

Engaging Employers

Building Capacity for
Immigrant Employment
A Five-Year Success Story
2006-2011

hire | embauche immigrants ottawa

Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO) is a community-based initiative that brings together employers, immigrant agencies and stakeholders to enhance employers' ability to access the talents of skilled immigrants in the Ottawa area. The initiative was launched in 2006 as a response to a growing need to identify and address barriers faced by employers in the hiring and integration of skilled immigrants into the labour force.

Hire Immigrants Ottawa

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TEL 613-228-6700 Fax 613-228-6730

www.hire immigrant sottawa.ca

Funded by:







Employer Council of Champions

Algonquin College *

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CGI*

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The Ottawa Hospital *

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat*

United Way Ottawa *

University of Ottawa *

* ECC organizations with representation on the Working Groups

Working Groups Member Organizations

BioTalent Canada

Canadian Council for Aviation and Aerospace

Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists

Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Certified General Accountants

Certified Management Accountants

Information and Communications Technology Council

International Development Research Centre

Kinaxis

National Research Council Canada

Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Pythian

Queensway Carleton Hospital

Thermo Fisher Scientific

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Message from the Council Chairs

As Co-Chairs of the Employer Council of Champions (ECC) we are proud to present this report describing the activities and accomplishments of Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO) since its inception five years ago. The cumulative result is impressive: Participating organizations have hired more than one-thousand immigrants into skills appropriate positions in the Ottawa region since the Council was launched in 2007. But even more important, the HIO initiative has brought together the collaborative efforts of local employers and numerous community partners and stakeholders to help foster systematic change within our workplaces – changes that will have lasting impact in the ability of employers to hire the best available talent.

By improving our recruiting and hiring practices, adopting innovative mentoring and coaching programs, enhancing our cross-cultural competencies, sharing our lessons learned and celebrating our success stories, together as employers we are laying a foundation for long-term success — with a diverse and inclusive workforce that is key to our community's prosperity and cohesiveness.

As we take stock of our accomplishments, we must continue to reach out to our networks and increase the number of employers who understand how to effectively tap this diverse talent — not just how to recruit and hire people of diverse backgrounds, but how to take full advantage of the energy and innovation that diverse work teams and diverse leadership can bring to our businesses and to our community.

We also take this opportunity to recognize and thank our many partners, stakeholders and Council members for their collaboration and support in achieving these successes. Looking ahead to the next few years, we invite all local employers to join us in making Ottawa the destination of choice for this global talent.



Gaye Moffett
Co-Chair,
Employer Council of Champions
Founder, GEM Healthcare
Services Inc.



Dennis Jackson
Co-Chair,
Employer Council of Champions
Vice-President, Scotiabank,
Ottawa and West Quebec

Jennidae/4016



Employer Council of Champions
Official launch of Hire Immigrants Ottawa, April 2007.



Engaging Leaders • Involving Employers

Our Goal: Increase the number of employers who hire skilled immigrant into skills-appropriate positions.

Over the past five years, HIO has approached this task by engaging local leaders and employers:

A cross-sector **Employer Council of Champions** (ECC) - launched in May 2007. The ECC which is comprised of senior executives from leading Ottawa private and public sector employers, business associations and labour groups, gives employers a collective voice, enabling them to champion the successful integration of skilled

- 32 organizations engaged on the Employer Council of Champions
- 37 organizations participate in sector-working groups
- 137 employers have implemented systemic changes to their HR policies and practices since 2009
- 525 employers have been reached by HIO since 2007
- Employers and stakeholders have contributing over 6,000 hours of their time and expertise towards the work of HIO since 2007

immigrants into the workforce. ECC members are at the forefront of the HIO initiative, promoting the integration of skilled immigrants within their organizations as well as within their organizations as well as professional networks and business relationships.

Five sector-specific working groups

represent employers and stakeholders in health care, information technology, finance, biotechnology and the public sector. The working groups are the operational arm of the ECC. Each group tackles the barriers and systemic challenges that employers in their respective sector face when attempting to hire and integrate skilled immigrants into the workplace. The working groups lead and are engaged in a broad range of activities — hosting events that connect employers with skilled immigrants, sharing promising practices, participating in cross-cultural competency training workshops, promoting the adaptation of HR policies and practices, and creating workplaces that welcome cultural diversity.

