

# EVENT BRIEF: SOLUTIONS-DRIVING SESSION ON STRENGTHENING EMPLOYER FEEDBACK CHANNELS

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MARCH 2026

# ABOUT IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT COUNCIL OF BC

The Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to empowering BC employers with the solutions, tools, and resources needed to effectively attract, hire, and retain skilled immigrant talent. We understand that the successful integration of skilled newcomers into BC's labour force is essential to both their success and the province's long-term economic performance. By collaborating with employers, government, and other partner stakeholders, we ensure that BC employers can effectively integrate global talent.

## ABOUT THIS PROJECT

As Canada refines its immigration approach to better align with labour market needs, the Immigrant Employment Councils of Canada (IECC) launched the Strengthening Employer Feedback Channels (SEFC) initiative to ensure employer perspectives inform system design and policy alignment.

SEFC convenes structured forums across regions to understand how immigration, settlement, and workforce systems function in practice. These forums surface barriers, identify opportunities, and generate actionable insights to improve how employers attract, hire, and retain internationally trained talent.

This brief captures key insights from a virtual Victoria Feedback Forum focused on employer engagement and workforce integration. Discussions explored workforce system navigation, employer capacity, talent assessment, and opportunities to strengthen coordination, trust, and access to supports that help employers connect with newcomer talent.



# EVENT BRIEF: SOLUTIONS-DRIVING SESSION ON SEFC

This solutions driving session convened employers, service provider organizations, and system partners to collaboratively identify challenges and develop practical, system level solutions related to employer engagement, immigrant talent integration, and feedback channels within workforce and immigration systems.

Rather than a traditional forum, the session was intentionally designed as a working session. Participants moved from identifying core system drivers to brainstorming, prioritizing, and building early solution concepts using a shared Miro board.



## Who Shaped the Conversation

Participants represented employers, service delivery organizations, a professional association, and system observers. The group was intentionally small but brought deep experience across hiring, workforce development, and immigration systems. Existing working relationships supported candid discussion and collective problem solving.

Engagement was high throughout the session, with participants actively contributing, reacting to one another's ideas, and building shared understanding through the Miro board.



## How the Session Worked

The session followed a structured, solutions driven process. Participants worked through four stages on the Miro board:

1. Identifying what is driving key challenges
2. Brainstorming potential solutions
3. Prioritizing ideas collectively
4. Building early solution concepts

This structure supported movement from problem identification toward actionable directions, rather than remaining at a diagnostic level.

Participants noted that the structured approach helped shift the conversation from describing what is broken to exploring what could realistically work in practice.



## Here's what we heard

### Fragmentation in Support Systems Creates Friction for Employers

Workforce and immigration information remains fragmented across service providers, government programs, and information sources, making it difficult for employers to identify reliable and current information. Frequent changes to programs and funding further contribute to navigation challenges.

The lack of a **“single trusted place to start”** and **“information that becomes outdated quickly”** emerged as key drivers of confusion.

**Insight:** Fragmentation creates inefficiencies and can erode trust in available supports, discouraging sustained employer engagement, particularly among organizations with limited HR capacity.

### Skills Are Present, but Trust Mechanisms Are Weak

Assessing international credentials and experience remains a challenge for employers, particularly when institutions, job titles, and qualifications are unfamiliar, verification tools are limited, and hiring timelines are constrained. These factors can increase reliance on proxies such as Canadian experience during recruitment and selection processes.

The discussion highlighted a gap between **“skills being present”** and **“employer confidence in assessing them.”**

**Insight:** The challenge is not necessarily a lack of talent, but a lack of trusted and efficient mechanisms that help employers understand, verify, and confidently assess international skills and experience.

### Capacity Constraints Shape Employer Decisions

Limited time, staffing, and internal expertise continue to influence employers' ability to navigate workforce, settlement, and immigration systems. Even organizations committed to inclusive hiring can face challenges engaging with complex programs and processes alongside day-to-day operational demands.

Capacity was frequently identified as a factor influencing which workforce solutions were feasible and scalable.

**Insight:** System complexity can disproportionately affect employers with limited internal capacity, creating barriers to accessing available supports and connecting with immigrant talent.

### Employers Prioritize Practical, Low Burden Solutions

Employers consistently prioritized solutions that reduce administrative burden and hiring risk, with

practical tools often viewed as more valuable than new programs or standalone initiatives. The need for solutions that are **"practical," "easy to use," and "employer ready"** emerged throughout the discussion.

**Insight:** Inclusive hiring efforts are more likely to be adopted and sustained when they align with existing employer workflows, capacity, and operational realities.

### **Intermediaries and Coordination Are Central to System Function**

Service provider organizations play an important role in connecting employers and newcomers, with stronger coordination across employers, SPOs, government programs, and sector organizations viewed as critical to improving system usability. Intermediaries were described as a way to **"reduce guesswork for employers"** and **"make the system navigable."**

**Insight:** Clearer coordination and defined roles across organizations can help reduce friction, simplify navigation, and strengthen employer confidence in available supports.

### **Emerging Solution Directions and Reflections**

Through prioritization and concept building activities, participants developed a set of early solution directions aimed at reducing friction for employers and strengthening system coordination across the network of employers, service providers, and system partners. These included the need for a centralized, regularly updated directory of employer facing supports across B.C.; clearer positioning of service provider organizations as active intermediaries; the use of technology, including AI, to support timely updates and easier navigation; and the integration of employer education resources alongside newcomer supports. Collectively, these ideas reflect a preference for practical, low burden approaches that fit employer realities while reinforcing the value of coordinated, network based solutions rather than standalone interventions.

Taken together, the session highlighted how fragmentation, limited transparency, and uneven capacity continue to shape employer engagement with immigrant talent across the system. Participants emphasized that building trust—through clearer pathways, coordinated information, and practical tools—is essential to strengthening employer feedback channels and improving workforce integration outcomes. Importantly, the Miro based working process demonstrated that employers and system partners are ready to move from problem naming toward solution building when collective structures, shared platforms, and intentional facilitation support that shift.

### **Thank you to all participants for contributing your experience, insights, and ideas.**

Thank you to all participants for contributing your experience, insights, and ideas. Your engagement in this solutions-driving session helped surface shared priorities and early solution directions that reflect a

collective, network-oriented approach to strengthening employer feedback mechanisms and supporting more inclusive and effective immigrant talent integration across B.C.

**Note:** *As follow-up to this solutions-driving session, the national team would like to bring your attention to the **iecc.network** platform as a starting point for further solution discussions. The platform can be positioned as an existing foundation that supports coordination, shared learning, and centralized access to information, rather than as a standalone or finalized solution. This framing aligns with the session's emphasis on building from what exists, strengthening system coordination, and advancing solutions collaboratively over time.*

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