



## 27TH METROPOLIS CANADA CONFERENCE

### **Resetting Canada's Immigration Plan and Program for a New Era**

**March 13-15, 2025**

*The Westin Harbor Castle, Toronto, Ontario*

#### **PRELIMINARY PROGRAM**

Titles and information regarding all sessions appear in the official language they were submitted to by the workshop organizer.

Please note all poster presentations are listed at the end of the program as they run through the entirety of the conference.

A final and complete program with additional information (exhibitors, maps, etc) will be posted shortly.

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## 27E CONGRÈS METROPOLIS CANADA

### **Réinventer le plan et le programme d'immigration du Canada pour une nouvelle ère**

**13 au 15 mars 2025**

*Westin Harbor Castle, Toronto, Ontario*

#### **PROGRAMME PRÉLIMINAIRE**

Les titres et les informations concernant toutes les séances s'affichent dans la langue officielle dans laquelle ils ont été soumis par l'organisateur de l'atelier.

Veillez noter que toutes les présentations d'affiches sont listées à la fin du programme car elles sont exposées tout au long du congrès.

Un programme final et complet avec des informations supplémentaires (kiosques des exposants, cartes, etc) sera posté prochainement.

# THURSDAY, MARCH 13 / JEUDI 13 MARS

## As of / À partir de 7:30 am

Registration - Metropolitan Foyer

Inscriptions - Metropolitan Foyer

Visit the Exhibitors and Poster Presentations - Metropolitan Ballroom *East*

Visite des Kiosques des exposants et des Présentations d'affiches - Metropolitan Ballroom *Est*

## 8:45 am – 9:00 am

Metropolitan Ballroom

Welcoming Remarks / Mots de bienvenue

- **Dr. Wendy Cukier**, Conference Co-Chair, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Ted Rogers School of Management at Toronto Metropolitan University; Founder and Academic Director, Diversity Institute; Academic Director of the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH); and Academic Research Director of the Future Skills Centre | Co-présidente du congrès, professeur d'entrepreneuriat et d'innovation à la Ted Rogers School of Management de la Toronto Metropolitan University ; fondateur et directeur académique du Diversity Institute ; directeur académique du Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH) ; et directeur de la recherche académique du Future Skills Centre.
- **Shamira Madhany**, Conference Co-Chair, Managing Director, WES Canada & Deputy. Executive Director. World Education Services | Co-présidente du congrès, Directrice générale de WES Canada et Directrice exécutive adjointe, World Education Services

## 9:00 am – 10:30 am

*Metropolitan Ballroom*

Plenary Session 1 / Séance plénière 1

### **At a Crossroads: Setting a Vision of Immigration for Canada's Future**

Like other industrialized nations, Canada faces an aging demographic, low birth rates, significant labour shortages in critical sectors, aging infrastructure, and a need to keep pace with technological advances. For many years, immigration has provided solutions to these issues based on approaching managed migration via a Multi-Year Levels Plan and balancing economic, humanitarian and family-class entrants but the pendulum has swung. In 2025,

Canadians are calling for less immigration as a national housing crisis and pressures on the health and social sectors prevail.

Does the current immigration program provide the best framework for Canada for the next 50 years? Or is a new approach needed? Does IRPA, based on a human capital model, need a rethink? What is the right immigration eco-system to provide a platform for success for a nation at the cross-roads?

- Session Chair/Moderator: **Catrina Tapley**, Chair of the Board of Directors of The Association for Canadian Studies and The Metropolis Institute / Retired former Deputy Minister, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (RCC)
- **Shamira Madhany**, Managing Director WES Canada and Deputy Executive Director, World Education Services
- **Anil Arora**, Former Chief Statistician of Canada, Statistics Canada / Board Member of The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI)
- **Tasha Kheiriddin**, Public affairs commentator, consultant, lawyer, policy analyst and writer
- **Jack Jedwab**, President & CEO, Metropolis Institute and the Association for Canadian Studies

### **À la croisée des chemins : Définir une vision de l'immigration pour l'avenir du Canada**

À l'instar d'autres nations industrialisées, le Canada fait face à un vieillissement démographique, à des faibles taux de natalité, à d'importantes pénuries de main-d'œuvre dans des secteurs essentiels, à des infrastructures vieillissantes et à la nécessité de suivre le rythme des avancées technologiques. Pendant de nombreuses années, l'immigration a offert des solutions à ces problèmes grâce à une migration gérée via un Plan des niveaux pluriannuels et à un juste équilibre entre les catégories économiques, humanitaires et familiales. Cependant, la tendance a changé. En 2025, les Canadiens réclament une réduction de l'immigration face à une crise nationale du logement et des pressions qui s'exercent sur les secteurs de la santé et des services sociaux.

Le programme d'immigration actuel constitue-t-il le meilleur cadre pour le Canada pour les 50 prochaines années ? Ou une nouvelle approche est-elle nécessaire ? La Loi sur l'immigration et la protection des réfugiés (LIPR), basée sur un modèle de capital humain, doit-elle être repensée ? Quel serait l'écosystème d'immigration adéquat pour poser les bases de la réussite à une nation à la croisée des chemins?

- Présidente de séance/Modératrice: **Catrina Tapley**, Présidente du conseil d'administration de l'Association d'études canadiennes et de l'Institut Metropolis / Ancienne sous-ministre, d'Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada (IRCC)

- **Tasha Kheiriddin**, Commentatrice en affaires publiques, consultante, avocate, analyste politique et écrivaine.
- **Jack Jedwab**, Président et Directeur Général, de l'Institut Metropolis et de l'Association d'études canadiennes.
- **Anil Arora**, Ancien statisticien en chef du Canada, Statistique Canada/Membre du conseil d'administration du Centre pour l'innovation dans la gouvernance internationale (CIGI)
- **Shamira Madhany**, Directrice générale de WES Canada et Directrice exécutive adjointe, World Education Services

### **10:30 am – 11:00 am**

Break / Visit the Exhibitors and Poster Presentations - Metropolitan Ballroom East  
 Pause / Visite des Kiosques des exposants et des Présentations d'affiches - Metropolitan Ballroom Est

### **11:00 am – 12:15 pm**

Block A of concurrent sessions (workshops)  
 Bloc A des séances simultanées (ateliers)

*A1 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Digital Champion14s for Newcomers**

This training session will equip you to empower newcomers to Canada by developing your understanding of the Digital Champion role and how to effectively support newcomers in improving their essential digital skills. You'll learn strategies to engage and motivate learners with limited or no digital experience and discover valuable resources to enhance your impact as a Digital Champion.

- **Brenda Lavandier**, GEO Nova Scotia
- **Josie Lake**, GEO Nova Scotia

*A2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Building Resilient Workforces through Skills Development and Mental Health Support**

This session explores two initiatives focused on addressing systemic employment inequities and building workforce resilience among immigrants and racialized communities. The "Skills for Success in Food Services and Accommodation" program partners with industry leaders to equip newcomers, women, youth, and racialized groups with essential skills tailored to hospitality roles, fostering inclusion and adaptability. The "Career Success for Racialized Newcomer Women" initiative complements this by providing targeted support, including communication skill-building and holistic mental wellness training, to help participants navigate the Canadian workforce. Together, these programs highlight the transformative power of skill-based

frameworks and mental health interventions in creating equitable pathways to meaningful employment and addressing labor gaps across sectors.

- **Evgeniya Slastnikova**, Achēv, “Economic Integration and Sustainable Livelihoods in the Food Services and Accommodation Sector”
- **Maya Ramadan** – Achēv
- **Lubna Shaban** – Achēv
- **Zaineb Nizami** – Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services

*A3 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **SOGIESC / OCSIEG : pour mieux comprendre et servir les clients LGBTQ+ en français**

Les niveaux en immigration francophone sont ambitieux pour les 3 années à venir. Les futurs immigrants francophones proviendront très majoritairement du continent africain d'où être membre de la communauté 2SLGBTQI+ constitue un crime dans certains pays. De plus, un nombre plus important de personnes provenant de cette communauté est à anticiper car les politiques étasuniennes dès janvier 2025 pourraient nous amener à accueillir plus de réfugiés. À Calgary, Centre for Newcomers a mis en place une formation pour mieux comprendre la problématique et mieux armer le personnel d'établissement à y faire face. À la Cité des Rocheuses, nous avons traduit cette formation en français. Nous la présentons et la promovons pour mieux servir ces clients.

- **Hervé Stéclebout**, La Cité des Rocheuses
- **Evangelia Kalognomou**, La Cité des Rocheuses

*A4 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Building Bridges: Collaborative Solutions for Immigrant Housing, Wellness, and Support**

Calgary welcomed nearly 100,000 new residents in 2024, primarily immigrants, amidst rising costs and record demand for social services. This workshop explores how a cross-sector immigrant-serving platform, a housing-focused resource hub, and a domestic violence care system collaborated to address complex needs. Participants will learn how these initiatives leveraged expertise to support immigrants, including client journey mapping, operationalizing collaboration, and tackling challenges.

- **Session Moderator: Tihana Radojic**, Immigrant Services Calgary, “Building Bridges: Collaborative solutions for immigrant housing, wellness, and support”
- **Kate Bowers**, YW Calgary & FearIsNotLove, “A ground-breaking platform fostering an integrated System of Care for women and families escaping domestic violence.”
- **Candice Giammarino**, 'Distress Centre Calgary - SORCe', “Addressing complex needs through a multi-agency housing-focused resource hub.”

