince George   | # of immigrant participants in virtual fair and analytics of their participation (e.g., sections viewed, time spent, etc.) |
| Build and increase collaboration amongst employers, community agencies, educational institutions | Employer networking and advisory group formed  | Immigrants willing to consider moving to PG<br>Employers connected to immigrant talent<br>Employers save time, travel costs and increase capacity | # of employer participants in virtual fair<br># of participants who contact IPG after career fair                          |
|  |  | Immigrants are hired in Prince George workplaces  | # of employers that follow up with immigrants  |
|  |  | Immigrants move (with their families) to Prince George  | # of immigrants interviewed<br># of immigrants hired   |

## IPG Activities and Outputs

IPG successfully developed and implemented two virtual career fairs. These career fair platforms provided an on-line career fair experience. The experience allowed prospective employees and employers to learn about and engage with each other. The virtual platform provided the ability for this interaction without travel or other costs being incurred.

The following highlights the project's key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Conducted extensive outreach to employers.
- Conducted extensive media and social media campaign in Prince George and metro Vancouver.
- Conducted extensive outreach to immigrant serving organizations in Prince George and metro Vancouver.
- Formed new and enhanced existing partnerships with Prince George Chamber of Commerce and immigrant serving organizations.
- Built new website to host career fairs.
- Held two online Career Fairs.
- Created videos showcasing new Canadians who have built successful careers in PG.

## IPG Outcomes and Learning

For this project, IPG identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the development and implementation of the virtual career fair. The intention was to build awareness in the community of the benefits and feasibility of hiring immigrants in Prince George. Then, with this knowledge, employers would participate in the career fair to recruit employees.

The first step for IPG was to develop a comprehensive on-line tool for the virtual fair. To this end, IPG consulted with local employers and other community resource organizations for immigrants. At the same time IPG worked to recruit employers to participate in the fair. IPG then, conducted two virtual career fairs. IPG now has the capacity to implement career fairs in the future and plans to continue this strategy if feasible to do so.

The following discusses the project's achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

**Outcome: Immigrants get information on all aspects of the community of Prince George. (Realized)**

*As a result of our first career fair, 1,170 people are now aware of career opportunities outside of Metro Vancouver. Even if they did not land a job as a result of their participation in the job fair, this awareness could help shift their focus to Prince George and help them find a job in the future.*

*The project is bringing awareness to the community through press releases and media attention. We expect this attention to grow in the future and people will learn more about Prince George.*

*We have partnered with the Prince George Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness amongst local employers. Also partnered with the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George to hold a business engagement session to give us an understanding of employer's needs and to try to reduce any barriers they might have to hiring new Canadians.*

*We have collaborated with other EIF projects to learn more. As a result, we are meeting monthly now with Central Interior Logging Association to discuss how to work together. The Immigrant Multicultural Services Society has been working with the EIF projects in Prince George.*

**Outcome: Immigrants willing to consider moving to Prince George.**

**(Realized)**

*We had a tremendous number of people participate in the career fair. This tells us that people are looking for opportunities. We are very encouraged by this response.*

**Outcome: Employers connected to immigrant talent.**

**(Realized)**

*Prior to our work on the online job fair and working with immigration and multicultural services society, lots of employers thought that hiring immigrants meant sponsoring people and moving people to Canada, but now they see that there is a market here already, that are permanent residents.*

*I still think that some employers are a little bit confused, but I definitely think we reached a lot of employers. We held the event in partnership with the chamber, CILA, and IMSS and basically educated a room full of 100 people on what that meant. That was an opportunity we had because of this project.*

*We learned how to work with a designer to create the portal for the online job fair, how to approach business, and how to advertise the job fair. In the first fair we went for a high volume of people and interviews, in the second fair we were more specific, with maybe less interviews but better results, so quality vs. quantity. And for future job fairs, we plan to make them even more specific. So rather than having a general job fair where any employer can participate hiring any type of candidate, we are going to focus more on trades, or professional services or a smaller segment of the employment market.*

*People were hesitant to use the online portal, they didn't feel comfortable committing to doing something completely online, and we probably did lose some participants and employers based on that. But the ones that did participate, said that the education part was good and that the system was easy to use, some of them still had problems, but most were happy and found that it wasn't as intimidating as they thought at first.*

**Outcome: Employers save time and travel costs and increase capacity.**

**(Realized)**

*It is nice for smaller businesses who can't afford to be a part of bigger non-local fairs, so the locality of having a specific Prince George fair is important. We are building on the idea of job fairs, but doing it in a unique way. Now that the platform is developed, it will be easier to explain the online format to businesses and show them how it can work for them.*

**Outcome: Immigrants are hired in Prince George workplaces.**

**(Realized)**

*Only 7 of the 16 employers responded to our survey. There were 5 hires amongst them and 2 of those hired were new immigrants. That's all that I could verify. We are not sure why more were not hired.*

**Outcome: Immigrants move (with their families) to Prince George.**

**(Not Realized)**

## IPG Indicator Measures

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized. The following table shows the project’s results during the project period.

- # of immigrant participants in virtual fair and analytics of their participation 3,070 job seekers attended in total for both virtual fairs.
- # of employer participants in virtual fairs. 29 employers participated.
- # of participants who contact IPG after career fair. None.
- # of employers that follow up with immigrants. About 25% of employers.
- # of immigrants interviewed during job fair. 407 immigrants interviewed.
- # of immigrants hired. Two immigrants hired.

## IPG Challenges

In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project outcomes, learning and innovation,

these challenges contribute to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience and results throughout the project period.

### **Collaboration and outreach require considerable staff time and effort.**

One of our greatest challenges has been balancing our existing workloads with our project workload as the project *has become much larger in scope than outlined in our initial proposal.*

*Getting employers to jump onboard with a completely new idea (online instead of in person job fairs), and on top of that, specifically targeting immigrants. So we had to do a lot of educating for both. That was the biggest challenge!*

*When we were educating about hiring immigrants, we had the project launch event that we did with the chamber, CILA, and IMSS. And on top of that IMSS held 1 or 2 business seminars, it was a lunch where employers came in and they talked about what it meant to hire an immigrant and how people had been successfully growing their businesses because of accessing the immigrant labour pool. And then IPG and the chamber did presentations on what they were doing. This wasn’t part of the EIF project, it was part of an IMSS project, and we piggy-backed on top of that to raise awareness.*

### **Employers seem reluctant to become involved in recruiting immigrants from the lower mainland.**

*We were disappointed with only 13 businesses joining the first career fair. Many businesses said that this simply wasn’t the market that they wanted to target. Some didn’t want to get involved in the current controversy in BC about immigrants and temporary workers. We have now done a lot of outreach with employers and we expect to have more employers involved in the next career fair.*

### **Career Fair has not yet resulted in many hires.**

*The main concern we have about the success of our project is hires occurring as a result of our job fairs. Based on feedback after the first career fair we have made improvements to both the career fair platform and the process so we are hoping more hires will occur in the future.*

## **IPG Significant Aspect**

Project managers were asked to describe the most significant aspect of the project or of their learning during the project. The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals generally illustrate important aspects of the project and,

*What I loved about the project was all the emails and comments from job seekers thanking us, and the appreciation for having a job fair for immigrants. Some were unsolicited emails, and some were from the portal where they could put in comments.*

*I wasn’t expecting the challenges we had to get the employers onboard. It was very affordable and still they didn’t jump on board right away, it took persistence. I thought that because there was a worker shortage, that people would jump on board*

along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

# KITIMAT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (KITIMAT CHAMBER)

## Kitimat Chamber of Commerce Project Description - New Canadians/New Employees: Hiring Immigrants Competently Workshops

This project involves designing and delivering workshops in a number of locations across three regions in Northern BC to inform employers about ways to use a competency-based approach for hiring new immigrants. The target audience for the workshops will be employers, hiring managers, recruiters, and other personnel involved in attracting, hiring and retaining immigrants in the workplace.