Employer Engagement - Through ongoing employer outreach and engagement activities, HIO shares lessons learnt from the sector – specific working groups and employer-oriented tools and resources with the larger employer community of Ottawa.







Developing Solutions to Workplace Barriers

Our Tactic: Provide employers with the tools and resources to more effectively tap the local pool of immigrant talent.

Breaking Down Barriers through Innovative Solutions

- HIO has produced an *Employers Guide to Integrating Immigrants into the Workplace*, which provides tips and
 strategies on how to deal with the most
 common challenges faced by employers
 when hiring and retaining skilled
 immigrants.
- The Working Groups Action Plan is a document that outlines the preliminary activities and action plans of the working groups after their first year. An update to this document, Employers in Action, helps employers enhance their efforts to hire and integrate skilled immigrants. Both documents highlight identified barriers that employers face and recommend strategies that they can adopt or adapt. An implementation template helps employers measure the outcomes of these activities.
- Networking Events bring together employers and skilled immigrants. These informal events provide opportunities for immigrants and employer representatives to have discussions and interactions related to their sector and profession.

 Working group members also host and participate in *Coaching Events* for skilled immigrants. These events typically involve several employers within a specific sector. Immigrants meet with HR personnel and/or managers who review and provide feedback on résumés and offer sector-specific information and jobsearch guidance.

17 networking and coaching events, involving 300 skilled immigrants, have taken place since 2009





Public Sector Working Group members (HR Professionals and Hiring Managers) coaching skilled immigrants at a HIO Coaching Event.

Event Hosted by the City of Ottawa – January 2010.



Building Capacity and Awareness

Employer concerns about cultural differences in the workplace can be a strong barrier when considering immigrant applicants in the hiring process or managing diverse teams. Employers benefit from enhanced cultural competency in their workplaces, and from greater appreciation of the business drivers related to cultural diversity and changing demographics.

To achieve the objective of building capacity and awareness, HIO offers:

Complimentary cross-cultural competency training to employers in the Ottawa area. These modular workshops help employers improve their cross-cultural communication skills, develop effective cultural adaptation and successful accommodation strategies, and inclusiveness practices, so that they can

- 6 interactive cross-cultural competency workshop modules have been developed
- 52 workshops have been delivered to 634 participants since 2008
- 11 information sessions have been delivered to 96 employers since 2008

better prepare their organizations for a more culturally diverse workforce.

Employers Learning Exchanges –events that provide employers and stakeholders an opportunity to learn and exchange ideas with subject matter experts and practitioners on a wide range of topics on the effective labour market integration of skilled immigrants.

Information sessions which provide employers with current local labour market information, and the business case for integrating skilled immigrants into the workplace ,with a focus on the implications of the changing demographics of Ottawa's labour force for employers. At these sessions employers are also introduced to the tools and resources that are available, through HIO and its network of stakeholders and partners, to help them more effectively leverage the talents of skilled immigrants in their workplaces.

Labour Market Fact Sheets highlight employer workforce needs, demographic trends and labour market developments.



EIO AIDE LES EMPLOYEURS

L'initiative Embasche immigrates Ottawa (EIO) mavaille avec les employeurs locaux afia de les aider à éliminer les obstacles organisationnels qui les empéchent de recruter et de mainterir en poste plus d'insmigrants qualifiés. EIO complète ainsi la travail des agences au service des immigrants en procurant aux empleneurs des outils et des ressources qui les aident à paiser dans le bassin de talents des immigrants qualités de la région. EIO met en contact employeurs et agences au service des immigrants, et organise des activités de réseautage qui permettent aux employeurs et aux immigrants qualifiés de se rencontrat.

L'objectif d'ElO est s'augmenter la capacité des employeum de la région d'Ottawa d'intégrer efficacement des ermigrants qualitiés à leur main-d'auver locale. Laucée au 2006. ElO est subventionnée par le gouvernement de l'Ostario et par Citoyenseté et Inmigration Canada. Depuis sa formation. EIO ausemble les employeurs pour leur fournir des informations et des appais qui les aident à accroître leur capacité d'embascher et de maintenir en poste des immigrants qualifiés.