*A5 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

## **Breaking Down Barriers for Newcomer/International Students: Advancing Equitable Internationalization in Curriculum and Student-Facing Services**

This workshop/paper presents key insights from an applied research project conducted to promote equitable outcomes, and address anti-immigrant and integration barriers faced by international students within 2 critical experience spheres: (a)academic (i.e. curriculum/classroom) and (b)student-facing services. Researchers consisting of the College Applied Research Manager and diverse student researchers at the largest community college in Alberta used an equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonization(EDID) lens to frame the research, analyze data and produce findings/actionable recommendations. The research team discusses transferable aspects of the results, implications for mobility justice and equity for post-secondary education migrants.

- **Dr Benjamin Denga** , NorQuest College
- **Neetika Airi** , NorQuest College
- **Priscilla Idehenre** , NorQuest College
- **Richelle Jane Felix** , NorQuest College
- **Navodhi Ranatunga**, NorQuest College

### *A6 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Pathways for Asylum Seekers Support: Challenges and Opportunities**

This session explores the unique challenges faced by asylum seekers, drawing on experiences supporting over a thousand refugee claimants in hotels across the Region of Peel. It examines systemic barriers such as access to housing, healthcare, and employment, alongside the critical issues of social integration and mental health. By showcasing innovative practices and collaboration among stakeholders, this presentation highlights effective strategies for empowering asylum seekers, fostering resilience, and facilitating smoother transitions. Attendees will gain valuable insights into bridging service gaps and creating meaningful opportunities to help asylum seekers thrive in their new communities.

- **Nadia Sokhan**, Director of Programs Development and Strategic Partnerships, Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services
- **Hashim Alhussaini**, Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services
- **Doaa Khaira**, Peel Asylum Claimant Response at Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services.

### *A7 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Driving Change: Leveraging Employer Insights for Immigrant Workforce Integration**

This presentation distills key insights from the Strengthening Employer Feedback Channels project, spotlighting the integration of immigrant talent in Canadian workplaces. The national employer forums uncovered unique challenges and employer-driven strategies needing policy and program changes that encourage employer action and interventions. Panelists will share

actionable insights and recommendations from their engagements across diverse sectors and regions. Join us to discover how these findings can inform policy adjustments and enhance cross-sector collaboration, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and productive employment landscape for immigrants.

- **Session Moderator: Rania Younes**, IEC-BC
- **Thalia Semplonius**, Workforce Collective, “Research and Insight from the Strengthening Employer Feedback Channels”
- **Andrew Merchant**, What’s Next Development, “Human Capital Perspective”
- **Enver Naidoo**, RMIEC, “Perspectives from Rural Manitoba”
- **Doug Piquette**, Piquette, “Perspectives from Alberta”

*A8 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Integrated Care in Action: Thorncliffe Park Community Hub**

The Thorncliffe Park Community Hub (TPCH) exemplifies cross-sectoral collaboration, integrating health, social, settlement, & community services to address newcomers' needs under one roof. This innovative model promotes health equity & social prescribing, leveraging partnerships for efficient resource use and long-term community well-being in one of Canada's densest & most diverse neighbourhoods. We will share how TPCH:

- Worked with the Ministry of Health to integrate the vision with their goals
- Partnerships were developed and contributed to successful integration
- Funding mechanisms were used to raise capital through the Ministry, City of Toronto, IRCC, Legal Aid Ontario, United Way Greater Toronto.

- **Ravi Subramaniam**, Director, Partnerships & Hub Development at TNO
- **Nalini Pandalangat**, Vice President for Health, Wellness & Community Development at TNO

*A9 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **L' indice canadien de mesure d'intégration (ICMI): regards croisés France-Canada sur les données d'intégration**

Cet atelier offre un regard croisé sur les données d'intégration des nouveaux arrivants en France et au Canada. Les présentations mettront en avant les données issues du programme AGIR, le premier programme national français dédié à l'accompagnement global et individualisé des réfugiés afghans, ainsi que celles tirées de l'Indice canadien de mesure d'intégration (ICMI), qui fournira des statistiques illustrant l'accueil et l'intégration de ces populations réfugiées au Canada.

- **Samuel ETTOUATI**, Chef de la division des enquêtes et études statistiques, Direction Générale des statistiques des études et de la documentation, Direction générale des étrangers en France
- **Hillel Rapoport**, Directeur des relations internationales de Paris School of Economics
- **Michele Vitale**, Analyste de recherche, Institut Metropolis, Canada

*A10 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Bridging Workforce Gaps: Introducing the Employer Insights into Newcomer Occupations Index (EINOI)**

This presentation showcases the Employer Insights into Newcomer Occupations Index (EINOI), a cutting-edge tool designed to help employers address workforce shortages in British Columbia. Built on input from surveys, interviews, and open forums with local employers, EINOI is tailored to meet the needs of BC's evolving labor market. The tool examines key factors such as workforce participation, skill levels, occupational trends, wage structures, and language use in workplaces. By bridging skill gaps and promoting inclusivity, EINOI aims to create equitable opportunities for newcomers while supporting employers in making strategic workforce decisions. Join us as we discuss how EINOI can transform recruitment and workforce planning.

- **Daisy Quon**, Immigrant Employment Council of BC
- **Elham Ershad**, Immigrant Employment Council of BC
- **Majd Hawily**, Research and Evaluation Analyst
- **Paul Holley**, Research and Evaluation Director

*A11 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Addressing Canada's Nursing Shortage: Collaborative strategies to support Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) in Canada.**

Despite the increasing presence of internationally educated nurses (IENs), Canada continues to grapple with a significant nursing shortage, and therefore, it is critical to provide a continuous and collaborative support to IENs for their integration. Based on literature reviews and focus group discussions with IENs, employers, and licensing bodies, this session will identify current systemic barriers with actionable strategies to address these gaps, with a particular focus on collaborative efforts across disciplines, sectors, and governmental bodies. We will present effective practices and toolkits to streamline credentialing, enhance job readiness, and promote workforce retention, while cultivating a diverse and inclusive nursing workforce

- **Jamila Makii**, Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC)
- **Sameer Nizamuddin**, Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC)

*A12 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Centralized NAARS and sector collaboration in Saskatchewan: A template for the national Designated NAARS Services (DNS) implementation**

The International Women of Saskatoon (IWS) pioneered the implementation of the Centralized



NAARS pilot in the PNT region in 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In partnership with settlement sector organizations, IWS developed Centralized NAARS referral tools and protocols. As the five-year funding cycle draws to a close, numerous best practices and successes have emerged, providing a foundation for the upcoming IRCC-funded Designated NAARS Services (DNS) to be launched in 2025. This workshop will focus on the Centralized NAARS process, the distinctive Triage model used in Saskatchewan, and the effective collaboration across sectors to support ongoing client Case Coordination and Case Management.

- **Ijeoma Nwamuo**, International Women of Saskatoon (IWS), “A Paradigm Shift in Vision & Strategies: Basic NAARS & Triage to Case Management in Saskatchewan Urban Centres”
- **Mussarat Parveen**, Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership, “Facilitating ongoing multi-sectoral dialogues for effective systems changes and community impact”
- **Renata Cosic**, International Women of Saskatoon, “In-Depth Exploration of NAARS and Triage to Case Management Services at IWS”
- **Lori Steward**, Global Gathering Place, “Navigating the Route to Empowerment: The Role of Partnership in Intensive Case M

*A13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Sport for Settlement: Facilitating Participation in Sport and Recreation for Newcomer Youth**

The Sport for Settlement pilot bridges the gap between settlement services and community sport by providing culturally responsive physical activity programming for multi-barriered newcomer youth in early settlement stages. This three-year program aims to increase youth participation in sport and explore how engagement can foster social connections, promote wellness, and support settlement outcomes. With a robust evaluation framework and insights from qualitative and quantitative data, the project offers a replicable approach for integrating sport into settlement pathways. By demonstrating the potential of cross-sectoral collaboration, this pilot advances equity in sport and supports newcomer youth integration in Canada

- **Session Moderator: Amanda Koyama**, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- **Vanessa Graham**, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- **Matthew Kwan**, Brock University
- **Amanda Weightman**, Habitus Consulting Collective

*A14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Mobile Technology: A Key Service Tool in accessing IRCC funded Language Assessments for Newcomers in both official languages / La technologie mobile: un outil de service essentiel pour accéder aux évaluations linguistiques financées par IRCC pour les nouveaux arrivants dans les deux langues officielles.**

A CCNB Language Assessment Centre and iCent collaboration in modernizing a registration app, serving all Atlantic Canada's immigrant population. This innovative tool includes advanced accessibility features in both official languages, ensuring equitable access for all users. Driven by a commitment to inclusiveness, security, and efficiency, This collaboration successfully

implemented cutting-edge mobile technology to address specific needs. By streamlining registration and data management processes, this app serves as a critical tool in supporting the Newcomer journey toward integration and success in Canada. (French description to follow). Une collaboration entre le Centre d'évaluation linguistique du CCNB et iCent pour moderniser une application d'inscription, au service de la population immigrante de tout le Canada atlantique. Cet outil innovant intègre des fonctionnalités d'accessibilité avancées dans les deux langues officielles, crée un accès équitable pour tous les utilisateurs. Guidée par un engagement envers l'inclusion, la sécurité et l'efficacité, cette collaboration a mis en œuvre avec succès une technologie mobile de pointe pour répondre à des besoins spécifiques. En simplifiant les processus d'inscription et de gestion des données, cette application constitue un outil essentiel pour soutenir le parcours des nouveaux arrivants vers l'intégration et la réussite au Canada.