Kitimat Chamber of Commerce is a volunteer not-for-profit association representing approximately 220 businesses and organizations in the community.

The Kitimat Chamber of Commerce EIF project was supported in the **Level Two Regional Business Association Category (Up To \$100,000)**

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

### Kitimat Chamber of Commerce Logic Model

| Activities   | Outputs   | Outcomes  | Indicators   |
|--|---|---|--|
| Form Steering committee and engage as champions for the workshops    | Steering committee formed and engaged                 | Increased awareness amongst employers of existing promising practices | # of steering committee members  |
| Deliver workshops to employers and other personnel in 7 locations    | New workshop content and training materials developed | Employers have more support in hiring and integrating immigrants      | # of employers who attend workshops  |
| Filming of one of the workshops for training and evaluation purposes | 7 Workshops delivered                                 | Employers use a competency based approach to hiring immigrants        | # of stakeholders involved with developing and promoting the workshops                                     |
|  |   |   | Employers have more knowledge and understanding of the issues and how to conduct competency based approach |
|  |   |   | # who used tools provided in the workshop  |
|  |   |   | # who are prepared to hire immigrants  |

## Kitimat Chamber Activities and Outputs

Kitimat Chamber of Commerce developed and delivered a series of workshops in Northwest BC and Northeast BC, including Smithers, Kitimat, Prince Rupert, Fort Nelson, 2 in Fort McMurray, Dawson Creek and 2 in Terrace. Two workshops were held in conjunction with IEC-BC Forums in Kitimat and Prince Rupert. These workshops provided opportunities for business throughout the area to build capacity and to increase their awareness of the potential to recruit, hire and retain immigrants in the workplace. Kitimat developed tools and resources and provided these to workshop participants on a USB stick. The provision of these materials will allow participants to review and access the materials as needed and to share the materials with others in their communities. The following highlights the project's key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Workshop training materials developed and provided on USB sticks to workshop participants.
- Nine workshops delivered in Northwest BC and Northeast BC, including Smithers, Kitimat, Prince Rupert, Fort Nelson, Fort McMurray (2), Dawson Creek and Terrace (2).
- Participants in workshops were from a range of industries including retail, construction, non-profit, government, education, hospitality, energy, banking, health and others.
- Two workshops held in conjunction with IEC-BC Forums in Kitimat and Prince Rupert.
- Video recording of workshop created using participant ideas and suggestions.

*Each workshop was a little bit different. They were tailored to each group that was hosting the workshop. All of the materials and resources were provided on data sticks. And then having those data sticks available when we have other events. When I am speaking to employers I can hand them the data stick and they will utilize those resources. For example, one of our general practitioners here has been looking at opening a clinic, and he was not able to get to the workshops because of the time crunch. But I gave him the data stick and he has gone through the resources and came back and thanked me for that.*

## Kitimat Chamber Outcomes and Learning

For this project, Kitimat chamber of Commerce identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from participation in the workshops and the use of the workshop materials in their business. The first step for Kitimat was to develop and implement the workshops and to engage employers to attend and participate in the workshops. To this end, Kitimat

consulted with its constituents to determine the appropriate content for the workshops and then developed and tested the content with an “expert” audience in the lower mainland. Workshops were then delivered as planned.

The following discusses the project’s achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

**Outcome: Increased awareness amongst employers of existing promising practices.  
(Realized)**

*Employers that have attended our workshops are eager to utilize resources provided that will assist them in attracting new immigrants as another strategy for current HR challenges.*

*Resources - USB sticks were highly valued and we were able to find them for a good price.*

**Outcome: Employers have more support in hiring and integrating immigrants.  
(Realized)**

*Project participants have commented they like the “take away USB stick” with additional IEC-BC resources as well as the workshop materials.*

*Kitimat was started by bringing in workers from all over the world to first build the plant, so it is a very multicultural diverse community. This is an opportunity for Kitimat to work together and invest and attract new Canadians to our community.*

*The opportunity to collaborate, with the IECBC northwest forum, for example, and being more aware of the different resources that are out there means that we have more to offer the employers in our communities.*

*I went to a workshop in Smithers and met people from organizations that I was not yet aware of and learned about resources online that I wasn’t aware of. This is a great support.*

*Everything is tied in well with where our community is at right now. We have Welcoming Communities funding for another group who are working with immigrants who are new to the community, so we have been able to connect with them and provide them with information. The one on one connection is very valuable locally and in the region and in the province through IECBC.*

**Outcome: Employers use a competency based approach to hiring immigrants.  
(Not Realized)**

*Employers and others speak about attracting new Canadians to their community but are not sure how to do this and get the right people. When employers look at the competencies of new Canadians, they can find more people who will make a commitment to working here. They understand that they have the skills and if we work with them, you can have a long term employee.*

*They often work way under their skill level, so if their skills are assessed and they are given a job more at their level, they will be more likely to stay in the job in this community.*

## Kitimat Chamber Indicator Measures

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized. The following table shows the project’s results during the project period.

- # of steering committee members: No committee formed. Used a strategy of broad outreach to employers rather than a formal steering committee format.
- .Stakeholders involved with developing the workshops: MOSAIC , STEP, numerous small businesses, Chambers of Commerce. Work BC centres and Immigrant Serving Organizations in Northwest and Northeast BC participated in interviews and shaped the workshop content and process.
- Stakeholders involved with promoting: Smithers Chamber of Commerce, Houston Chamber of Commerce, Kitimat - Kitimat Chamber of Commerce, Prince Rupert Chamber of Commerce, Hecate Strait, Prince Rupert Port Authority, Fort Nelson Chamber of Commerce, Northern Lights College, Rotary, Energy Services BC, Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society, Fort St John - Northern Lights College, Rotary, SUCCESS, Fort St John Literacy Society, FSJ retiree provided non-profit contacts, Energy Services BC, Fort St John Chamber of Commerce. Dawson Creek - Community Futures, Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Chetwynd Chamber of Commerce, Energy Services BC. Terrace - Kitimat Chamber of Commerce, Terrace Chamber of Commerce, Northwest Community College, Community Futures, Terrace Economic Development Authority, Terrace Library, Skeena Diversity Society. British Columbia Construction Association, K.T. Industrial Development Society, Rotary.
- Employers have more knowledge and understanding of the issues and how to conduct competency based approach. Employers report having more knowledge on post-workshop questionnaire.
- # who used tools provided in the workshop -Not known
- # who are prepared to hire immigrants - Not known
- # of immigrants hired by workshop participants- None to date.