Les immigrants deivent anovyet surmonter de nombreux. ibstacles pour obtenit un emploi correspondant à leur formation. De même, les employeurs ont des difficultés à recrutor les inarigners qualités. Dans bien des cas, les obstacles auxquele on face les immigrants et les employeurs constituent les doux shee midaille. Par exemple, les immigrants doivent

MVLWB's interview committee (a finance/

administration manager, a line manager and

a technical person) interviewed 12 of its

a secunical persons uncorrescent to a no 38 applicants: two with college diplomas,

38 applicants: two with college diplomas, nine with bachelor degrees and Dr. Sangha.

Applicants with just a high school diploma.

and those with a graduate degree were not

interviewed, indicating that education was

used to screen out candidates both on the low

used to screen out canadates both on the tow side and the high side. However, unbeknownst

to Dr. Sangha, he was interviewed because of

to LA. vaugus, ite was interveneu values on his potential to fill the more senior position

tas potentiai to ut the more senior position of Technical Advisor, which was also vacant

Avoiding personal characteristics such as race,

cthnic origin, religion or age, the committee's

cume ungon, rengron or age, we communees structured interview contained standard

questions to explore skills, knowledge of

questions to expiore skius knowledge or the MVLWB, experience, availability and

salary expectations Dr. Sangha was tanked

Satus especiations of Sangua vas caused highest by the line manager and fourth by

nigness by the time manages and the finance/administration manager (the

tie thanke/ authinstration manager technical person did not provide scores).

In addition to the $intervie_W$ scores, the

In addition to the interview actives, the decision to make an offer was based on

Bis necessary for a job -

employment option.

Recruiters typically screen out over-qualified applicants because they believe such applicants because they believe soon candidates will experience dissatisfaction in

cantatates will experience assausacious in heir jobs and leave after a short period of

ne. Not only do two recent international

uce, sweet oury we two section international acides demonstrate this perception is flawed,

in Canada, employers now have the law

onsider when it comes to one segment of

qualified candidates — visible minority

othe Canadian Human Rights Tribunal

down a landmark ruling on the use

Audification as a justification for

Pautication as a Justification for andidates who are visible minority

altutuates who are visione minority (Statistics Canada defines a

igrant as someone who has been

uscaux as someone wno nas peen t resident for five to 10 years

recent immigrant as someone

here for less than five years).

yed a complaint filed with the

an Rights Commission by

after he was rejected for the

allatory Officer (RO) with

lley Land and Water Board

Paper ad for four vacant

ed its requirements; a

field and two years

or a college diploma

al management and

ace; knowledge of

d issues; software

ompetencies; and

Ositions were for

to a six-month

possible two.

recent immigrants.

embauche hire

D'autres activités d'ElO out pour but d'appuyer les system tout as long do processus d'embanche, du recru à la résention d'immigrants qualifiés. EIO fournit des outils et des conseils sur les meilleures pratiques afin d'aider les empleyeurs à évaluer, embaucher et intégrer des immigrants à lours milieux de travail, puis à les maintenir en poste et à encourager leur développement professionnel à long terme. EIG offre également aux employeurs l'occusion de puriciper à des séminaires et ateliers de formation intercultirelle. Ces séminaires et ateliers intensify visent & amélioner les compétences intenculturelles des employeers, pour leur permettre de mieux préparer leur organisation spe main d'enevre diversitiée.

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10 NEWS CANADIAN HR REPORTER

Pythian, Algonquin recognized for skilled immigrant retention practices

Buddy system, cultural competency training among award-winning initiatives

TWO YEARS AGO, rer base and consulting services company Pythian implement-ed a buddy program that pairs new hires with employees. If the new hire is an inter-

If the new hire is an inter-nationally trained professional (IEP) — which many new em-ployees are — he is paired with a buddy from a similar back-ground, said Heidi Hauver, di-rector of human resources. "It helps introduce them to our internal and external pro-grams, helps them socially in grams, helps them socially in the properties of the pro-ting of the proting of the pro-ting of the when there are questions inke,
"How do I go about getting my
first credit card?" they can support each other on that," she
said. "The buddy system re"w allows them to have a conincht away and form a





under their wing, show you in March. The awards recognize employers with outstand-Pythian has 164 em