- **Stéphanie Mayhew**, CCNB, Language Assessment Centre Coordinator
- **Ganesh Neelanjanmath**, Founder, CTO iCent

*A15 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Volunteerism as an Antidote to Anti-Immigrant Sentiment**

There is a saying that "we fear what we do not know." In the face of rising anti-immigrant sentiment, volunteerism brings newcomers and long-term Canadians together, facilitating intergroup relations and cross-cultural dialogues. This is true when Canadians volunteer to support newcomers, but even more so when immigrants volunteer, engaging in civil society and contributing to the collective good even as they settle and address their own needs. In this session, JIAS Toronto with data from VolunteerToronto will reflect on newcomers and volunteers, sharing data and stories that highlight volunteerism as a pathway to community integration and improved intergroup relations.

- **Naomi Kramer**, Program and Volunteer Manager, JIAS Toronto
- **Dana Fischman**, Program and Volunteer Manager, JIAS Toronto
- **Dani Abramova**, Refugee Worker, JIAS Toronto

*A16 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **"Communicator: Enabling Community Interpretation Success in Settlement"**

Doctors save lives, lawyers advocate, and community interpreters give newcomers a voice. Community interpreters bridge linguistic and cultural gaps, helping newcomers access essential services. This workshop shows how "Communicator" enhances community interpretation by addressing challenges faced by multilingual individuals, vital to SPOs and newcomers. Through interactive activities, participants will explore key interpretation skills. Using Train-the-Trainer, Communicator builds a network of skilled interpreters, scales training, and improves settlement sector interpretation. This session demonstrates how interpreter training promotes inclusivity and settlement success, inspiring attendees to use Communicator in their organizations.

- **Session Moderator: Mohammad Evan**, UCC-SK
- **Aram Mahdavian**, UCC-SK
- **Oleh Kovalchuk**, UCC-SK

**12:15 pm – 1:30 pm**

Lunch / Diner

*Metropolitan Ballroom*

**1:45 pm – 3:00 pm**

Block B of concurrent sessions (workshops)

Bloc B des séances simultanées (ateliers)

*B1 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Use of AI to Support Immigrants**

This panel discusses the use of AI in supporting immigrants in settlement and employment, which offers new opportunities to foster inclusion, economic growth, and workforce efficiency. Using an ecological system framework, the presenters will shed light on AI-driven tools, designed for employers, community stakeholders, and immigrant jobseekers, that help simplify credential recognition, match immigrants with suitable job opportunities, and plan career pathways. As Canada faces labor shortages, AI-driven solutions enhance immigrants' success while strengthening the country's overall economic resilience and diversity. This panel will also discuss the risks or ethical concerns of using AI in the labour market.

- **Dr. Wendy Cukier**, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Ted Rogers School of Management at Toronto Metropolitan University; Founder and Academic Director, Diversity Institute; Academic Director of the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH); and Academic Research Director of the Future Skills Centre
- **John Jensen**, COO, Peacegeeks
- **Darcy MacCallum**, Professor, Social Enterprise for Canada
- **Mark Patterson**, Executive Director, MagP23net

*B2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Regional and Evidence-based Responses P23to Anti-immigration Sentiment**

This session explores how interest holders in Alberta, Ontario, and the Atlantic region are responding to anti-immigration sentiment. Anti-immigration sentiment is on the rise in Canada, and these attitudes are largely shaped by highly-politicized debates and widespread misconceptions about immigrants and immigration. An effective response should rely on concrete data and facts while also addressing the unique social dynamics of regional or local contexts. In this session, each presenter will unpack a local response to anti-immigration

sentiment. As such, this session builds a practical framework that other interest holders can use to combat resentment and discrimination against newcomers.

- Session Moderator: Yolande Pottie-Sherman, Memorial University of Newfoundland
- **Jason Chalmers**, Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies, "Immigration and Regional Growth in Atlantic Canada"
- **Meghan Cunningham**, Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies, "Albertan Anti-Immigrant Sentiment and the Political Context"
- **Sarah Wayland**, Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council, "Building Inclusion in Southern Ontario: Local Immigration Partnerships take Action"

*B3 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Explorer les expériences des immigrants et des organisations francophones pendant la période de migration, d'établissement et d'intégration**

Ce panel en français (Q/A bilingue) vise à améliorer la compréhension du public en ce qui concerne la migration, l'établissement et l'intégration des immigrants francophones vivant en situation minoritaire. Jasmine Bégin Marchand discute des différentes approches adoptées par les organismes francophones de la région du Grand Toronto dans le soutien à l'intégration des nouveaux arrivants et des étudiants étrangers. Leyla Sall examine les expériences d'intégration des pères immigrants francophones en Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick. Par ailleurs, Astou Thiam et Suzanne Huot explorent les expériences des immigrants d'Afrique de l'Ouest-Centre dans le Grand Vancouver à travers un prisme d'hospitalité..

- **Astou Thiam**, PhD Candidate, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, CMS (Centre for Migration Studies) GraFellow 23-24, "Explorer les expériences des immigrants d'Afrique de l'Ouest-Centre dans le Metro Vancouver à travers un prisme d'hospitalité."
- **Leyla Sall**, Professeur titulaire, Département de sociologie et de criminologie, Université de Moncton, "Examiner les expériences d'intégration des pères immigrants francophones en Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick."
- **Jasmine Bégin Marchand**, PhD Candidate, University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, "Discuter des différentes approches adoptées par les organismes francophones de la région du Grand Toronto dans le soutien à l'intégration des nouveaux arrivants et des étudiants étrangers."
- **Suzanne Huot**, Associate Professor, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, Collaborator - Centre for Migration Studies

*B4 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Bridging Service Gaps: A Family-Centered Approach to Newcomer Settlement through Innovation and Collaboration**

Gateway's innovative, data-driven model supports specialized needs assessments tailored for caregivers of children aged 0 to 6, leveraging stakeholder insights to address service gaps and enhance service delivery. This model connects caregivers and children to resources across sectors, fostering integration and improving outcomes. In this workshop, participants will explore how Gateway uses technology and collaboration to create replicable frameworks to empower immigrants and strengthen community ties. The session will also highlight the benefits of building adaptable systems that respond to diverse demographic needs and the evolving newcomer settlement landscape, ensuring sustainable and effective service delivery.

- **Wissam Shalaby**, Immigrant Services Calgary, "Empowering Newcomer Families Through Gateway's Innovative Family-Centered Approach"
- **Tihana Radojcic**, Immigrant Services Calgary, "Building Sustainable Partnerships for Inclusive Settlement Services for Newcomer Families"
- **Megan Gill**, Immigrant Services Calgary, "Enhancing Settlement Services Through Participatory Research"

*B5 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Settlement Studies: The Creation of an Open Education Resource (OER) for All**

NorQuest College launched a first-of-its-kind textbook to address key issues within the settlement sector, and it has grown into a respected resource for learners, researchers, and practitioners. This presentation will discuss building the OER from its foundation to its success as a zero-cost book adopted within our Settlement Studies program and by institutions across Canada. Comprised of eleven chapters, Canadian Settlement in Action: History and Future, includes topics such as climate migration, anti-oppressive practices, and social justice. We brought together perspectives from experts in the field to highlight the challenges encountered by newcomers as they navigate through their settlement pathways.

- **Oscar Vergara**, NorQuest College
- **Wendy Chambers**, NorQuest College

*B6 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Fostering Effective Communication, through Universal Understanding and Community Ties: Insights from the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology's NSERC Project**

Transcultural Communication (TCC) project is a 3-year, \$350,000 NSERC-funded project introducing an innovative, inclusive, and research-based initiative benefiting educational institutions, their communities, and Newcomers to Canada. Developed through collaboration between academic and community organizations, the TCC workshop fosters effective communication across Canada's diverse communities. The project highlights include Train-The-Trainer workshops to empower participants as facilitators, survey insights from participants, and a comprehensive Open Educational Resource (OER). The link to the OER, including training materials and best practices, will be shared with the audience to support their implementation efforts.

- **Dania El Chaar**, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)
- **Ross Humby**, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)
- **Joseph Macdonald**, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)

*B7 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Ruptures, Reunification & Rootedness: The Impact of Family Separation on Immigrant Central American Youth in North America**

Drawing on findings from the Rights for Children and Youth Partnership Project, this presentation explores the impacts of family separation, reunification, and feelings of rootedness experienced by immigrant Central American youth in North America. Using Family Critical Race Theory, the findings highlight the socio-emotional impacts of family separation, the factors that influence economic migration, and youth's understanding of "home" as they navigate their cultural values of familism and identity in changing environments. Ultimately, the presentation reveals the critical role that reunification policies and settlement services play in supporting the long-term well-being of racialized immigrant youth and their families.

- **Maria Cappelletti**, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Laura Perez Gonzalez**, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Henry Parada**, Toronto Metropolitan University

*B8 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **Creating and using advanced digital tools in the immigration and settlement sector: lesson learned from the field**

Organizations and governments in the immigration and settlement sector are increasingly leveraging advanced digital technologies (ADT) to enhance service delivery, provide information, and manage files. While this trend offers significant potential, it also raises important concerns regarding privacy, data protection, and the digital divides. While much attention has been given to the use of AI in the immigration system, the presentations highlight how technologies often considered basic—such as videoconferencing, spreadsheets, and cellphones—are profoundly transforming the recruitment of newcomers and their navigation of the immigration system. This session brings together organizations in the immigration and settlement sector that have developed ADT tools and researchers who are exploring their impacts, offering an opportunity to share lessons learned from their experiences. This session is supported by the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF) Bridging Divides research program.