## Kitimat Chamber Challenges and Learning

In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project outcomes, learning and innovation, these challenges contribute to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience and results throughout the project period.

### **Employers in different communities in this region have little time to attend workshops and individual schedules vary from community to community.**

*Greatest challenge is potential participants are time deprived - they are interested in the workshop due to their current HR challenges but struggle to make time to attend. We have had great success because of our ability to tailor workshop presentation time to suit the unique requirements of each individual community.*

*Avoid evening workshops. Community centres are better than educational institutions for holding the workshop - more adult environment, less sense of “being at school” for participants. Length – Small business owners are very busy. Plan a workshop of two or three hours with lunch. Do not assume people will travel to another place.*

*Preparatory visits and interviews on site in northwest and northeast gave us Invaluable information through advance research interviews and on the ground research with people in the regions. We were able to adjust the workshop to the needs of each region, which are very different.*

### **Chambers of Commerce in this region are very busy and are challenged to be involved in planning and implementing workshops.**

*Over the course of the project it became very apparent that not just businesses but organization such as Chambers of Commerce and Employment Serving Agencies had gone from being busy and time challenged in early 2013 to stretched beyond limits, short staffed and “desperate” for knowledge and solutions. In developing the workshops and connections with IEC-BC and additional EIF projects have found that the projects and resources that have been developed and compiled are invaluable to businesses that are experiencing staffing shortages. The resources can be accessed at a time that is suitable for HR staff. The resources are concise and provide solutions.*

*Our original plan was to work with the chambers, but they don’t have time. They’ll send out info but can’t do much more. Their members can’t give up 2 hours or a half day to do a workshop - so they are going to do a short breakfast or lunch workshop and then have time for one on ones. We have been talking to people from economic development and community futures offices to connect with a broad range of organizations.*

## Kitimat Chamber Significant Aspect

Project managers were asked to describe the most significant aspect of the project or of their learning during the project. The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals generally illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

*There is a lot more to immigrant employment. That the whole aspect of encouraging new Canadians from the lower mainland and other centers up to Kitimat to fill positions and become part of the community, is really how the community was built. And that gave me the energy and enthusiasm for the whole project, that's how Kitimat came to be and how we managed that in the 50s without the technology we have now, we did it back then and we can do it again. And it will be that multicultural community that we were in the beginning.*

# NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE (NLC)

## Northern Lights College Project Description - Hiring Assessment Toolkit for New Canadians - Oil and Gas, and Mining Industries

Northern Lights College developed and piloted A *Hiring Assessment Toolkit* for new Canadians/immigrants. Two high demand occupations were selected as the focus for the project: Gas Plant (Process) Operator and Underground Miner. This is a collaborative project between the college and industry sectors.

Northern Lights College is BC’s Energy College™, serving northern British Columbians in an area covering more than 324,000 square kilometres. The college will collaborate with employers in the Oil & Gas and Mining industries that initiated this project as a direct response to their need to ensure sufficient workers are available for major projects and investments planned for Northern BC over the next twenty years.

The Northern Lights College EIF project was supported in The Level One Regional Industry/Sectoral Organization Category (Up To \$200,000).

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a comprehensive picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

### Northern Lights College Logic Model

| Activities  | Outputs  | Outcomes   | Indicators   |
|---|--|--|--|
| Engage steering committee to define the standards, translate them into a job competency profile and create an assessment approach and tools                             | Steering committee formed                                    | Employers will use the occupational performance standards (OPS) and trial competency assessments when hiring immigrant workers | # of occupations that create OPS and competency assessments with tools     |
| Create occupational performance standards (OPS) and competency assessments for non-trade occupations in the Oil and Gas industry and Mining industries in Northeast BC. | Occupational performance standards (OPS) developed           | Immigrant job applicants can better demonstrate their knowledge and capabilities   | # of trial assessments   |
| Train assessors as  | Competency assessments created and trialed for 2 occupations | Employers can better assess the competency of the individual against occupational standards                                    | # of employers that use the standards and assessment tools                 |
|   | Trained assessors  |  | Satisfaction of employers with process and tools for competency assessment |
|   |  |  | Satisfaction of immigrants with process and tools for competency           |

needed

Pilot competency  
assessment tool

Employers will hire  
and retain immigrants

assessment

## NLC Activities and Outputs

Northern Lights College successfully developed and piloted a comprehensive hiring assessment toolkit. This kit is comprised of several standardized tests that together measure industry competencies. Importantly, the toolkit includes two English language tests to measure the candidates English language ability. A unique feature of the assessment process is the interview with the candidate conducted by a trained assessor. This interview is important in providing an opportunity for the employer to learn as much as possible about the candidate's skills and experience that would be applicable and relevant to the industry. The following highlights the project's key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Conducted extensive consultation with industry representatives to determine appropriate areas for standards and assessment development.
- Formed Steering Committee.
- Selected oil and gas (control center operators and plant and facilities operators positions), and underground mining (entry level positions).
- Worked with the National Human Resources Sector Council and the BC Mining HR Task Force.
- Obtained MiHR occupational standards and certification materials and gained assistance from them to connect with others in the industry.
- Collaborated with North Island College related to their underground mining training program materials and access to their instructors.
- Developed Job Competency Standards for the selected occupations with content expert support.
- Identified suitable immigrant candidates for the assessment process.
- Completed pilot assessment training with 22 people - 10 new Canadians, nine project team members, and three assessors.
- Completed *Hiring Assessment Toolkit*.

## NLC Outcomes and Learning

For this project, NLC identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the development of *A Hiring Assessment Toolkit* for new Canadians/immigrants in the occupations of Gas Plant (Process) Operator and Underground Miner.

The intention was to pilot this toolkit in order to determine its viability and success in providing a competency based assessment for immigrants with skills and experience that would be valued in industry.

The first step for NLC was to identify industry partners interested in being involved in this pilot project and to determine from them, the types of job competencies required. To this end, NLC worked extensively with industry partners and other training institutes.

NLC also worked within the network of organizations that support immigrant integration and through this network identified ten individuals to participate in the pilot assessments. The toolkit is now complete and NLC is poised to promote the use of the toolkit extensively throughout the industry. NLC is also considering the development of similar toolkits for other high demand industries.