Visible minority immigrants: being over-qualified and the law important issue for jobseekers, employers important issue for Jouseekers, employers and policymakers. While it is sometimes a ana poucymakets, vy nue it is sounetimes a personal choice to work in a lower-skilled job, for most people who take jobs for which they are over-qualified, it is their only This scenario is especially so for Canada's ROs carry out standardized administrative ROs carry out standardized administrative tasks such as processing land use Permits tanks such as processing and use pentius and water licence applications. This involves collaborating with other stakeholders for contaborating with other stakeholders for the should be a candidate's overall profile and whom a cautatuates overtan Province and with the committee considered a good fit. The knowledge, more expertise is available the committee's decision not to hire Dr. Sangha internally or from external consultants. An commutees a accision not to once Lir, Sangra was based on the assessment that he was overunderstanding of the environmental issues was based on the assessment that ne was over-qualified for the entry-level RO Position and the standard by the work Afore augerscanding of the environmental issues in the north, as well as northern living quainted for the entry-level NO POSILION and that he would be bored by the work. After at the moral, as went as normeral aving experience and some familiarity with First that he would be voica by the work. After offers to two other candidates were declined, Nations communities, were also considered oners to two orner cananates were accurate the M/LWB hired two candidates who were

the may LAVID interactive cancendates who were ranked significantly lower than Dr. Sangha

Employee turnover is a particular issue in

Canada's north, and it's one of the reasons

Canadas notus, and as one or one reasons.

the MYLWB prefers northern experience.

Association theorems that the Report of conditions.

Ironically, it seems that the Board's candidate

selections failed to improve turnover. Most

of the RO positions became vacant within

on the NO POSIMONS DECRINE VACANT WILLIAM three years, as the incumbents moved on to

the eyeats, as the incumpents moved on to other opportunities or left the north. In D_{Γ} .

Sangha's case, his lack of northern experience

was not the criterion on which his candidacy

In considering the case, the Canadian Human

In considering the case, the Canadian rulman Rights Tribunal said that for Dr. Sangha to

Prove discrimination, he had to show that

prove alscrimination, he had to stron that he possessed the basic qualifications for the

ne pussesseu tae vasic quauticauuns toi tae job; he is a visible minority immigrant; he is

Jou, we is a visible without with minimization were over-qualified vis-a-vis the job in question;

over-quaintea vis-a-vis the jow in question; the over-qualified status was one of the

the over-quanticu scatus was one or ore reasons why he was not hired, and there

is a correlation between visible minority

inmigrant status and over-qualified status.

The Tribunal easily found that Dr. Sangha

The Intunal easily tound that Dr. Sangha had proven the first four points, and in bringsing the case forward, the Canadian points of the canadian structure of the canadian st

tringing the clase introduct, the Cathaland Human Rights Commission relied in large Human Rights Commission relied in large measure on opinions provided by Dr. Jeffrey Ricit, a University of Toronto professor who are a feet and a feet a feet and a feet and a feet a feet and a feet a f is an expert in the area of ethnic, immigration

was rejected.

on the interview scores.

in March. The awards recog-nize employers with outstand-ing practices in the retention of successive and the retention of "it's important for employ-"it's important for employ-"it's uper a see negard in long the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retention of the retention of the successive and the retention of the retentio that helped it win, said Denyce Diakun, director of workforce and personal development. The training aims to increase awareness of the issues that can occur when an employee is dealing with a variety of cul-tures. For example, plagfarism is a serious issue in Canada but it is looked at very differently in other countries or staff med in other countries, so staff need to explain the concept clearly students and not just assume

that helped it win, said Denyce

April 9, 2012

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Building Public Awareness

HIO's ongoing communications initiatives create awareness of the facts and issues related to the effective integration of skilled immigrants into the local labour market, and promote greater understanding of the economic contributions of immigrants to the local economy.