- **Session Moderator: Marie-Jeanne Blain**, Senior researcher, Institute for Migration and Society, Concordia University
- **Yannick Boucher**, INICI, "Building an integrated tool for settlement clients files: challenges and opportunities"
- **Mylene Coderre**, Senior researcher, Institute for Migration and Society, Concordia University, "Recruiting temporary migrant workers in a digital era: insights from recruitment agencies in Canada"

- **Abdulla Daoud** , The Refugee Center, “Allo Canada: a virtual Migration assistant”
- **Capucine Coustere** , Postdoctoral fellow, Institute for Migration and Society, Concordia University, “Low-techs and the management of immigration in Canada: the case of GCMS”
- **Christophe Berthet** , Immigrant Québec, “Marie: an immigration chat bot”

*B9 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Transforming Immigrant Support with Self-directed Services: Accessible and Innovative Solutions for Pre- and Post-arrival Needs**

This workshop will highlight innovative self-directed services for immigrants, focusing on Pan-Canadian and provincial initiatives. The Planning for Canada pre-arrival program launched two self-directed services to meet the evolving needs of immigrants seeking flexibility. Sault College's eLearning Design Centre will showcase its interactive modules tailored to diverse immigrant learners. ACCES Employment's Canadian Employment Connections program will demonstrate how integrating self-directed resources enhances immigrants' job readiness and accelerates labor market entry. This workshop will interest stakeholders creating self-directed solutions to improve service efficiency and accessibility.

- Moderator: **Cristian Medina**, Planning for Canada - CICan
- **Jennifer Mosley**, Sault College
- **Saima Aziz**, ACCES Employment

*B10 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **Promising Practice: Partnership with Heart**

Bridge building between Indigenous and newcomer communities is more important than ever. In this session, we will discuss the ups and downs as organizations that have taken the lead within the sector in Winnipeg on this work and how successful partnership between Immigration Partnership Winnipeg, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba, and Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network has flourished into a larger partnership that funders are interested in and is creating even more opportunities for relationship building within the sector and participants. The story begins with people whose heart is behind their work and a phone call about a pow wow....

- **Adrienne Breyfogle**, Immigration Partnership Winnipeg, “Promising Practice: Partnership with Heart”
- **Shereen Denetto**, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba, “Promising Practice: Partnership with Heart”
- **Clayton Sandy**, Turtle Island Project

*B11 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Anti racism solutions to decrease discrimination and racism in Canada's immigration process**

The session explores innovative anti-racism strategies to address systemic discrimination in Canada's immigration process. Recommendations include policy reforms to eliminate biases, equitable diversification of immigration pathways, and mandatory anti-racism training for immigration officials. It highlights the role of independent oversight, transparent data collection, and community engagement in fostering equity. Emphasizing accountability and inclusion, the presentation provides actionable solutions to combat disparities in visa processing and settlement outcomes. Attendees will gain insights into building a fairer immigration system that reflects Canada's commitment.

- **Session Moderator: Pascaline Nsekara**, Great Light Healing Community Services Society
- **Ines Ghozzi**, Le Relais Francophone de la Colombie-Britannique

*B12 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

**Equitable Pathways: Supporting BIPOC Grassroots Organizations in Accessing Federal Funding**

This presentation will share insights and best practices from the IRCC-funded pilot program B.U.I.L.D.S., focusing on the barriers BIPOC-led grassroots organizations face in accessing federal and other funding sources. We will highlight our approach to capacity-building opportunities and the direct support offered in the IRCC Call for Proposal 2024. We will discuss the critical need for equitable resource distribution to support diverse community initiatives and examine the systems impacting BIPOC success. Using case studies from our pilot, we will present actionable strategies identified by all the stakeholders, including the organizations themselves. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of capacity-building approaches & solutions.

- **Sumaiyyah Adam**, DICVERSEcity Community Resources Society
- **Lenya Wilks**, DICVERSEcity Community Resources Society

*B13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Practical Play and Impactful Imagination – Value of Artists as Members of the Interprofessional Healthcare Team to Address Newcomer Mental Health**

Newcomers experience numerous barriers when accessing mental health support, including stigma, limited knowledge, and lack of culturally tailored information. Disclosing personal information is particularly challenging for survivors of gender-based domestic violence. The co-design process of the Hubs of Expressive Arts for Life (HEAL) Project demonstrates the value of art-based facilitators and artists as part of interprofessional teams. These practitioners offer innovative approaches to enhance mental health knowledge, self-expression, self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and trauma healing. By integrating practical play and imagination practices,



artists are vital in improving newcomers' mental well-being and integration into Toronto's diverse

- **Christen Kong** , Access Alliance Multicultural Health & Community Services, "Health Promoter - Newcomer Mental Health"
- **Shruthi Thomas** , Access Alliance Multicultural Health & Community Services, "Immigrant Insight Scholar Fellow"

*B14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Creatives as Drivers of Economic Growth: Workforce Development and Migrant Integration Through the Arts**

Canada's creative sector is a major driver of the economy. In 2022, despite the pandemic, the arts, culture, and creative industries sectors generated \$58.5B, or 2.2% of GDP, with \$26.4B, or 45% of culture GDP, coming from Ontario. In this panel, funders, settlement, workforce development, and community-engaged, examine the ways that the under-funded arts sector is a vital means of newcomer settlement and integration for not only creatives themselves but for families and communities writ large. Subsequently, understanding the arts as a key mechanism for settlement and integration has the potential to unlock even greater economic growth for the country.

- **Shawn Newman**, Skills for Change & Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Alka Kumar**, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Annie Katsura Rollins**, Mabelle Arts
- **Kadija de Paula**, Toronto Arts Council & Foundation
- **Tomée Tzatzanis**, Toronto Metropolitan University

*B15 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Unlocking Integration: A Hands-On Guide to the Canadian Index for Measuring Integration**

Join uMetropolis for an interactive, hands-on session exploring the Canadian Index for Measuring Integration (CIMI). This live tutorial will walk you through how to use the CIMI to assess immigrant integration across key domains, interpret data effectively, and apply insights to policy and practice. Whether you're a researcher, policymaker, or service provider, this session will equip you with practical tools to unlock deeper understanding and drive impactful change.

- **Christopher Surtees**, uMetropolis, Metropolis Institute

*B16 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Le pouvoir de la connaissance : s'engager dans l'apprentissage organisationnel et le renforcement des capacités en évaluation**

La capacité en évaluation favorise une approche axée sur les résultats, aidant les organisations à se concentrer sur l'obtention de résultats mesurables. L'adoption de cette approche permet de progresser vers les résultats souhaités. Mais par où commencer ? Rejoignez-nous pour explorer

le renforcement des capacités d'évaluation, ses avantages pour les organisations, et les stratégies visant à renforcer l'apprentissage organisationnel. Écoutez les témoignages de praticiens qui ont amélioré leurs compétences en matière d'évaluation en collaborant avec des chercheurs. Découvrez CAPACITÉS, une nouvelle initiative visant à renforcer l'apprentissage organisationnel et la capacité en évaluation, et comment vous pouvez y participer.

- Session Moderator: **Julie Rodier**, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC)
- **Kim Lehrer**, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), "Qu'est-ce que la capacité en évaluation ? Pourquoi est-elle importante ? Quelles sont les tactiques efficaces pour renforcer la capacité en évaluation et l'apprentissage organisationnel ?"
- **Arnaud Baudry**, FrancoQueer, "L'expérience en évaluation de FrancoQueer avec l'appui de la SRSA"
- **Julie Rodier**, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), "CAPACITÉS— une nouvelle initiative visant à renforcer la capacité en évaluation des fournisseurs de services œuvrant dans le secteur de l'établissement et de l'intégration"

### **3:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

Break / Visit the Exhibitors Booths and Poster Presentations - *Metropolitan Ballroom East*

Pause / Visite des Kiosques des exposants et des Présentations d'affiches - *Metropolitan Ballroom est*

### **3:30 pm – 4:45 pm**

Block C of concurrent sessions (workshops)

Bloc C des séances simultanées (ateliers)

*C1 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Newcomer Inclusion in High-Demand Occupations: Employment Trends and Barriers in Canada's Evolving Labor Market**

As Canada's immigration policies evolve and labor market demands shift, ensuring newcomers' access to high-demand occupations is more critical than ever. Led by the CIMII research team, this presentation examines access to key occupations (classified as TEERs 0, 1, and 2) in several sectors, such as healthcare, technology, transportation, and agriculture. The study highlights challenges including declining immigration numbers, increased reliance on temporary foreign workers, and persistent overqualification among immigrants, particularly in essential roles, which can hinder their long-term career advancement.

Drawing on Census data and recent labor force surveys, the research will analyze the occupational distribution of immigrants and non-permanent residents (NPRs) across Canada as well as assess disparities between newcomers and Canadian-born workers in several sectors. By shedding light on systemic barriers and identifying opportunities for improvement, this work aims to support evidence-based policymaking that fosters equitable labor market outcomes and maximizes the potential of Canada's diverse workforce.