The following discusses the project's achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

**Outcome: Immigrant job applicants can better demonstrate their knowledge and capabilities.  
(Realized)**

*It was great to see the number of new Canadians/immigrants in the Lower Mainland with experience that is directly or indirectly related to both industry sectors, in particular the oil and gas industry: Individuals with the technical knowledge and skills to realize much of the planned investment forecast for northern BC; Individuals with experience living and working in communities similar to those in northern BC; working in remote areas, and in conditions common to the industry in northern BC; individuals who are willing to re-locate to live and work in northern BC.*

*We are working on occupations where there are similar positions in other countries, so immigrants with that type of experience have relevant transferable skills to these jobs.*

**Outcome: Employers can better assess the competency of the individual against occupational standards.  
(Realized)**

*The Toolkit makes it easy to see if there's a match between the job and the job applicant. It supports determining if an applicant meets industry standards. Employers can decide whether they want a 100% match or are prepared to accept someone who doesn't meet all of the requirements and/or have all of the competencies. This will become increasingly important as the labour market tightens and fewer skilled workers are available.*

*The Toolkit shifted the focus from recognizing credentials to recognizing competencies. Competencies became a common language that allowed the employer and job applicant to talk to each other about work in a way that they each understand.*

*We looked at labour market information and we selected occupations that were in high demand but that would also have a good fit with the immigrant labour pool. It has to be broad enough to be useful to the sector, and specific enough to be useful to one employer.*

*“This project is turning it around. Instead of looking for workers anywhere in the world doing the required job, we look at what you need to be able to do the job, then we look amongst people already here and try to see what they do have, what they don’t have and make a decision about the gap and the training that is needed.”*

*“We don’t expect to find people already here with the exact job experience, we expect to find people with similar competencies, transferable skills that are relevant to these jobs.”*

**Outcome: Employers will use the occupational performance standards (OPS) and trial competency assessments when hiring immigrant workers.  
(Not realized)**

*This has the tremendous potential for sustainability because once we have proven that the assessment and performance standard tool works well, we’ll have partners from other industries wanting to adapt it to their industries such as construction and electrical.*

*Now that the tool is developed and proven successful, there is the potential for application both provincially and nationally.*

*Scalability is important. We see this project more as a “proof of concept.” Prove to the industry that this is possible and what it can do for them. Then you can approach scalability. You can’t do these both at the same time.*

**Outcome: Employers will hire and retain immigrants.  
(Not realized)**

## **NLC Indicator Measures**

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized. The following table shows the project’s results during the project period.

- # of occupations that create OPS and competency assessments with tools: Two occupations included in this pilot.

- # of trial assessments: 15 assessments were completed exceeding the project target of 4 trial assessments
- # of employers that use the standards and assessment tools: None to date
- Satisfaction of employers with process and tools for competency assessment: Not known.
- Satisfaction of immigrants with process and tools for competency assessment: Pilot group reported they were satisfied with the process and tools.

## NLC Challenges and Learning

In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project outcomes, learning and innovation, these challenges contribute to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience and results throughout the project period.

### **It is difficult to schedule meetings with employers and industry representatives.**

*It’s difficult to find and get time with industry to secure participation and input in to these types of projects. Within both sectors, there’s a small pool of people with the expertise to help out and they are in demand for a lot of similar projects.*

*Companies are enthusiastic about the project but are very busy, making it challenging to connect with people, particularly for meetings involving representatives from more than one company. To compensate, we have adjusted (and will continue) our approach to focus on one-on-one meetings, using phone/teleconference more frequently, and increasing reliance on written summaries of discussions and agreements to keep everyone informed. This approach appears to be working well, although it is more time consuming.*

### **It takes time to gain buy-in from employers.**

*It has taken longer than we thought to really learn the ways, terminology and culture of this industry, which we need to be able to demonstrate in order to get buy-in from the employers. Convincing the employers actually takes quite a long time, once they know what it’ll do for them, they buy in, but it takes time.*

### **There is a disconnect between industry and immigrants.**

*There is a disconnect between the employers in both industry sectors saying they need workers and new Canadian/immigrant workers looking for work. In some cases, job seekers have trouble penetrating industry networks to find the right employers; in other cases, hiring practices (e.g., automated resume scanners) screen out new Canadians/immigrants because they aren’t familiar with North American job hunting practices (e.g., incorporating key words from the job posting into your resume and cover letter). As a result, many new Canadian/immigrant workers never even get the chance to show an employer the relevant experience they do have.*

## NLC Significant Aspect

Project managers were asked to describe the most significant aspect of the project or of their learning during the project. The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals generally illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

*For me it was coming face to face with real people in that labour pool. Everybody hears about doctors being taxi drivers, and I have spoken to taxi drivers. But I had not met people like those we had in the pilot. Hearing their stories individually made me realize the amount of skills that are sitting there in that labour pool right here in BC, and they are virtually invisible. They are not getting used. Particularly on the oil and gas side, everyone said “you’ll never find anyone with oil and gas experience, you’ll never find anyone who wants to come up to the north” but I was blown away by the number of people we were able to find and the similarity of their experience and skills with what we are trying to do in the north. And in fact, these people have the skills needed to grow our industry and take it to the next level, because where they come from, they don’t have the abundance of natural resources that we do, so they are able to innovate and take product development and marketing and market share to a whole different level.*

# PRINCE GEORGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (PRINCE GEORGE CHAMBER)

## Prince George Chamber of Commerce Project Description - Consider Prince George

Prince George Chamber of Commerce developed and implemented a community outreach campaign designed to recruit and retain skilled new Canadians and their families from the lower mainland and island regions of BC to a prosperous life in Prince George. This campaign was called, “Prince George: Dreams. Opportunity. Affordability.” The campaign involved “community champions,” immigrants who have built successful work and family lives in Prince George, to show the opportunities available to families. This multi-media advertising campaign included TV and print advertising within cultural stations and publications, and an extensive social media campaign. The campaign used the language of each target cultural community, as well as English.

Representing its members, the Prince George Chamber of Commerce acts as a catalyst and information resource for the business community and promotes and improves trade, commerce and the economic, civic and social welfare within the City of Prince George and the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George.

The Prince George Chamber of Commerce EIF Project was supported in the Level One Regional Business Association Category (Up To \$200,000)

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a comprehensive picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

### Prince George Chamber of Commerce Logic Model

| Activities   | Outputs  | Outcomes   | Indicators   |
|--|--|--|--|
| Creation of TV commercials and print media ads<br>Media campaign to share stories of successful immigrant families in Prince George<br>Immigrant families speaking several languages will be | Web based social media campaign presented in languages other than English<br>Video commercials featuring PG immigrants (aired on TV and online post project) | Prince George perceived as positive place to live and work among BC immigrant population<br>Immigrants locate in Prince George<br>Immigrants will be hired and retained in employment in | # of hits on website<br># of television viewers<br>Social media interactions (twitter, Facebook)<br># of phone conversations<br># of immigrants reporting they were encouraged to consider Prince George |

|                         |  |               |  |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|--|
| Prince George champions |  | Prince George | # of employers reporting hiring immigrants |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|--|

## PG Chamber Activities and Outputs

Prince George Chamber of Commerce successfully developed and implemented a social media campaign that was built on the stories of several successful immigrants in Prince George. A highlight of this campaign was the use of several languages and the targeting of media that would reach specific cultural groups. PG Chamber coordinated its activities with other EIF projects in that region and specifically built on its relationship with Initiatives Prince George, an organization working to promote Prince George throughout BC and elsewhere. The Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George also played a key role in this project. The following highlights the project’s key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Learned about social media and implemented campaign using several social media platforms
- Recruited community champions-immigrants who have successfully integrated in Prince George.
- Created six videos for TV advertising showing the “champions,” immigrant families, in Prince George. These videos are in Punjabi and Mandarin languages and will air on OMNI, targeting immigrants in the lower mainland.
- Created social media campaign on three primary social media platforms - Facebook, Twitter and Google Plus.
- Held website launch event in partnership with Initiatives Prince George.
- Created written marketing material.

