IECBC
IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT COUNCIL OF BC

Program Background Document

PowerHack: Moving from Credentials to Competencies

A series of four events:

July 20, 2019 to March 31, 2020

Program Background

PowerHack is the newest initiative from IEC-BC that provides an innovative way for employers to build their talent pipeline by connecting with local immigrants with tech sector skills, knowledge and experience. Through a hackathon setting, employers and hiring managers are able to assess the hard technical and soft skills of the participants as they interact to solve a 'real world' problem.

IEC-BC will host four PowerHack events between July 2019 and February 2020, with the first event confirmed for Saturday, July 20, 2019 in downtown Vancouver.

How it works

- One-day event, using a hackathon format
- Participants are pre-screened
- Participants with a range of technical and non-technical skills, knowledge and experience, will self-form into working groups
- A series of micro-learning sessions, led by tech subject matter experts, will be offered throughout the day to offer participants additional learning opportunities
- Local industry professionals/employers will be invited to attend, as observers and resource people - *Note: Given the short duration of the event, employer representatives will be invited to observe, interact with participants, and respond to questions.*
- Participant teams will present their solution to a panel of judges, working in the tech sector.
- The teams with the top 3 solutions will receive awards.

Participants

Highly skilled immigrants and refugees, from diverse cultural backgrounds with:

- International skills, knowledge and experience in tech sectors
- Intermediate to advanced English language proficiency (CLB 7+)
- Technical skills including, coding, big data, product development, data analysis
- Non-technical experience such as business development and talent acquisition
- Motivated and ready to work

What problems are we addressing?

The future of work through the lens of skilled immigrants

Sample problem statements

1. Most business schools in Canada allow their students to choose their own classes for their degree. How can students tailor their academic journey and organizational experience so that they could get a job that they want?
2. How can skilled immigrants coming into Canada adapt to the rising automation in the workplace?
3. Given the predicament and barriers that skilled immigrants are facing when looking for employment, how can we create a technological solution that that helps skilled immigrants to find a job in their field in Canada?
4. With the increasing access to information and learning materials online, people often turn to self-guided online learning modules to train themselves and improve their workplace competencies. How can we improve the completion rate for self-guided learning programs?
5. The gap between traditional education systems and the labour market could grow with increasing automation and digitization, how can we adequately be preparing Canadians and newcomers in retraining and upskilling?

At the beginning of the hackathon, two problem statements will be presented to the participants, who will choose one to work on in self-formed teams.

Get Involved

- Be a subject matter expert and lead a micro-learning session (15 – 20 minutes)
- Promote the events within your networks
- Provide a 'real world' problem faced by your organization
- Be a judge
- Be a sponsor

To get involved or for more information, please send an email to powerhack@iecbc.ca.

PowerHack is a pilot project funded through the Workforce Innovation and Inclusion Project (WIIP). Led by the Diversity Institute at Ryerson University WIIP is a three-year program that brings together employers, non-profits, and settlement agencies to address the employment needs of newcomers and produce a skilled, resilient Canadian workforce. WIIP is funded by the Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and will enhance settlement services delivery and provision across Ontario, Nova Scotia and British Columbia.

Supporters