

# Canadian Immigration Summit

November 20–21, 2024



## Agenda

### Day 1 / November 20, 2024

8:00 a.m. [Registration Opens](#)

8:30 a.m. [Opening Remarks](#)

Speaker:

**Stefan Fournier**, Executive Director, The Conference Board of Canada

8:45 a.m. [Keynote Presentation](#)

#### **Harnessing the Talent and Networks of our Global Communities to Drive Economic Growth**

Speakers:

**Muraly Srinarayanathas**, Co-Founder and Executive Chairman of 369 Global

Building inclusive communities is about thinking and working globally to create local value. This year's keynote address will explore how Canadian businesses can draw on our immigrant population to strengthen international relationships and drive economic growth in municipalities across Canada.

9:30 a.m. [Plenary Session](#)

#### **Building Inclusive Communities: Insights and Innovations from Municipal Leaders**

Moderator:

**Timothy Tierney**, Councillor, City of Ottawa, Second Vice President of Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Speakers:

**Jerry Dobrovolsky**, Chief Administrative Officer, Metro Vancouver

**Jin Huh**, Executive Director of Social Planning Toronto

**Wayne H. Redekop**, Mayor, Town of Fort Erie

**Kevin Silliker**, Executive Director of Economic Development, City of Moncton

Municipal leaders who have been at the forefront of expanding immigration inclusion in their regions will share their experiences, lessons learned, and new solutions for creating equitable and inclusive communities. Attendees will gain useful insights into the problems these leaders have encountered and the strategies that have helped.

10:30 a.m. [Break](#)

10:45 a.m. [Concurrent Session A1](#)

#### **The Future of Settlement Services**

Moderator:

**Patrick MacKenzie**, CEO, Immigrant Employment Council of BC

Speakers:

**Tonie Chaltas**, CEO, Achêv

**Manjeet Dhiman**, SVP, Services & Strategic Initiatives, ACCES Employment

**Steve Reynolds**, Executive Director, Regional Connections Immigrant Services

The needs of immigrants and the tools available to provide settlement services are continually evolving. Leaders working with Canada's diverse immigrant communities will reflect on the challenges and opportunities associated with delivering impactful services in the next five years.

10:45 a.m. [Concurrent Session A2](#)

#### **Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Canada: Leveraging Immigrant-Driven Innovation for a Prosperous Economic Future**

Moderator:

**Dr. Usha Srinivasan**, Founding Director, Brampton Venture Zone, TMU

# Agenda

## Day 1 / November 20, 2024 (cont'd)

### Speakers:

**Fedor Belomoev**, Founder and CEO, Canadian Business Growth Advisors

**Karla Briones**, Founder, Immigrant Entrepreneur Canada and Consultant Karla Briones Consulting

**Grace Sheng**, Manager, Ottawa Newcomer Entrepreneurs Hub (ONE Hub)

This session will explore the pivotal role of immigrant entrepreneurs in driving innovation and economic growth in Canada. Through case studies and real-world examples, panelists will share their success stories, address the unique challenges they have faced, and discuss policies and programs that support economic growth through entrepreneurship, such as the Start-Up Visa Program.

Participants will have the chance to engage with experts and entrepreneurs to gain insights and strategies that can help them leverage immigrant entrepreneurship to create a prosperous economic future.

### Sponsored by:



Canadian Business Growth Advisors

### 10:45 a.m. Concurrent Session A3

#### Initiatives to Address Housing Affordability

##### Moderator:

**Steve Pomeroy**, Industry Professor, McMaster University, Executive Advisor to the Canadian Housing Evidence Collaborative (CHEC); and Principle, Focus Consulting Inc

##### Speakers:

**Riaz J. Kara**, Director General, Ministry of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities

**Cailan Libby**, Founder, Happipad and Refugee Housing Canada

**Amanda Sobchak**, Director, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada

**Cliff Youdale**, Chief Development Officer at Ottawa Community Housing Corporation

Housing affordability has become a key concern affecting both immigrants and Canadians. Speakers will examine housing initiatives and immigration policies that can enable newcomers to find affordable housing that is suitable for their family.

### 12:00 p.m. Lunch

### 1:00 p.m. Interactive Presentation

#### What Is Multicultural Canada?

##### Speaker:

**Jamaal Amir Akbari**, Poet Laureate Emeritus

This dynamic and inspiring spoken-word poetry performance will combine art and observation to illuminate the joys and contradictions inherent in a multicultural Canada.

### 1:10 p.m. Plenary Session

#### Securing Canada's Immigration Future: Retaining Valuable Talent

##### Moderator:

**Dr. Melissa Kelly**, Senior Research Associate and Project Director, TMU

##### Speakers:

**Daniel Bernhard**, CEO, Institute for Canadian Citizenship

**Arif Khimani**, President & COO, MobSquad

**Dr. Stein Monteiro**, Lead Research Associate, The Conference Board of Canada

Canada's future depends on retaining the talent we attract. Every immigrant who leaves represents a missed opportunity for lifelong contributions to our growth. In this session, we'll explore the critical importance of addressing onward migration. Panelists will discuss why it's important that policy-makers understand why immigrants choose to leave and will examine these departures from economic, social, and demographic perspectives. Join us to uncover actionable strategies for improving immigrant retention and securing Canada's place as a global leader in talent retention.