*The impact of this project will last much longer than the campaign. Right now we cannot measure it other than the positive comments we have received. This is the time of year immigrants are really recognizing their struggles and considering a change. This fact, combined with my trip to Vancouver, along with advertising material set to come out prior to the trip, should generate a good buzz involving the project. I am confident that although difficult to measure, I will soon have solid data regarding impact.*

## PG Chamber Outcomes and Learning

For this project, PG Chamber identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the Prince George Chamber of Commerce community outreach campaign designed to recruit and retain skilled new Canadians and their families from the lower mainland and island regions of BC to Prince George.

The intention was use several media that specifically target cultural groups in the lower mainland and to use this opportunity to show Prince George as a positive place for immigrants to live and work. It was anticipated that this campaign would result in interest in Prince George from immigrants exposed to the campaign and, further, that these immigrants would locate to Prince George.

The following discusses the project's achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

**Outcome: Prince George perceived as positive place to live and work among BC immigrant population.  
(Realized)**

*The greatest success with the project to date involves developing a community "team" working on the larger issue of recruiting and retaining skilled workers to the city. Working together, the Prince George Chamber of Commerce, Initiatives Prince George, and the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society have created an initiative and series of events to increase community diversity and acceptance and address the shortage of skilled workers.*

*This project has helped elevate awareness and discussion of these issues within the community as well as knowledge of the programs and organizations working on the issues. Businesses, stakeholders and other individuals have all jumped on board the Consider PG Project, engaging and spreading the messages to extended networks*

*People's minds are changing slowly, but it's not as quick as I'd like it to be, but the project seems to be well known, so it is getting the attention that I had hoped it would get.*

**Outcome: Immigrants locate in Prince George.  
(Not Realized)**

*The biggest surprise is immigrants' resistance to relocate. Even when they are not making enough to survive and cannot afford to live, they are still resistant to relocating again. Many immigrants are still holding a grudge about the promise of employment when they immigrated. It has been a challenge to even have immigrants consider Prince George, because the reality is that it wouldn't matter what other city was being promoted, they do not want to relocate.*

**Outcome: Immigrants will be hired and retained in employment in Prince George.  
(Not Realized)**

*A new angle of insight is the need to better advertise jobs available in Prince George. Initiatives Prince George has done a fabulous job with their online job board; however, employers are still not all buying in, and many jobs remain unadvertised. A few of the employment service providers in the Vancouver area have said immigrants want to see the job postings before even thinking about a move.*

*I find that more employers are now open to talking about it as IMSS through the welcome PG committee have really been addressing that as well, the need for employers to be more open minded. Historically you didn't need to go outside of your usual hiring protocols, but now you do.*

*The talent pool isn't giving them what they need, so they have to open their eyes and think outside the box, and stop dismissing skilled immigrants with great qualifications.*

## PG Chamber Indicator Measures

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized. The following table shows the project’s results during the project period.

- # of hits on website: 517 page views
- # of television viewers: Not known
- Social Media Interactions - Facebook: 546 likes, a post on Dec 9 reached 577 people
- Social Media Interactions - Twitter: 178 followers
- # of phone conversations: 8+
- # of immigrants reporting they were encouraged to consider Prince George: 15+
- # of employers reporting hiring immigrants: None to date

## PG Chamber Challenges and Learning

The project experienced challenges that affected the implementation and results of the project. In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project outcomes, learning and innovation, these challenges contribute to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience and results throughout the project period.

**Working together with other organizations in PG is effective, rewarding and also challenging.**

*The greatest challenge to date has been in coordinating schedules between partnering community organizations and community champions.” Everyone is busy and has their own priorities.*

**There is a lack of employer awareness and buy-in to hiring immigrants.**

*Employers are screaming about needing people, but when it comes to actually getting them to consider new Canadians for the roles it can be a challenge. A lot of local employers don't understand that this is an untapped labour pool and that the skill sets are relevant even if the experience isn't Canadian.*

**We were only able to target two cultural communities in their own language and media sources.**

*We received comments along the lines of “that’s discrimination, you can’t just target Chinese Canadians and indo-Canadians, that’s discriminating against some groups over other groups. We explained that this was not what was intended, that we received a certain number of dollars and in order to make the project successful we had to target groups, we can’t just scatter the money across everything. It needs to be specific and it needs to be strategic. We focused on those groups because they make up a larger portion of the groups in Vancouver. It was ok in the end, but there were some strong comments that we were being biased.*

## **PG Chamber Significant Aspect**

Project managers were asked to describe the most significant aspect of the project or of their learning during the project. The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals generally illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

*I thought that we could sell them on Prince George and then they would look at jobs, but it's actually the other way around. They know there is opportunity in PG, but they don't want to know more about PG, they want to know about the specific jobs that are available and which companies are hiring. I don't know if they already know about PG, or if it just doesn't matter as much as the jobs at this point.*

# SURREY BOARD OF TRADE (SBOT)

## Surrey Board of Trade Project Description - HR Solutions for Immigrant Talent

The Surrey Board of Trade developed and implemented, *HR Solutions for Immigrant Talent*, a project to assist small and medium-sized businesses to integrate new Canadians into their workplaces. The project involved workshops and a range of other human resources support for Surrey employers with needs assessment and consultation provided by an HR specialist. SBOT worked in partnership with Douglas College to develop and implement this project. The Surrey Board of Trade is a not-for-profit organization that represents 3,600 member contacts and 1900 businesses. Its purpose is to advocate at all levels of government, facilitate networking opportunities and provide cost-saving benefits and marketing opportunities to its members. The Surrey Board of Trade supports and attracts business.