- **Paul Holley**, Research Director
- **Ravindra Shrestha**, Research Manager
- **Michele Vitale**, Senior Research Analyst

### *C2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Advancing Socio-Economic Research for Evidence Informed Public Health Decision Making**

Ontario's health care system continues to suffer from nurse shortages, internationally educated nurses (IENs) remain un/under-employed. Our qualitative study with stakeholders and IENs across southern Ontario, explores IEN awareness of supports meant to help them achieve employment as nurses in Ontario. As nursing shortages continue, understanding factors such as the socio-economic impact of licensing processes that may limit IEN registration and employment is important for future planning. This workshop will engage participants in discussion of study findings and inform knowledge mobilization. Findings will help inform program planning and decision making for IENs integration into the Ontario nursing workforce.

- **Tala Mufleh**, McMaster University
- **Nasrin Alostaz**, McMaster University
- **Olive Wahoush**, McMaster University
- **Jumoke Kolade**, McMaster University

### *C3 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

#### **L'avenir de la reconnaissance des titres de compétences étrangers pour les immigrants qualifiés – Comparaison des systèmes et services en Nouvelle-Écosse et en Colombie-Britannique**

Les processus de reconnaissance des titres de compétences étrangers se varient d'une province à l'autre au Canada, mais ils partagent des similitudes dans la complexité, les exigences et les challenges rencontrés par les nouveaux arrivants qualifiés. L'objectif de la session est de sensibiliser sur ce sujet en comparant les situations en Nouvelle-Écosse et en Colombie-Britannique, notamment les systèmes et services mis en place, ainsi que suggérer une direction futuriste. Les participants repartiront avec une vision plus large de la question qu'ils pourront utiliser sur le terrain en desservant les clients immigrants qualifiés dans leurs provinces.

- **Session Moderator: Ui Heang Hur**, Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique (SDECB)
- **Jessica Rogers**, Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique (SDECB)
- **Zineb Bennani**, Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDÉNE)

*C4 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Digital and New Approaches to Skills Training, Reskilling and Upskilling**

This session discusses innovative, employer-centered approaches to help immigrants to overcome barriers in skills training, reskilling and upskilling focused on innovative approaches to digital skills, AI and language training. This session starts with a presentation on the changes in occupations related to the shift toward AI and how such changes are affecting the employment opportunities for immigrants. The macro-level study is followed by two case studies on innovative approaches to the development and delivery of digital skills, such as AI skills, programs targeting immigrants.

- **Tahsin Mehdi**, Senior Research Economist, Social Analysis and Modelling Division, Statistics Canada
- **Katlynn Sverko**, Director, Diversity Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Charles Finley**, Cybersecurity Catalyst

*C5 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Strategies to promote equitable access to healthcare for newcomer patients and health professionals**

Newcomers make up a significant segment of the patient population, but their unique needs are not always understood in healthcare settings. This workshop explores the landscape of newcomer health equity in Canada, offering valuable insights into the challenges faced by this vulnerable group. Meanwhile, at the bedside, immigration is key to addressing Canada's healthcare workforce challenges, yet significant barriers prevent internationally educated healthcare professionals (IEHPs) from fully contributing. Fewer than 40% of IEHPs achieve licensure due to rigid licensing pathways, financial constraints, and inadequate support systems.

Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the systemic and practical barriers newcomers encounter in accessing healthcare as both patients and professionals and learn actionable strategies to promote equitable access.

- **Sahar Zohni**, National Newcomer Navigation Network
- **Christine Kouri**, National Newcomer Navigation Network

*C6 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Strengthening Partnerships: Promoting Inclusion and Integration of immigrants**

This workshop supports attendees to develop best practices to eliminate exploitation, address digital challenges and promote sustainable policies for the empowerment and integration of all immigrants.

Ontario's \$51 billion agri-food sector relies on 871,000 workers, including 4,000 from Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. Despite the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, IAWs face barriers. Worker Hubs offer cost-effective solutions, addressing their needs and bridging service gaps.

Technology helps immigrants integrate by fostering economic inclusion and growth. It aids in learning languages, cultural nuances, and accessing opportunities like work, education and services. Additionally, it enhances co

- **Session Moderator: Marie Mouradikian**, Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre
- **Nudrat Rahman Sheikh**, Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre
- **Fatima Aguinaga**, Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre

*C7 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Collaborative Child Welfare Practices for Immigrant and Refugee Families**

This session highlights the innovative collaboration between the Child Welfare Immigration Centre of Excellence and Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services in supporting vulnerable immigrant and refugee families. By integrating cross-sector expertise, the partnership focuses on preventing child welfare involvement by strengthening family support systems. Through shared best practices, the presentation explores strategies that prioritize keeping children within their families, addressing cultural nuances, and navigating systemic barriers. Attendees will gain actionable insights into fostering resilience, promoting family unity, and creating sustainable solutions for immigrant and refugee families in child welfare systems.

- **Liz Okai**, Peel CAS's Child Welfare Immigration Centre of Excellence
- **Danielle Ungara**, Peel CAS's Child Welfare Immigration Centre of Excellence
- **Nadia Sokhan**, Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services
- **Scott Small**, Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services

*C8 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **SkillUP Program: Workforce Development Through Collaboration**

The SkillUP Program addresses skill gaps in the trades by equipping participants with essential and technical skills while promoting diversity and workforce inclusion. Initiated by the Newcomers Centre in Edmonton in partnership with the Centre for Newcomers in Calgary and in collaboration with technical training providers Omnia and Arctic Response, the program has

trained and placed over 90 graduates in sustainable jobs. The workshop will highlight its innovative recruitment strategies, diversity outcomes, and collaboration with employers. It aims to inspire stakeholders to replicate or adapt similar initiatives, fostering workforce development and economic resilience in various contexts.

- **Kwame Owusu Ofori**, Newcomers Centre- Edmonton
- **Bernice Shukairat**, Centre for Newcomers- Calgary

#### *C9 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Social networks, employer diversity and some best practices in shaping immigrants' employment potential and firm's performance in Atlantic Canada**

In this session, we aim to generate discussion on 1) the role of social networks on employment potential of international students coming from diverse cultures, 2) the role of diversity among top executives on firm performance and 3) explore current, effective solutions that bring together employers, trainers, subject matter experts, mentors, and immigrants to achieve impactful outcomes. Focus will be on immigration in Atlantic Canada which presents the case of smaller area immigration.

- Session Moderator: **Syed Ather H. Akbari**, Saint Mary's University, "Do social networks help international students find a job in their field of study"
- **Nicholas Manuel**, Saint Mary's University, "Do social networks help international students find a job in their field of study"
- **Tony Fang**, Memorial University of Newfoundland, "Revenue, Hiring, and Optimism: Do Top Executive's Immigration Status and Management Perception of Multiculturalism Matter?"
- **John Hartley**, Memorial University of Newfoundland, "Revenue, Hiring, and Optimism: Do Top Executive's Immigration Status and Management Perception of Multiculturalism Matter?"
- **Anna McBeth**, Immigrant Settlement Association of Nova Scotia, "Driving change: Innovative Approaches to Immigrant Employment"

#### *C10 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Le Québec futur, une société interculturelle**

Selon un récent sondage : «... en deux ans, la proportion de Canadiens qui se disent d'accord avec l'affirmation « il y a trop d'immigration au Canada » a plus que doublé, passant de 27 à 58 %.»

Le C.O.R. croit qu'il faut miser sur les jeunes avant que les préjugés se cristallisent.

Un moyen de les mobiliser est de leur proposer une réalisation (slam; tableau; vidéo...); des médiateurs interculturels faciliteraient les échanges sur des thèmes rassembleurs.

Il faut viser l'entre-connaissance, l'ouverture à l'Autre, tout en cultivant le sens de la citoyenneté pour construire un projet commun.

- **SAMIRA LAOUNI**, C.O.R.
- **MIRIAM TAYLOR**, C.O.R.
- **Saadia Maaroufi**, C.O.R., “Santé mentale et migration : regards intergénérationnels”

*C11 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Building Bridges: Co-designing a Holistic Immigrant Integration Strategy from Vision to Action**

In response to the evolving landscape of immigration in the Fredericton region, Ignite embarked on a transformative project to develop an innovative strategy for the attraction, integration, and retention of newcomers across the Capital Region. Calling upon the expertise of O Strategies, this new strategy was co-created and co-developed using a collaborative approach involving a wide array of stakeholders and community partners, which entails collective ownership of the strategy. Join us as we explore the development process, the final product known as the CAIR Strategy, and its implementation through our Local Immigration Partnership.

- **Myriane Ouellette** , O Strategies, “Co-Designing the Blueprint: Collaborative Approaches to Immigrant Integration”
- **Nausheen Ali** , Ignite, “The Capital Region Newcomer CAIR Strategy”
- **Sarah Caissie** , Ignite, “Partnering for Change: Implementing the CAIR Strategy through our Local Immigration Partnership”

*C12 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **Session to be confirmed**

*C13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Media construction of immigrant crisis**

This panel is focused on topics related to media-constructed immigrant crisis and racism. By framing immigration as a threat on topics of border crossings, housing shortages, or crime, media narratives created fear, particularly affecting racialized immigrant communities. Such narratives on both mass media and social media not only distort reality but also deepen systemic racism, creating barriers to inclusion and equitable treatment for newcomers in Canada. This session will include works on critical race theory, and empirical studies using various methods, such as discourse analysis and social network analysis.