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### 2:10 p.m. Spotlight Story

##### Speaker:

**Louise Summers**, Regional Vice President, Ottawa Central, RBC

### 2:20 p.m. Break and Booth Exploration

### 2:35 p.m. Concurrent Session B1

#### Novel Approaches to Employer Engagement

##### Moderator:

**Rania Younes**, Senior Manager, Employer Networks and National Engagement, Immigrant Employment Council of BC

##### Speakers:

**Deanna D'Elia**, General Manager Employment and Immigrant Services, YMCA of Niagara Employment & Immigrant Services

**Lara Dyer**, Chief External Affairs Officer, Talent Beyond Boundaries

**Shaloma Gauthier PhD**, Manager, Immigration Promotion and Employer Outreach Unit.

This panel discussion will offer key insights from research and practice on engaging employers in a variety of immigration programs across Canada. These insights will include results from the service delivery improvement project Engaging SMEs: National Business Networks and Local Design Perspectives, in which six partner organizations tested prototypes to improve the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to acquire talent and retain immigrant newcomers.

## Day 1 / November 20, 2024 (cont'd)

Participants will also hear about employer engagement in the Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot (EMPP), skilled pathways for refugees, and grassroots employer service programs.

Panelists will reflect on innovative ways to engage employers and critical lessons learned. Attendees will learn how to better address employers' distinctive challenges, needs, and barriers in accessing, hiring, and retaining newcomer immigrant talent.

### 2:35 p.m. Concurrent Session B2

#### **Sélectionner et intégrer les immigrants francophones à travers le Canada/ Selecting and Integrating Francophone Immigrants Across Canada**

Moderator:

**Dorra Gdoura**, Conseillère Principale, Senior Advisor, Collège La Cité

Speaker:

**Roukya Abdi Aden**, Directrice de la concertation et de la recherche, RDÉE Canada

**Marie-Eve Filteau**, Directrice-adjointe, Assistant-director, Francophone Immigration Branch (FIB), IRCC

**Bintou Sacko**, Directrice/Director, Accueil francophone du Manitoba

French : Explorez des perspectives clés sur le paysage dynamique de l'immigration francophone au Canada, tant au niveau national que communautaire. Des experts partageront des stratégies visant à améliorer l'expérience des immigrants francophones, qu'ils soient individus ou familles, tout en offrant une compréhension approfondie des processus de sélection et d'intégration des immigrants francophones à travers le pays.

Cette session se déroulera en français et sera traduite en anglais.

English: Gain valuable perspectives into the dynamic landscape of francophone immigration in Canada at both the national and community levels. Experts will share strategies to enhance the immigration experience for francophone individuals and families and provide a deeper understanding of the selection and settlement processes for francophone immigrants across the country.

Please be advised, this session will take place in French. RSI will be available. Look out for details on how to connect to this.

### 2:35 p.m. Concurrent Session B3

#### **Investing for Impact and Newcomer Success**

Moderator:

**Claire Fan**, Economist, RBC

Speakers:

**Claudia Hephurn**, CEO, Windmill Microlending

**Heidi Hemdan**, Manager, Newcomer Specialists, Ontario North and East Region, RBC

**Trevor McAlmont**, CEO, YMCA National Capital Region

**Chiemeka Umunnakwe**, Windmill Microlending Alumni

The Canadian labour market is constantly evolving, with a high demand for future-ready skills and increased pressure on immigrants to fill critical labour gaps. However, newcomers consistently face credential and skill barriers that make it hard for them to integrate effectively into the workforce and advance their careers.

Through case studies and practical insights, panelists will examine the milestones and obstacles that often shape newcomers' experiences in Canada and explore how microlending can help break down those barriers, so newcomers can engage more fully in the labour market and succeed over the long term.

**Sponsored by:**



### 3:50 p.m. Transition time

### 4:00 p.m. Plenary Session

#### **Paradoxes of Provincial and Federal Professional Regulation: Tensions, Risks, and Opportunities**

Moderator:

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

Speakers:

**Susan Paul**, Regulatory Transformation Advisor, Quality Practice, College of Health and Care Professionals of BC

**Dr. Beata Pawlowska**, Director, College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants

**Dr. Susan Glover Takahashi**, Adjunct Lecturer, University of Toronto, Principal Consultant, SGT & Associates

At its core, the primary aim of a professional regulatory system is to ensure the public receives quality service delivered by competent regulated professionals. However, professional regulation in Canada presents a complex landscape characterized by jurisdictional tensions, gaps between federal and provincial roles, and a grey practice area created by legislative gaps.