The Surrey Board of Trade EIF project was supported in the Level One Mainland/Southwest Category (Up To \$200,000)

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a comprehensive picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

### Surrey Board of Trade Logic Model

| Activities   | Outputs   | Outcomes  | Indicators  |
|--|---|---|---|
| Industry consultant coaches from Douglas College provide HR support services (related to hiring, retaining and integrating new immigrants) to SMEs | 12 workshops delivered for SMEs<br>60 participants in workshops<br>25 businesses conduct needs assessment | Employers are more aware of initiatives, strategies and approaches and how to assess them.<br>Employers are better able to navigate HR so that they can keep their focus on their operations. | Participants have increased knowledge about immigrant employment<br>Business can identify their own needs related to immigrant employment |
| Deliver workshops and facilitate access to resources and tools   | 20 employers in focused interventions<br>Experienced industry consultant coaches on preferred list        | Businesses are better able to respond to market demands with better hires and less time needed for HR   | # of participants in awareness workshops  |
| Distribution of tools and resources to SME Chamber members   | HR plans developed for SMEs   | Businesses use best practices to hire, retain and integrate immigrants  | # that participate in needs assessment  |
| 20 employers   | SMEs provided   | Employers share information and   | # of participants in focused  |

|  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| participate in “focused interventions” | immigrant employee-related HR training<br>Modified workforce policies and practices. | experiences with other businesses or associates<br>SME internal immigrant hiring capacity will be enhanced. | interventions<br># that report sharing information with other businesses<br># of immigrants hired |
|--|--|---|---|

## Surrey Board of Trade Activities and Outputs

Surrey Board of Trade successfully developed and implemented workshops, business needs assessments, and employer-focused interventions with small & medium sized employers (SME’s). The project exceeded its target outputs in each of these areas. The following highlights the project’s key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Conducted 12 Awareness Workshops and one additional IEC-BC Focus Group
- Conducted 7 Employer-focused HR Series Workshops.
- Conducted 27 Organizational Needs Assessments (ONA’s) with SME’s across Surrey
- Conducted 7 Employer-focused on site interventions with a total of 199 staff trained including 31 from management
- Prepared 7 HR Plans for SME’s
- Established a Surrey Board of Trade website portal for HR Solutions for the Immigrant Talent
- Produced two Toolkits to support employers (SME’s) in addressing their human resources needs related to the recruitment, integration and retention of new immigrants:
- Produced Workshop Training Toolkit Binder
- Produced employer tip sheets for distribution and posted on website
- Promoted the project through several communiques and articles in Business in Surrey.
- Received the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Award to HR Solutions for Immigrant Talent.

*It’s crucial for SBOT to take the lead on this EIF project. The immigrant population of surrey is growing faster than in any other city, both in percentage basis, but also on a number basis. These new Canadians are entering the labour market in our community, not just as potential workers that need a job but also as entrepreneurs, and investing in the development of businesses. So if we look at the composition of our demographics in the board of trade, more and more immigrants are playing a key role in the membership of the organization, the committees and the leadership of the organization. And that speaks to the importance of addressing the issues of developing effective strategies in the integration of immigrants in our community.*

## Surrey Board of Trade Outcomes and Learning

For this project, SBOT identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the workshops and other HR supports provided through this project. Several of the outcomes were achieved during the project period as employers who participated in the project gained awareness, knowledge and skills related to HR practices.

The following discusses the project's achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

### **Employers are more aware of initiatives, strategies and approaches and how to assess them.**

#### **(Realized)**

*We put the focus on the skills shortage and the importance of immigrants in terms of fulfilling that shortage.*

*We structured the workshop to utilize a combination of tools with employers and a toolkit as a take away. This provides more information about a range of resources. We are using the Surrey Board of Trade website as a repository so employers can access resources in an on going way.*

*This is innovative because it creates differentiated learning situations and a broader variety of resources which they can access.*

*The attendance of service providers (i.e. representatives from the Skills Connect for Immigrants Program, WorkBC Centres and immigrant serving organizations) in the workshops resulted in direct networking between employers and service providers, increasing the awareness of employers of the various services available to employers.*

### **Employers are better able to navigate HR so that they can keep their focus on their operations.**

#### **(Realized)**

*The high level of employer demand for training from the "HR Solutions for Immigrant Talent" has required the project to adjust its training intervention strategies to include a training workshop series as well as the individualized training for employers. As a result, the project established a series of training workshops focussed on: Mastering the Job Interview Process with Immigrants, How to Retain Talented Immigrant Employees in Today's Job Market, and Coaching New Immigrants for Maximum Performance.*

*The demand for focused interventions and customized training by employers extended far beyond the Project's scope and capacity to meet employer needs, including the request for multiple training sessions due to their particular organizational needs.*

*At the conclusion of the second round of Training Workshops delivered, it became evident that adding the Creating a Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces for Immigrants Workshop would be an important addition to the HR Solutions for Immigrant Talent Workshop Series, and would address employers' increased awareness in making their workplaces more welcoming for new immigrants*

## **Businesses better able to respond to market demands with better hires and less time needed for HR.**

**(Realized)**

*There is a clear need by employers in Surrey to address the issue of recruitment, integration and retention of immigrant workers. Our members tell us they lack the training, the HR tools and resources to achieve that affectively, and this project is able to deliver for members.*

*The amount of time employers have to spend on HR is decreasing as they are having to spend more and more time working on their business. There is also less time to spend on training for HR issues, but we all know the importance of addressing these issues.*

*Also, in the workshops, we break people into groups, share HR issues and use these as case studies which become the workshop template. This allows us to draw on employers' experiences to make it more relevant to the employers themselves.*

## **Businesses use best practices to hire, retain and integrate immigrants.**

**(Realized)**

*The Partnership with Douglas College has resulted in this project being able to offer the highest calibre of information to employers. Douglas College is highly experienced in this area and together with the SBOT can train employers in best practices related to immigrant employment.” Our partner is Douglas College who is already addressing this in the community. This partnership is a model that can be replicated across the country.*

## **Employers share information and experiences with other businesses or associates.**

**(Realized)**

*The HR Solutions for Immigrant Talent has just been acknowledged by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce as the top award winner in their national competition, “Connecting with Educators on the Skills Gap.” Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Responsible for Labour, noted, “by finding new and innovative ways to integrate immigrants into small and medium-sized business, the Surrey Board of Trade shows they understand the critical role immigrants play in growing out economy.*

*The willingness to share resources is innovative. Many organizations take this as proprietary, but we posted this on our website, and we suggested the Google site that is now established by IEC-BC to share resources among the 11 projects. This helped to stimulate discussion among the different organizations, and has facilitated improvement by utilizing a variety of resources.*

*HR Solutions for Immigrant Talent has had a significant impact on the Surrey Board of Trade and has increased both its commitment and organizational capacity to support its members in the recruitment, integration and retention of new immigrants.*

*The strategic partnership that SBOT developed with Douglas College has not only bolstered the Board's relationship with this post-secondary educational institution, it was the major reason for winning the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Award for Connecting with Educators on the Skills Gap.*

*The relationship that the CEO of the Surrey Board of Trade had with key employers across the City was a major benefit in recruiting the initial employers to the workshops. We utilized a targeted list of SBOT members (Top 100) for the initial marketing of workshops. Word of mouth referrals increased employer and service provider participation after the initial workshop success.*

**SME internal immigrant hiring capacity will be enhanced.  
(Realized)**

*Employers attending the workshops were primarily from small- and medium-sized businesses with a few large employers. They represent a wide-spectrum of industries from within the community, including: educational services, healthcare, retail, accommodation and food, finance and insurance, administrative support, utilities and construction.*

*Within the context of the interventions with employers, they articulate specific areas where they need help or assistance. We structured the workshops to meet these specific needs. Once we attached specific training areas to the workshops, our attendance just doubled overnight.*

## Surrey Board of Trade Indicator Measures

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these “future-oriented” indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project’s intended results even if these are not yet realized. The following table shows the project’s results during the project period.