- **Dr. Wendy Cukier**, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Ted Rogers School of Management at Toronto Metropolitan University; Founder and Academic Director,

Diversity Institute; Academic Director of the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH); and Academic Research Director of the Future Skills Centre

- **Anatoliy Grudz**, Professor, Information Technology Management, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Tamara Thermitus, Ad. E.**, Visiting Scholar (McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism); Past Chair, Quebec Human Rights Commission
- **Graham King**, PhD student, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

*C14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Driving Long-Term Systemic Change: Lessons in Advocating for Immigrant Inclusion**

Immigrants play a key role in Canada's economy and society, as opposed to current discourse that centres commodification of immigration. There is a need for more equitable policies for immigrants, such as international students' rights, temporary foreign workers, immigrant business owners facing unregulated commercial rent hikes, and essential racialized workers. In this session, WES Mariam Assefa Fund's grantee partners across Canada that are doing critical advocacy work for these various groups will share best practices to support changes that centres human values, dignity, and workers' rights, irrespective of immigration status, as well as insights on how Canada's new immigration policies leave room to be more equitable.

- Moderator/Session Chair: **Sifat Yusuf**, Program Manager, WES Mariam Assefa Fund
- Moderator/Session Chair: **Jawad Shahabi**, Program Manager, WES Marian Assefa Fund (Co-moderator)
- **Syed Hussan**, Migrant Workers Alliance for Change
- **Paban Adhikary**, ActionDignity
- **Manvir Bhangu**, Laadliyan
- **Liliana Camachoa**, Better Way Alliance

*C15 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **The Disaggregated Data Action Plan and the Changing Data landscape, and DDAP In Action**

Statistics Canada has long history of providing Canadians with high-quality information that helps inform our society and economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has strengthened the Agency's commitment to provide new and timely information, and highlighted how a single event can be experienced differently across various groups, thus revealing uneven social and economic realities. This presentation will provide an overview of the Disaggregated Data Action Plan ( DDAP) , a whole-of-government approach led by Statistics Canada, to increase and improve statistics on diverse populations, and to support more representative data collection methods-



as well as showcase the changing data and analytical landscape since the implementation of the DDAP.

This presentation will also provide participants with an understanding of the steps of the analytical process under the DDAP, and showcase DDAP in action, through a recent analytical product on the sociodemographic portrait of the Black population in Canada. Statistical standards such as sex at birth, gender and sexual orientation and visible minority will be discussed. The key highlights on the findings and recommendations from the Consultative Engagement on the Visible Minority Concept will be presented.

- **Pauline Tuitoek**, Assistant Director, Diversity and Social Cultural Statistics , Statistics Canada

*C16 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Strengthening Pathways to Integration: Cross-Sectoral Collaborations for Immigrant and Newcomer Women and Families in Canada**

Systemic challenges such as limited access to employment, affordable housing, language barriers, and lack of culturally responsive mental health services often impede the process of integration for newcomer women. The Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA) has developed a holistic, integrated, cross-sectoral model to address some of these challenges, leveraging partnerships across employment and training, language and education, mental health and healthy relationships, and other social services to create sustainable pathways for integration.

This presentation will demonstrate CIWA's collaborative approach and actionable recommendations for stakeholders through case studies and evidence-based insights from its five core departments: Employment and Training, Language, Family Services, Wellbeing and Resiliency, and Settlement and Integration.

- **Punam Dalal**, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
- **Shamsa Mistry**, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association

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**5:15 pm – 6:15 pm**

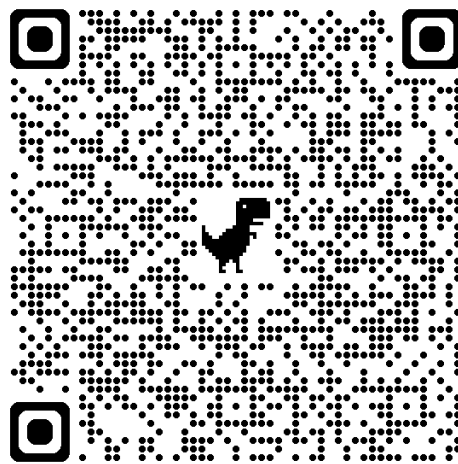
### **Wine & Cheese Networking Event Hosted by the Immigrant Services Calgary**

Immigrant Services Calgary is hosting a pre-registered networking event featuring Newcomer Knowledge Hub and Gateway and for the attendees of the 27<sup>th</sup> Metropolis Canada Conference to connect and mingle! We will be serving wine, non-alcoholic beverages, and snacks to accompany our evening of fun activities. Come see us at our

exhibition booth. To learn more about us, please visit [www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca](http://www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca) and [www.k-hub.ca](http://www.k-hub.ca)

**Registration is limited.** Please note that if you are not checked in by 5:15 PM, your seat may be given away. Don't forget to save your e-ticket to show at the door.

[https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/wine-cheese-hosted-by-the-newcomer-knowledge-hub-tickets-1155018293809?aff=oddtcreator&utm\\_campaign=postpublish&utm\\_medium=sparkpost&utm\\_source=email](https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/wine-cheese-hosted-by-the-newcomer-knowledge-hub-tickets-1155018293809?aff=oddtcreator&utm_campaign=postpublish&utm_medium=sparkpost&utm_source=email)



**FRIDAY, MARCH 14 / VENDREDI 14 MARS**

**7:30 am**

Frontenac Ballroom

**"Move for FUN"**

**Special Physical Fitness Fun activity -Presented by Sports for Life**

Getting physically active doesn't have to be difficult! Engaging in physical activity offers numerous benefits for newcomers, including: building social connections and community,

enhancing mental and physical well-being, and providing academic, economic, and career advantages. It also fosters inclusion and a sense of belonging.

Join us on Friday, March 14, and Saturday, March 15, at 7:30 a.m. in the Frontenac Ballroom to discover the benefits of physical activity through easy play. Come ready to move! No registration required

You will also find us at our exhibition table in the Metropolitan Ballroom East where you can get some cool tokens and learn more about our organization, Sport for Life.

**As of / À partir de 7:30 am**

Registration - Metropolitan Foyer

Inscriptions - Metropolitan Foyer

-

Visit the Exhibitors and Poster Presentations - Metropolitan Ballroom East

Visite des Kiosques des exposants et des Présentations d'affiches - Metropolitan Ballroom Est

**9:00 am – 10:30 am**

Metropolitan Ballroom

Plenary Session 2 / Séance plénière 2

**Re-establishing the Case for Immigration**

Over the past year, the federal government has made unprecedented changes to the Immigration Program with reductions to the Multi-year Levels Plan, capping international students, and restrictions on temporary foreign workers. Balancing economic migration with assisting those most in need around the globe has become even more difficult in an era of high interest rates and a national housing crisis while health, education and social services are experiencing critical funding shortages. The outcome of the most recent national Call for Proposals will see agencies closing, services reduced and upheaval at a time when Canada is accepting more vulnerable clients with increasingly complex needs.

In this session, national leaders will share their vision for service provision in an environment that will require funding diversification, innovation, technology and resilience. What kind of partnerships will the Sector need to develop to not only survive but to excel?

- Session Chair/Moderator: **Corinne Prince**, ACS-Metropolis Institute
- **Debbie Douglas**, Executive Director, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
- **Abdulla Daoud**, Executive Director, Le Centre des réfugiés / The Refugee Centre, Montreal, Quebec

- **Dr. Wendy Cukier**, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Ted Rogers School of Management at Toronto Metropolitan University; Founder and Academic Director, Diversity Institute; Academic Director of the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub (WEKH); and Academic Research Director of the Future Skills Centre
- **Wadih Karam**, Director General, La Maisonnée
- **Tonie Chaltas**, Chief Executive Officer, Achēv

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### **Réaffirmer l'argument en faveur de l'immigration**

Au cours de l'année écoulée, le gouvernement fédéral a apporté des changements sans précédent au Programme d'immigration, notamment en réduisant les cibles du Plan des niveaux pluriannuels, en limitant le nombre d'étudiants internationaux et en imposant des restrictions aux travailleurs étrangers temporaires. Concilier les besoins de la migration économique avec le soutien aux personnes les plus vulnérables à travers le monde est devenu encore plus difficile notamment dans un contexte marqué par des taux d'intérêt élevés, une crise nationale du logement et de graves pénuries de financement dans les secteurs de la santé, de l'éducation et des services sociaux. Les effets du dernier appel à propositions national se traduira par la fermeture d'agences, la réduction des services et des bouleversements à un moment où le Canada accueille davantage de clients vulnérables aux besoins de plus en plus complexes.

Lors de cette session, des leaders nationaux partageront leur vision de la prestation de services dans un contexte qui nécessitera une diversification des financements, de l'innovation, de la technologie et de la résilience. Quels partenariats ce secteur devra-t-il établir pour non seulement surmonter les défis, mais aussi pour se développer et réussir?

- Présidente de séance/Modératrice: **Corinne Prince**, AEC-Institut Metropolis
- **Debbie Douglas**, Directrice générale, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
- **Abdulla Daoud**, Directeur général, Le Centre des réfugiés / The Refugee Centre, Montréal, Québec
- **Wendy Cukier**, Directrice du Diversity Institute, professeure d'entrepreneuriat et de stratégie, faculté de gestion, Ted Rogers School of Management, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Wadih Karam**, Directeur général, La Maisonnée
- **Tonie Chaltas**, Directrice générale, Achēv

### **10:30 am – 11:00 am**

Break / Visit the Exhibitor's Booths and Poster Presentations, Metropolitan Ballroom *East*

Pause / Visite des Kiosques des exposants et Présentations d'affiches, Metropolitan Ballroom *Est*

**11:00 am – 12:15 pm**

Block D of concurrent sessions (workshops)

Bloc D des séances simultanées (ateliers)

*D1 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Empowering Digital Literacy: Success Stories, Best Practices, and Program Impact**

This workshop will showcase the transformative impact of the Digital Literacy Exchange Program (DLEP) in fostering digital skills acquisition in the Settlement Sector. Through best practices, instructor and learner testimonials, and evaluation results, participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the program's successes and challenges. The session will highlight contributions from delivery partner organizations, including SUCCESS, CCIS, ACCT, GEO NS, and ACS-Metropolis, providing attendees with actionable insights into program delivery, outcomes, and effective strategies for digital literacy education.

