



National Immigration Centre (NIC)

Agenda

November 18-19, 2020, Virtual Fall Members Meeting

Meeting contact

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Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Day 1, Theme: Diversity and Inclusion: Immigration, Recruitment and Retention Practices in Canada

Finding employment is an essential part of the settlement process for newcomers. As important, however, is that newcomers can find work that maximizes their skills, education, and passions. Work that fulfils and supports them and lets them make the biggest possible contribution to Canadian society and economy.

To this end, significant emphasis is placed by government and settlement service providers on working with newcomers to prepare them for the Canadian labour market through, among other things, information, and settlement services. These are important efforts, but newcomers still face barriers, limitations, and discrimination when they seek employment and advancement opportunities.

Could more be done to work with employers to encourage or enable them to better hire, retain, and promote newcomers? Could employers become more active partners in the overall settlement of newcomer employees? What role does the broader immigration sector have to play in using their knowledge and experience working with newcomers to support, educate, and nudge employers on



how to assess newcomer candidates and provide them with empowering and supportive workplaces?

While there are other dynamics in play, systemic racism undeniably plays a significant role in the challenges racialized newcomers face in finding employment and advancing in their careers. How can employers honestly and effectively confront conscious and subconscious racism in their organizations? How can those who work with racialized newcomers leverage their knowledge and understanding of systemic racism to push for change?

Meeting objectives

- Learn about and discuss the employer side barriers newcomers face when trying to find employment or seek promotion.
- Highlight best practices to help employers develop effective recruitment and retention strategies.
- Brainstorm how the NIC and its members can contribute productively to employer inclusion and recruitment of newcomers.

10:00 a.m. **Welcoming Remarks and Introductions**

Iain Reeve, Associate Director, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada

Jo-Leen Folz, Network Officer, The Conference Board of Canada

10:10 a.m. –

10:40 a.m. **Keynote Speaker**

The Honorable Marco Mendicino, PC, MP Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

10:40 a.m. –

11:00 a.m. **Break**

11:00 a.m. –

12:00 p.m. **A Practitioner Perspective on Approaches to Newcomer Hiring and Retention**

Patrick MacKenzie, Chief Executive Officer, Immigrant Employment Council of BC

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12:00 p.m. –
12:15 p.m. **Break**

12:15 p.m. –
1:00 pm **Members Only Virtual Networking Luncheon**

During this session we will divide the attendees up into breakout groups for a virtual networking luncheon. All luncheon attendees will be provided with a “Skip the Dishes” gift card to order their lunch ahead of time from their favourite restaurant of choice.

1:00 p.m. –
2:00 p.m. **World Education Services Hosted Presentation - The Inclusive Workforce**

Four industry leaders explore the implications of diversity, inclusion, and equality in the Canadian workplace.

Andrew Agopsowicz, Senior Economist, Royal Bank of Canada

Shamira Madhany, Managing Director Canada and Deputy Executive Director, World Education Services

Stephanie Hollingshead, Chief Executive Officer, HR Tech Group

Trevin Stratton, Chief Economist, Canadian Chamber of Commerce

2:00 p.m. –
2:30 p.m. **Break**

2:30 p.m. –
3:30 p.m. **Panel Discussion: Systemic Racism**

Moderator: **Beth Robertson, Senior Research Associate, Inclusion / Education & Skills, Future Skills Centre, The Conference Board of Canada**

Shaheen Azmi, Direction, Policy, Education, Monitoring, Outreach at Ontario Human Rights Commission

Remi Warner, Senior Manager, Human Rights Office, Toronto District School Board



3:30 p.m. –

3:40 p.m. **Stand and Stretch Break**

Jo-Leen Folz, Network Officer, The Conference Board of Canada

3:40 p.m. –

4:00 p.m. **Break**

4:00 p.m. –

5:00 p.m. **Facilitated Group Discussion**

This facilitated discussion will offer participants an opportunity to revisit some of the main themes of the day, and to dig deeper into the topics based on what they have learned. It will also provide an opportunity to address the questions listed at the outset of the meeting agenda, with the intent of ensuring participants have an opportunity to learn from one another and share a bit about their own expertise, practices and insights.

Guiding discussion questions:

- Given what we have heard and learned over the course of the meeting, where do we feel the most successful approaches are for immigration recruitment, retention practices?
- What have we learned from the success stories? Where and how can we work towards a great commitment to to employer inclusion and recruitment of newcomers.

Facilitator: **Erin Rose, Senior Research Associate I, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada**

5:00 p.m. **Adjourn Day 1**



Thursday, November 19, 2020

Day 2, Theme: Post COVID-19 Recovery, Where Do We Go from Here

Day 2 will focus on more specific topics within our broader theme of diversity, inclusion, and the involvement of employers in the settlement process.

Much of the discussion of employment equity and the hiring and advancement of newcomer workers focuses on the experiences and needs of Canada's economic immigrants. Refugees are a group of newcomers with incredibly diverse characteristics and fantastic potential who are often left out of discussions about employment because of their status. What unique needs do refugee workers have? What role does employment play in refugee settlement and integration? What have we learned in our recent history about the economic and social contributions of refugees to Canada?

COVID-19 and the public health measures undertaken to lessen its spread have placed the Canadian economy under incredible strain and significantly impacted employment, particularly in certain sectors. How has the COVID-19 period exacerbated existing issues with immigrant hiring, retention, and promotion, as well as workplace safety? What can this extreme period teach us more generally about these struggles? How might our policy and advocacy reactions need to adapt to address more acute issues during the COVID period and in the forthcoming economic recovery?

Meeting objectives

- Learn about and discuss how COVID-19 and associated public health measures have exacerbated newcomer employment struggles.
- Learn about and discuss what specialized measures may be necessary to ensure newcomers do not take a step backwards in the post-COVID-19 economy.
- Discuss how we can use lessons from this period to design a better immigration and settlement system in the future.

10:00 a.m. –

11:30 a.m. **Interactive Session: COVID and Newcomer Employment Recovery**

We will be providing pre-recorded interviews with our speakers ahead of this session. We will bring everyone together on the day of the meeting for an interactive discussion period. This is not a webinar or formal presentation. This is intended to be a fully interactive discussion between the speakers, attendees, and guests.



Moderator: **Erin Rose, Senior Research Associate I, The Conference Board of Canada**

John Shields, Professor, Dept. of Politics and Public Administration, Ryerson University

Laura Di Paolo, Director General, Settlement Network, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Maggie Perzyna, Researcher, Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration program (CERC), Ryerson University

Nausheen Ali, Population Growth Specialist, Ignite Fredericton

11:30 a.m. –

12:00 a.m. **Members Only Networking Coffee Break**

During this session we will break attendees up into different groups from the networking luncheon to provide opportune it for people to network with new individuals members from other organizations.

12:00 p.m. –

1:00 p.m. **Break**

1:00 p.m. –

2:00 p.m. **Panel: Fostering Refugee Talent**

Moderator: **Jo-Leen Folz, Network Officer, The Conference Board of Canada**

Peter Boyd, Owner, Your Independent Grocer Kelowna, BC

Ileana Cruz-Marden, Senior Manager of Private Sector Partnerships, TENT

2:00 p.m. –

2:15 p.m. **Break**

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2:15 p.m. –

3:45 p.m. **Facilitated Group Discussion**

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Facilitator: Iain Reeve, Associate Director, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada

3:45 p.m. **Meeting Adjourns**

Next members meeting

Spring 2021

Stay tuned for more webinars, networking events and virtual presentations throughout the months to come!