- Participants have increased knowledge about immigrant employment: Several stories of employer learning are posted on the BBOT website.
- Business can identify their own needs related to immigrant employment: Employers have provided feedback and ideas showing they understand their own needs. Based on this feedback, the project adjusted its workshop topics and content.
- 47 participants in eight awareness workshops.
- 14 employers participate in needs assessment.
- 6 employers in focused interventions such as on-site training sessions.
- 2 immigrants hired: The participation of representatives from employment service providers has led to the direct referral of a number of immigrant candidates to employers for job openings.

## Surrey Board of Trade SBOT Challenges and Learning

In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project outcomes, learning and innovation, these challenges contribute to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience and results throughout the project period.

### **There is a very high demand for employer training.**

*This has required the introduction of the workshop series to augment the customized training sessions. In addition to meeting increased employer training demands, the workshop series was able to attract employers during the summer months, when marketing opportunities were reduced.*

*We are turning employers away because we don’t have enough seats. We started in a room that hold 12-15 people, moved to a room with seating capacity 20, then to a room with capacity of 35. This speaks to the need of the community and also the success of the initiative, but it is also a challenge to respond to the need.*

### **Customized interventions with employers are labour and time intensive.**

*The greatest challenge has been meeting the unexpected, high-volume demands for training. We realized we don’t have the capacity to address this need in the way we had planned.*

*When we did the needs assessment, we realized it takes a tremendous amount of time to go through the process of articulating the business’s needs, and then developing, evaluating, adapting and delivering the training plan. But the workshops that were tailored to a specific training need that they had, they were very willing to join in and get enough out of it to eliminate the need to have a tailored one.*

*We are able to identify some specific training needs for the employers, and so we end up bypassing the needs assessment piece. And then they book the training session right away. This makes this project a bit more fluid and less rigid. We found a need for flexibility to adjust as we need to, to meet the needs we find of the employers as opposed to what we assumed the needs would be - to make it work more effectively.*

### **Employers respond best to workshops that meet very specific needs.**

*To recruit employers, there must a clear business case presented to motivate participation (i.e. what’s in it for me?) with a clear return on investment articulated in the marketing materials.*

*When we attached a concrete training topic to our awareness workshops, for an additional 2 hours, our attendance doubled, because the employers can therefore use their time more efficiently to meet their specific needs.*

*We found that people who took one workshop, tended to sign up for another workshop because they got a lot out of it, and noted the high quality of the workshops.*

*The key to our success so far is flexibility and ability to adjust schedules and such accordingly to better meet the needs of employers.*

### **Employers' schedules and time constraints are factors in their participation.**

*Projects that focus on the participation of employers need to recognize the difficulty of attracting them during certain periods of the year (i.e. summer months) due to vacation schedules, and business cycle issues.*

*Employers have limited time to invest in training initiatives and therefore training events need to be short in duration and be flexibly scheduled to meet employer needs (breakfast meetings, lunch and learn, half-day workshops).*

### **Surrey Board of Trade Significant Aspect**

Project managers were asked to describe the most significant aspect of the project or of their learning during the project. The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals generally illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

*In the workshops, when I saw during the breaks that employers and service providers were talking to each other and exchanging business cards, I knew that we weren't just giving them a training workshop with resources they can take away. I knew that the connections that emerged would live longer than the initial workshop. I think that that is the most important residual that comes out of those opportunities.*

*If you are trying to get a fusion between the demand and supply sides, once it starts to happen, those initial contacts will become ongoing working relationships between employers and organizations that work with immigrants to address the market needs in the community.*

# TOLKO INDUSTRIES LTD (TOLKO)

## Tolko Project Description - Success through People - Innovation, Immigration & Integration

This project involved the development of a multilingual recruiting website targeted at immigrants and the creation of an inclusive onboarding program to support immigrant integration within the company. This project was designed to enhance Tolko’s ability to attract immigrant talent to Tolko’s operating regions in the Thompson-Okanagan and Cariboo, to assist Tolko to become a culturally inclusive employer of choice and to provide new opportunities for immigrants to achieve labour market attachment.

Tolko Industries LTD is a private, Canadian-owned forest products company based in Vernon, BC, which manufactures and markets forest products to world markets. Tolko’s manufacturing operations produce lumber, unbleached specialty Kraft papers, panel products, co-products, biomass power and a number of other specialty wood products.

The Tolko EIF project was supported in the Level Two Regional Employer Category (Up To \$100,000)

The following logic model was developed at the onset of the project. It provides a comprehensive picture of the project’s intended activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

### Tolko Logic Model

| Activities  | Outputs                                       | Outcomes   | Indicators   |
|---|---|--|--|
| Develop a recruiting website with multilingual (English and 2 other languages) and multicultural support targeted to immigrants                 | Recruiting website                            | Increase awareness of existing promising practices for the integration of new immigrants | # of hits and origin to multi-cultural pages on website                  |
| Create a culturally relevant onboarding program for the forest products sector to support immigrant integration and engagement in the workplace | Onboarding program for forest products sector | Modified workforce policies and practices to support immigrant hiring and retention      | # of skilled immigrants who self-identify                                |
|   | Engaged community organizations               | Enhanced ability to attract immigrant talent   | # of hires of skilled immigrants   |
|   | Best practices shared with businesses         | Tolko will become a culturally inclusive employer of choice                              | # of engaged community organizations and immigrant serving organizations |
|   | Marketing materials created                   | New opportunities for immigrants to achieve  |  |
|   | Immigrant recruiting strategy                 |  |  |
|   | Recommendations for modified                  |  |  |

|  |                                   |  |   |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Identify and engage community organizations and immigrant service agencies in operating regions<br>Design recruitment strategy | workforce policies and practices. | labour market attachment.<br>Employer-led approaches and solutions to skills shortages<br>Have a strategic approach to sourcing immigrant talent | # of businesses and industry stakeholders shared information with |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|

## Tolko Activities and Outputs

Tolko Industries successfully developed a recruiting website with multilingual (English and 2 other languages) and multicultural supports targeted to immigrants to attract new talent, highlight transferable skills, and spotlight careers in the forest products sector. The project also created an onboarding program to support immigrant integration and engagement in the workplace. To support immigrant integration, Tolko identified and engaged community organizations and immigrant service agencies in the Okanagan and Thompson-Nicola operating regions in British Columbia. The following highlights the project’s key activities and outputs during the project period.

