

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **National Employer Feedback Forums Aim to Transform Immigrant Talent Inclusion**

*Groundbreaking project shifts focus to employers' perspectives*

VANCOUVER, December 7, 2023 — As Canada continues with its ambitious targets to welcome up to 500,000 in 2025, employers need effective strategies to attract, hire, and retain skilled immigrants more than ever.

Despite this need, Statistics Canada data reveal a concerning disparity in employment outcomes for newcomers compared to individuals born in Canada, resulting in lost output, prosperity, and inclusion. In response to this challenge, the national network of Immigrant Employment Councils of Canada (IECC) has introduced the National Employer Feedback Forums Project. The Forums will establish a formal structured feedback mechanism that will provide governments and organizations serving immigrant communities with valuable insights into employer perspectives and needs to shape future policies and programs. The project will also build a common platform where best practices are shared.

The Feedback Forums will collect and analyze constructive input from employers and share practices between diverse stakeholders. These include employers, local business experts, and community and service providing organizations (SPOs) across Canada. The forums will use facilitated, thoughtful consultations and rigorous analysis to help employers learn and share the most effective ways of attracting, hiring, and retaining immigrant talents in Canada.

Employers are pivotal to the success of Canada's immigration priorities and are responsible for a large part of the integration and inclusion of newcomers into the labor market. However, they currently lack a formal process and place for comprehensive discussions regarding their challenges, insights, and strategies for the recruitment and retention of qualified immigrant talent. The project will give them a louder voice when it comes to programs that prepare newcomers for work or determine how newcomers are chosen to come to Canada.

The project will be organized by local immigrant employment councils across Canada, including the Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC), Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC), Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council (ERIEC), Rural Manitoba Immigrant Employment Council (RMIEC), Saskatoon Open Door Society (SODS), Workforce Collective, Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), New Brunswick Multicultural Council (NBMC), and Halifax Partnership.

“If we want a successful economy, we must give employers the tools and the voice they need to attract and recruit top talent. That’s why I’m thrilled to partner with immigrant employment councils from coast to coast so that Canada’s employers can communicate labour market needs promptly and share and learn practices to integrate immigrant talent,” says IEC-BC CEO Patrick MacKenzie.

The Feedback Forums Project empowers local IECs to facilitate focused and intentional discussions about effective labor market integration practices informed by employer perspectives and needs, fostering action-based solutions co-developed with stakeholders.

This initiative aims to transform the landscape of immigrant talent integration, enhancing the comprehension of the immigration system from the employers' standpoint, and formulating forward-looking approaches to align immigration plans, policies, and processes with labor market needs.

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