Through a comprehensive, cross-sectoral analysis of regulatory frameworks and case studies, this panel will explore the challenges faced by federal and provincial regulators and the observed impacts on practitioners and the public navigating these regulatory gaps.

**Sponsored by:**



### 5:00 p.m. Adjourn

### 5:00 p.m. Networking Reception

# Agenda

## Day 2 / November 21, 2024

8:00 a.m. [Registration Opens](#)

8:30 a.m. [Plenary Session](#)

### **Insights from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada**

Speaker

**Honourable Marc Miller**, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Join us for a conversation with The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), as we discuss the latest immigration developments and policies in Canada. Hear from Minister Miller on IRCC's current immigration priorities and the challenges and opportunities of realizing the 2025–2027 Immigration Levels Plan. Engage in a discussion on the path ahead for permanent residents, temporary workers, refugees, and international students, and gain insights into how IRCC is helping to shape a diverse and inclusive future for Canada.

9:15 a.m. [Fireside Chat](#)

### **Tomorrow's Temporary Resident Program, Today**

Moderator:

**Delphine Nakache**, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa

Speaker:

**Philip Mondor**, President and CEO | Président et directeur général, Tourism HR Canada

**The Honourable Ratna Omidvar C.M.**, O.Ont Former Senator for Ontario, Senate of Canada

Temporary residents make immense social, cultural, and economic contributions to Canada and its communities, but there are persistent inequalities in the temporary resident system. In light of a succession of policy changes directed at limiting the number of temporary residents entering Canada, this session will expand on the potential consequences for our immigration system, labour market, and educational institutions, and what can be done to establish an equitable temporary immigration program.

10:15 a.m. [Break](#)

10:30 a.m. [Concurrent Session C1](#)

### **From Arrival to Advancement: Rethinking Workplace Culture for Mutual Success**

Speakers:

**Rachel Crowe**, Senior Project Manager, CAIP, TRIEC

**Dr. Tricia Williams**, Director of Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Mobilization, Future Skills Centre

**Juan Marsiaj**, Director, Research Special Projects, Diversity Institute

**Rania Younes**, Senior Manager of Employer Networks and National Engagement, Immigrant Employment Council of BC

This session explores creating inclusive workplaces for newcomers by addressing both individual and employer perspectives. We'll discuss the importance of training

newcomers in Canadian workplace culture while also emphasizing the need for employers to adapt their practices to better integrate and support newcomer talent.



**Future Skills Centre** Centre des Compétences futures

**Presented by:**

10:30 a.m. [Concurrent Session C2](#)

### **Digital Transformation: Navigating Ethical Considerations and Inclusive Practices**

Moderator:

**Faun Rice**, Manager of Research & Evaluation, Information and Communications Technology Council

Speakers:

**Jennifer Freeman**, CEO, PeaceGeeks

**Kingsley Madu**, Founder & CEO, Expedier

**Craig Damian Smith**, Executive Director, Pairity

This panel session will delve into the ethical considerations and best practices associated with the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into the immigrant selection and settlement processes. Speakers will explore strategies to ensure that digital innovations enhance immigration systems in Canada while actively addressing potential biases and disparities.

10:30 a.m. [Concurrent Session C3](#)

### **Building Blocks for International Student Success**

Moderator:

**Jeremy Strachan**, Senior Research Associate, Education & Skills, and Interim Senior Manager, Future Skills Research, The Conference Board of Canada

Speakers:

**Dr. Marshia Akbar**, Research Area Lead and Director, BMO Newcomer Workforce Integration Lab

**Dr. Ashika Niraula**, Senior Research Associate, CERC Migration and Integration, TMU

**Michael Sangster**, Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Career Colleges

In an evolving policy environment, developing fair and accessible immigration pathways for international students is critical to creating an inclusive society where they can thrive. Panelists will discuss strategies to enhance services and infrastructure, improve employment outcomes for international students, and develop ethical recruitment best practices for Canadian universities and colleges.

**Presented by:**



**Bridging Divides**

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## Day 2 / November 21, 2024 (cont'd)

### 11:30 a.m. [Plenary Session](#)

#### **Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Leveraging Technology to Foster Humanitarian Pathways to Study and Work**

Moderator:

**Marlene Olsavsky**, Managing Director, English Language Teaching, Duolingo

Speakers:

**Lara Dyer**, Chief External Affairs Officer, Talent Beyond Boundaries

**Michael Casasola**, Senior Resettlement and Complementary Pathways Officer, UNHCR

**Ashley Korn**, Manager – Canadian Programming, Durable Solutions for Refugees, WUSC

**Farhana Roshan**, Duolingo Access Scholar, UNHCR

Technology is revolutionizing language learning, breaking down barriers, and creating new pathways in education and employment for refugees. Through compelling case studies, leading practitioners will explore innovative strategies and tools that are opening new opportunities for refugees, fostering a more inclusive and connected future.

**Sponsored By:**



### 12:30 p.m. [Closing Remarks](#)