- Identified and engaged community organizations and immigrant service agencies in Tolko’s B.C. operating regions;
- Formed a steering committee with four forestry company partners.
- Developed recruiting website with multilingual component (English, Hindi, Chinese).
- Created a culturally relevant onboarding program to support immigrant integration and engagement in the workplace;
- Completed videos of interviews with new Canadians currently working at Tolko.

*The EIF project will be rolled into our overall recruitment strategy. We looked at what are the target talent pools that we need to build specific strategies around, and based on our workforce planning data, which tells us where we have gaps, but also tells about growth we wanted to target the skilled new Canadian labour force. We were very excited about EIF because it was something we wanted to do but we just didn't have the resources. So it kick started, or acted as a catalyst for us to put effort into this and a focus on it. So the learnings from this project will become a part of our overall recruitment strategy.*

## Tolko Outcomes and Learning

For this project, Tolko identified outcomes that would reasonably and logically result from the development and use of the inclusive and targeted recruitment strategies presented on

its new website. These strategies integrated existing Tolko employees to present a picture of Tolko's approach both with its workforce and its communities.

The following discusses the project's achievement of the outcomes during the evaluation period and highlights some of the areas of learning related to these outcomes.

**Outcome: Increased awareness of existing promising practices for the integration of new immigrants.**

**(Realized)**

*EIF has allowed us to reach into the organization and talk to our immigrant community and understand from them, what they like about Tolko, and what it has meant to their lives. Without this project, we probably wouldn't have even thought about that.*

*We brought in the Safe Harbour Program to further what we are doing with EIF. Safe Harbour: Respect for All is an AMSSA program that helps to create more welcoming communities that support diversity and reject discrimination. There was some resistance at first because it's a shift but we made the case for this and it was accepted by the management.*

**Outcome: Modified workforce policies and practices to support immigrant hiring and retention.**

**(Realized)**

*I was hired a couple years ago to build a recruitment strategy, and the first thing we focused on was youth, so we started a coop program. The next part of our strategy was remote locations and trade, and then the next was going to be aboriginal and immigration. And because of this project, we bumped immigration first, and will be looking at aboriginal next year.*

*This is part of our overall strategy, so it will be sustained throughout Tolko.*

**Outcome: Enhanced ability to attract immigrant talent.**

**(Realized)**

*This idea came from our intern (he is from Canada, but his family is of Chinese descent) and he brought a very interesting perspective. And also from our media design people that we brought in, and they interviewed us and told us that it comes across on our website that Tolko has strong values but we need to personalize it somehow. And so we brainstormed and came up with the idea to profile our own employees.*

*This is part of our overall strategy: We can't compete head to head with oil and gas, so we focus more on family values, communities, etc. This is a big part of what we think is attractive about working at Tolko.*

**Outcome: Tolko will become a culturally inclusive employer of choice.**

**(Realized)**

*Because at Tolko, we have very strong values of equal opportunity, multiculturalism and diversity, we didn't want to create something that looked like we were creating something different; we*

wanted to meld the EIF project into our larger overall strategy. So what EIF has allowed us to do is hire a really good project lead to connect with the communities and do a lot of research that we wouldn't have had time or capacity to do.

Developed website site map and shot videos of interviews with new Canadians currently working at Tolko, so that they can share their personal experiences about why they chose Tolko and what it meant for them and their family.

**Outcome: Employer-led approaches and solutions to skills shortages.  
(Realized)**

*EIF has given us the opportunity to focus on this and get it done, rather than knowing that it is important, but not having the time to do it right now. We have to do this now, we are reopening a mill in Athabasca and we need to hire hundreds of people and we are also seeing that our workforce is retiring and we need to bring in new people.*

**Outcome: Have a strategic approach to sourcing immigrant talent.  
(Realized)**

*We now have a comprehensive strategy with several key points: Building internal and external learning and sharing of information through the regular review of the project with the HR Peer Group, Executive Sponsor (VP Human Resources) and Steering Committee; Promoting and reinforcing cultural sensitivity internally; Engaging recent immigrant Tolko employees as part of solution building; Achieving Safe Harbour Certification; Generating enhanced internal regional HR alignment regarding Tolko's approach to attracting skilled worker, "whole family" approach, integration to community etc.*

**Outcome: New opportunities for immigrants to achieve labour market attachment.  
(Not Realized)**

## TOLKO Indicator Measures

The logic model lists several indicators that are intended to measure project results. These indicators were identified by each project during the proposal process and were later confirmed in consultation with IEC-BC and the evaluators. During this consultation process, projects stated that while all of the indicators are relevant and would accurately show project success in the long term, it was likely that some indicators could not be measured during the one year project period. This was particularly true for measures of hiring and retaining immigrants where it was certainly possible but unlikely that there would be enough time for the project activities and outputs to lead to significant results. However, it was determined that these "future-oriented" indicators would remain as part of the project logic model to show the project's intended results even if these are not yet realized. The following table shows the project's results during the project period.

- # of hits and origin to multi-cultural pages on website: Website has not yet been launched.
- # of skilled immigrants who self-identify: None to date
- # of hires of skilled immigrants: None to date
- # of engaged community organizations and immigrant serving organizations: 9 organizations with direct contact. Database with 65 potential agencies with several connecting to serving immigrants
- # of businesses and industry stakeholders shared information with: 5 Safe Harbour stakeholders, 3 Steering Committee Stakeholders and Industry representatives. More planned with release of final report.

## Tolko Challenges and Learning

In this section we outline the issues, conditions and situations that made it challenging for the project to achieve its outcomes. Comments from project staff and stakeholders illustrate these challenges. Along with the discussion of the project outcomes, learning and innovation, these challenges contribute to the “stories” that illustrate the project’s overall experience and results throughout the project period.

### **Project summer timing delayed consultation with community partners.**

*One challenge is that this project took place mostly over the summer months and people just weren’t available to meet with. A lot of people said they were interested in talking to us, but wanted us to come back in September.*

### **It takes time to find an appropriate technical team for website and resources development.**

*We were pretty picky about the media company and the project lead so that took us longer than we expected - but I’m glad we waited because they are awesome.*

*The amount of time it took us to get the right people was a bit of surprise. We wrote an RFP for both of those areas of the project. We issued them, we had to evaluate them, and we presented it to the steering committee, which all took time.*

## Tolko Significant Aspect

Project managers were asked to describe the most significant aspect of the project or of their learning during the project. The “Most Significant Aspect or Change” is a common question in evaluation and research studies, particularly with projects designed to address social change. The stories told by individuals generally illustrate important aspects of the project and, along with other findings, provide insight into the project success and challenges.

*The idea of going into our organization and talking to new Canadians about their experience is just brilliant, it's created a real sense of excitement about the project and a sense of awareness and sensitivity around our employees, and it's created such pride with the people who we have asked to be involved.*

*It was a real learning for us, because we did an engagement survey 2 years ago and we have been working on improving our results in terms of engagement. If we want to create a culturally inclusive look and feel then we needed to look into our organization and talk to the people and use them as our spokes people instead of putting words in their mouths. That was a big, big learning.*



*Funding is made possible through the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia and through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement.*