- **Miraaj Yousif**, ACCT
- **Josie Lake**, GEO NS
- **Brenda Lavandier**, GEO NS
- ACCT Client (TBC)
- **Paul Holley**, Metropolis Institute
- **Sarah Kooi**, Metropolis Institute

*D2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Bridging the Gap: Integrating Internationally Trained Professionals into Canada's Labour Market with Internships and Bonds**

Join us for an interactive workshop on overcoming the “no experience without a job” cycle for internationally trained professionals (ITPs). We'll explore two innovative pilot projects using employment bonds and internships to integrate skilled newcomers into Canada's labour market. Discover research findings, project outcomes, and best practices while engaging with program staff and employers. Together, we'll discuss strategies to enhance employer and public understanding of migration and effectively share research to support newcomers in a rapidly changing environment, ensuring Canada remains competitive in attracting global talent.

- Session Moderator: **Samantha Iyere** , Achēv
- **Ayesha Bhikha** , Achēv
- **Kim Lehrer** , SRDC
- **Larry Chan**, MOSAIC
- **Anna McBeth** , ISANS

*D3 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**For a Vibrant Francophonie**

Francophone immigration is crucial for maintaining the demographic weight of French speakers in Canada. Strong cooperation among all stakeholders is required for providing appropriate settlement services, successful integration and retention of these newcomers. The “by and for” approach to the Francophone Integration Pathway (FIP) is vital for meeting the needs of francophone immigrants, as it fosters trust and cultural awareness between immigrants and service providers. We present the results of a project that has been designed to raise awareness and provide resources for the successful integration of Francophones in Alberta.

- **Hervé Stéclebout**, La Cité des Rocheuses

*D4 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**The Humanitarian Pathway for the Americas: A Pre-Arrival Services Response**

This presentation, Facilitated by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Pre-Arrival Services will detail the IRCC-funded Humanitarian Pathways for the Americas (HPA) Initiative. This initiative addresses irregular migration from the Western Hemisphere and the specific settlement challenges of newcomers from Colombia, Venezuela, and Haiti. We will discuss the strategies and collaborations that play a vital role in providing a flexible client-centered approach to services in their first language. We will share insights, best practices, and experiences that highlight the initiative’s efforts to create optimal settlement conditions for this specific client group.

- **Kevin Yazdi**, Settlement Practitioner Lead
- **Diego Salazar**, Settlement Practitioner

**Reflections on the E-Start Program: Lessons Learned and Future Implications**

This presentation, facilitated by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Pre-Arrival Services, will reflect on the experience and knowledge gained through the IRCC-funded E-Start Program. We will share key insights, successes, and challenges from our work supporting pre-arrival refugees with employment information and settlement resources.

Attendees will explore strategies to improve pre-arrival employment services and refugee integration programs, focusing on the lasting impact of E-Start and its potential to inspire future pre-arrival services and refugee integration initiatives

- **Ghaith Sheikh**, SUCCESS
- **Mark Batt**, SUCCESS

*D5 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Supporting Internationally Educated Healthcare Professionals: Cross-sector collaboration to**

## **address Canada's health workforce needs**

This panel presentation explores how cross-sector partnerships support skilled immigrants in Canada's healthcare sector. Highlighting the International Pharmacy Graduate Mentorship and Integration Project and the Health English Language Pro project, it showcases innovative approaches to workforce integration, licensure challenges, and employer engagement. These initiatives demonstrate the power of collaboration between professional associations and immigrant-serving organizations to align supports with newcomers' professional needs, foster connections, and build capacity in Canada's health workforce, ensuring meaningful employment and building capacity in Canada's health workforce.

- **Cameron Moser** , ACCES Employment
- **Eva Grunfeld** , University of Toronto
- **Kelsey Skromeda** , Canadian Pharmacists Association

### *D6 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Debunking Myths, Embracing Diversity: A Collaborative Approach to Religious Literacy**

The Saskatoon Open Door Society, the Regina Open Door Society, and the Centre for Civic Religious Literacy are co-launching a project to support settlement agencies and partners in Saskatchewan. It aims to reduce growing polarization and tensions around cultural and religious diversity by building mutual understanding and promoting reconciliation. The project will include past and present perspectives, religious literacy training—an intersectional lens that includes a set of knowledge and skills to engage religious, spiritual, and non-religious identities—and a local Advisory Council. The organizations seek collaborators to enhance the initiative's impact and broaden its reach across the province.

- **Doris Wang**, Saskatoon Open Door Society
- **W. Y. Alice Chan**, The Centre for Civic Religious Literacy

### *D7 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Beyond the Brochure: Information Delivery for International Students**

Access to accurate, timely information is crucial for international students as they navigate the complexities of education and immigration in Canada. This panel will examine the availability and reliability of information from the perspective of international students and information providers. It will also include findings from a research project that is mapping the international student information ecosystem. In the session, speakers will address strengths, gaps, and problem areas. It will also be an opportunity to discuss what is needed to improve information access, with the goal of better supporting international student success across the entire study journey.

- **Session Moderator: Erin Rose**, The Conference Board of Canada
- **Kathryn Dennler**, World Education Services, "Information, Misinformation, and Missing

Information: Mapping the Ecosystem”

- **Ashmita Sandhu**, World Education Services, “Recruitment in India: A Visual Tour”
- **Lisa Griffin Ndour**, World Education Services, “Reflections on Providing Legal Information and Services to International Students”
- **Isaac Garcia-Sitton**, Toronto Metropolitan University, “From Admission to Belonging: Improving Support Systems for International Student Success”

*D8 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **Unlocking Generative AI: Innovative Technology for Newcomer Support**

Generative AI is reshaping the future of immigration and newcomer services. This engaging roundtable will spark bold conversations about how AI can revolutionize settlement practices, address integration challenges, and unlock new opportunities for collaboration. Through practical examples and facilitated discussion, we'll explore innovative applications of technology in support of integration and settlement, tackle ethical dilemmas, and co-create strategies to build an inclusive, technology-enabled immigration system that empowers newcomers and strengthens communities across Canada.

- **Mark Patterson**, Magnet

*D9 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **Training for the future – Forecasting staff development needs with micro-credential lessons learned**

Shorter funding cycles and staffing instability with turn-over may be experienced alongside acute social needs of large cohorts of new arrivals. This session will explore, through a brief presentation and discussion, the potential of modular and cross-sectoral approaches to professional development to support rapid hiring of staff, increase retention and build cohesive approaches to service delivery across different organizations.

- Session Moderator: **Jessica Kwik**, United Way Greater Toronto - Peel Newcomer Strategy Group
- **Matt Rempel**, Sheridan College
- **Nadia Sokhan**, Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services
- **Priyanka Sheth**, Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre

*D10 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Exploring Inter-ethnic Relationships in the Canadian Settlement Sector**

A study on migrant experiences within settlement services examined inter-ethnic dynamics and their implications for migrant ethnicization and structural gaps. Comprehensive interviews with service providers and users (n = 80) were conducted across Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and



Montreal, as well as parallel funded sites in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Focus groups with migrants and outreach to Indigenous communities are further explored. Guided by a community panel, the research contributes to migration discourses, enhances organizational practices, and offers actionable strategies to improve newcomer integration and foster inclusive global community development.

- Session Moderator: **Dr. Ka Tat Tsang**, University of Toronto
- **Jemima Utami**, University of Toronto
- **Dr. Sean Lauer**, University of Toronto
- **Dr. Carla Hilario**, University of Toronto
- **Dr. Jill Hanley**, University of Toronto

*D11 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Promoting Access to Services and Supports for Temporary Foreign Workers in Ontario**

TNO - The Neighbourhood Organization's Worker Support Services (WSS) Program provides support to temporary foreign workers (TFWs) in collaboration with agencies across Ontario by:

- Helping TFW access accurate information & services including health, legal, & social services in their communities.

- Increasing education & empowering TFW to exercise their rights while in Canada.

- Supporting increased social, civic engagement & participation of TFW in their communities.

This session will present findings from an external evaluation of the WSS program, conducted by the Association for Canadian Studies and Metropolis Institute, to determine its effectiveness & the extent to which it empowers migrant workers.

- **Jennifer Rajasekar**, Manager of Newcomer Support Services, TNO
- **Paul Holley**, Research Director, Association for Canadian Studies & Metropolis Institute

*D12 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Filling Gaps in Service Delivery when working with Immigrant Families Experiencing Family Violence**

Participants will learn about innovative, collaborative approaches from the Prairies and hear how federal, provincial, and local stakeholders work together to create unique, coordinated community responses to Family Violence. CIAFV is comprised of non-profits, government departments, committees, and for-profits working together to improve the capacity of family violence professionals. IFVPC has created a groundbreaking online course that equips service providers with tools and strategies to better comprehend Coercive Control within immigrant families. The course covers definitions, dimensions, factors affecting immigrant families, tactics used, and how to identify red flags. Animated videos are used to enhance the participants' learning.