These initiatives include:

- quarterly HIO Communiqués, distributed to stakeholders and interested individuals;
- periodic media advisories and press releases, as well as local media coverage of events;
- articles contributed to professional and industry publications;
- profiles of employer and employee success stories and best practices on the HIO website;
- presentations at conferences, workshops, business association meetings and workplaces;
- the HIO website and its employer-focused tools and resources; and
- an annual Employers Summit, where proven strategies and programs that are making a difference in workplaces are highlighted and local results and success stories are celebrated.

- 125 media articles/features and references
- 85 presentations at conferences/workshops
- Over 113,000 unique visitors to hireimmigrantsottawa.ca have downloaded over 46,000 copies of various resources





Hire Immigrants Ottawa is a winner of the 2010 Arthur Kroeger College Awards in Public Affairs for Citizenship and Community Affairs.



Employer Recognition

An annual Employer Excellence Awards program recognizes local employers for their leadership, innovative recruitment, retention and engagement policies, and promising practices around the integration of skilled immigrants into their organizations.



1158 skilled immigrants have gained skills appropriate employment with participating HIO employers since 2007

Employer Excellence Award Recipients

- Algonquin College
- Association pour l'intégration sociale d'Ottawa
- CGI
- Citizen Advocacy of Ottawa
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- City of Ottawa
- GEM Health Care Services

- MBNA Canada Bank
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
- OCRI Talent Bridge
- Pythian
- Revera Health Services Inc.
- Scotiabank
- University of Ottawa
- Vanier Community Service Centre

Read about Award recipients at: hireimmigrantsottawa.ca











Making Connections and Collaborations

LASI World Skills Inc (Ottawa Job Match Network)

HIO collaborates with local immigrant serving organizations through LASI World Skills to connect employers to skilled immigrants. In response to employers request for a centralized access point to the skilled immigrant talent pool, the Ottawa Job Match Network was launched by our agency partners. Led by LASI World Skills, the OJMN is a partnership that includes the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO) and the National Capital YMCA-YWCA. The goal of the OJMN is to match internationally trained individuals with jobs commensurate with their education, skills and experience, as well as providing post-hiring support for managers and employees. The OJMN also pre-qualifies and invites skilled immigrants to HIO's Networking and Coaching events.

Federal Internship for Newcomers Program

Hire Immigrants Ottawa has worked closely with the Federal Government, first through an inter-departmental roundtable of federal departments, and subsequently with Citizenship and Immigration Canada as they built upon two successful pilot projects to launch the Federal Internship for Newcomers program. Working with immigrant serving organizations such as LASI World Skills, Service Intégration Travail Outaouais and World University Service of Canada, CIC leads FIN, which engages with other federal departments and agencies to provide valuable Canadian work experience to newcomers in order to enhance their labour market outcomes.

Working with other Cities

- HIO is a member of the ALLIES (Assisting Local Leaders with Immigrant Employment Strategies) network, an initiative that supports local efforts in Canadian cities to successfully adapt and implement programs that further the suitable employment of skilled immigrants.
- HIO is from time-to-time invited to share its model, lessons learned, and employer engagement strategies with other communities. Some of the communities visited include Cornwall, Kingston, Peterborough, Brockville and Smiths Falls.





Financial Statement

Schedule of Contributions and Expenses

| Cumulative period | |
|--|--------------------|
| fı | rom March 13, 2006 |
| | to March 31, 2012 |
| | \$ |
| Contributions | |
| Citizenship and Immigration Canada | 1,047,105 |
| Ministry of Citiz <mark>enship and Immigratio</mark> n | 1,944,660 |
| Ministry of Train <mark>ing, Colleges and Univ</mark> ersities | 20,000 |
| United Way/Cen <mark>traide Ottawa</mark> | 445,809 |
| Interest | 32,483 |
| | 3,490,057 |
| Deferred contributions | (180,419) |
| | |
| Total contributions | 3,309,638 |
| | |
| Expenditures | |
| Salaries and be <mark>nefits</mark> | 1,704,086 |
| Professional ser <mark>vices</mark> | 522,948 |
| Administration | 950,652 |
| Repayment of u <mark>nused contributions</mark> | 131,951 |
| | |
| Total expenditures | 3,309,638 |

Note: Audited annual financial reports are available upon request