- Session Moderator: **Naheed Amjad-Minhas**, Senior Expert Prevention, Counselling

Therapist, Chair of Immigrant Family Violence Prevention Committee (IFVPC)

- **Nour Abdul-Rahim**, Research & Content Developer, Graduate Student, Islamic Family and Social Services Association, "Creating Learning Modules for Frontline Professionals working with Immigrant Families in the area of Family Violence"

*D13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Breaking Barriers: Strategies for Overcoming Resistance to Hiring Immigrant Talent in Smaller Centres**

Join Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) and Halifax Immigration Partnership (HIP/LIP) for a workshop on addressing employers' resistance to hiring immigrant talent. Hear from ISANS Employer Engagement experts and the HIP Project Manager as they share insights from Atlantic Canada. Learn about successful programs and strategies that helped employers in smaller centres diversify their workforce. Discover how these approaches can be applied in your community to foster inclusion, break down barriers, and encourage the hiring of immigrant talent. This session offers practical solutions to promote workforce diversity and overcome hiring challenges.

- **Joanna Stewart**, ISANS
- **Ariane Savi**, Halifax Immigration Partnership
- **Clifford MacDonald**, ISANS

*D14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Bridging Cultures Through Storytelling: Fostering Connection and Community**

This panel presentation will explore how storytelling can foster understanding between Indigenous and newcomer communities. We will feature 3 projects: "Common Territory," "Stories of Impact," and "Stories from the Land." "Common Territory" shares narratives from Indigenous peoples and newcomers in the Fraser Valley, BC, highlighting themes of displacement, cultural preservation, and resilience. "Stories of Impact" celebrates immigrant journeys from India, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Chile, and Colombia, showcasing their contributions and successes. "Stories from the Land" reflects on how Indigenous cultural protocols and traditional stories offer newcomers a unique opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue and strengthen community integration.

- **Session Moderator: Tina Balachandran**, Manager, Surrey Local Immigration Partnership
- **Diana Ospina**, Senior Manager, Surrey Local Immigration Partnership
- **Amy Van Bergen**, Coordinator, Abbotsford Local Immigration Partnership

*D15 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Bridging Health and Settlement: Community Health Ambassadors as a Model for Inclusive**

## Healthcare

Newcomers to Canada face a multitude of barriers when accessing the healthcare system, including cultural, linguistic, and systemic challenges. The Community Health Ambassador (CHA) model bridges this gap by empowering trained community members to provide first-language, culturally relevant health support and navigation. CHAs serve as vital connectors between newcomer communities and health systems, addressing disparities in preventive care and healthcare access. Developed in collaboration with CCIS, Praxus Health, and Health Commons Solutions Lab, this model highlights how cross-sectoral partnerships can empower newcomer communities, reduce barriers, and create inclusive, equitable healthcare interventions.

- **Amanda Koyama**, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- **Gina Vetro**, Praxus Health & Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- **Lydia-Joi Marshall**, Health Commons Solutions Lab

*D16 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Making Evaluation Simpler and GBA Plus Less Scary**

“Evaluation framework” sounds about as fun as watching paint dry. But it doesn't have to be! This workshop will explore how cross-sectoral collaboration can drive simple, effective, and meaningful evaluation processes aligned with GBA Plus. Drawing from experiences of some Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs)—what worked, what didn't, and why—you will learn: 1) how Southwestern Ontario LIPs developed a toolkit that simplifies GBA plus for practical use; 2) how a participatory co-design process can build capacity and make evaluation less intimidating, and; 3) how a community-driven approach ensures effective implementation.

- **Farheen Meraj**, Toronto North Local Immigration Partnership / JVS Toronto
- **Fiona Murray**, St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership / YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin
- **Mohammad Araf**, Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council / City of Hamilton

*D17 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

*Dockside 6, lower level, hotel*

### **Workplace Stress and Mental Health in the Settlement Sector**

Workplace stress and mental health challenges among Canadian settlement service providers have intensified, particularly in the aftermath of COVID-19, significantly impacting employee well-being. Despite the sector's critical role in integrating immigrants and refugees amid unprecedented migration, limited research exists on these issues. To address this gap, the Canadian Mental Health Association (Toronto branch), in collaboration with Toronto South Local Immigration, conducted an online survey of settlement sector employees. The study examines workplace stress, mental health, and contributing factors across demographic and

organizational contexts. This panel will highlight key findings and next steps to foster stability and growth.

- **Nadia Umadat**, Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership
- **Reuben Hodari Clarke**, Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership
- **Irma Molina**, Canadian Mental Health Association
- **Daniel Anckle**, Cecil Community Centre
- **Alisha Griffith**, Unified We Grow

**12:15 pm – 1:30 pm**

Lunch / Dîner

*Metropolitan Ballroom*

**1:45 pm – 3: 00 pm**

Block E of concurrent sessions (workshops)

Bloc E des séances simultanées (ateliers)

*E1 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

**Welcoming Newcomers: Promoting Integration through Community Connections. Sharing best practices and Lessons Learned.**

This session's objective is to discuss how community organisations and all other stakeholders can work together to improve the capacity for welcoming newcomers, particularly focusing on key issue – community integration, accessing community resources and adapt to culture. This theme is highlighted under key topics reflected in your call for papers.

We will share best practices of the Community Connection program under Settlement Services at ISSofBC. Specific focus will be talking about our experience and best practices on how stakeholders and partnerships can help newcomers to build and enhance social connections, built sense of belonging and learn Canadian culture while building a new identity and life in receiving community.

- **Elmir Ismayilov**, ISSofBC
- **Ajlin Mehmedi**, ISSofBC

*E2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un pane*

**Funding and Program Evaluation: Meeting Funder Expectations**

Metropolis Evaluations

- **Paul Holley**, Metropolis Institute
- **Sarah Kooi**, Metropolis Institute

*E3 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Une approche inclusive dans les services d'établissement pour les Immigrant-e-s francophones 2SLGBTQIA+**

L'atelier proposé par FrancoQueer vise à améliorer l'accueil et l'intégration des immigrant-e-s francophones 2SLGBTQIA+ en Ontario. Il met l'accent sur l'inclusivité et la sensibilisation des organismes pour créer un environnement sécuritaire et respectueux, adapté aux besoins des personnes nouvellement arrivées. Les participant-e-s apprendront à reconnaître les défis spécifiques auxquels font face ces immigrant-e-s et découvriront des stratégies, notamment l'offre active de services, pour rendre les établissements plus inclusifs. L'atelier vise également à fournir des outils pratiques pour optimiser l'intervention et l'accompagnement des personnes 2SLGBTQIA+ immigrantes francophones en dehors du Québec.

- **Georgelie Berry**, FrancoQueer
- **Ruth Stacy Emmanuel**, FrancoQueer

*E4 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Best practices for employers to hire immigrants**

This session includes various perspectives on how to support employers, especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to hire more immigrant talents. Since SMEs are the backbone of the Canadian economy, providing about 90% of employment in the private sector, it is critical to empower SMEs to hire and retain immigrants. Our presentations explore the effectiveness of innovative approaches, such as a social resilience lens, the adoption of employer-driven skills training and employment services, needs assessment of local SMEs, and wraparound supports, in the ecosystem.

- **John Shields**, Professor Emeritus, Politics and Public Administration, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Patrick MacKenzie**, CEO, Immigrant Employer Council of British Columbia, IECBC
- **Tony Fang**, Professor of Economics, Memorial University of Newfoundland
- **Guang Ying Mo**, Director, Diversity Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University

*E5 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Canada's Education-Migration Policy Nexus: Tapping into Talent, Cashcows, or Scapegoats?**

Canada's international students have found themselves on a rapid rollercoaster of immigration policy changes. Recently, the federal government introduced sweeping measures within the fragmented policy landscape of education and immigration. After years of concerns about the integrity of Canada's international student program, the higher education now sector faces greater challenges with restrictive immigration policies, caps on international students, intensifying global competition, and shifts in post-pandemic mobility. This workshop explores

Canada's education migration policy nexus with presentations on the global talent race, international student revenues and recruitment, recent policy reforms, and the role of higher education in selecting prospective immigrants to Canada.

- **Emily Gong**, Senior Development Officer, PhD candidate, University of Toronto, *Canada's Talent Race: Evolving Strategies and Barriers in Higher Education*
- **Yazhu (Evelyn) Lin**, PhD Candidate & Administrator, University of Toronto, *International Students in Canada: Immigration, Education, and Subsidizing a Domestic Market*
- **Pranay Reddy**, Career Coach, International Students, Western University & PhD Candidate, University of Toronto, *Arresting the Falling Dominos: Rethinking Canada's International Education Strategy*,
- **Ashley Manuel**, PhD Candidate & Graduate Research Assistant, University of Toronto, *Unintended Gatekeeping: Exploring Canadian Higher Education's Role in Immigrant Selection*

*E6 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **Empowering Immigrants: Building Community and Driving Innovation Through Conversation and Volunteering**

An engaging workshop that combines the power of conversation and volunteerism to support immigrant integration and community building. Learn effective methods to facilitate English conversation circles that foster inclusivity and engagement and discover how volunteering can enhance economic growth and drive innovation. This session will highlight best practices, success stories, and strategies to create welcoming spaces and empower newcomers, contributing to a more informed, cohesive, and prosperous Canadian society.

- **Elsie Decena**, Volunteer Advocate

*E7 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Cross-Sectoral Collaboration for Long-Term Growth: Empowering Skilled Newcomers for Canada's Sustainability Economy**

This session highlights the transformative partnership between CCIS and Creative Links Inc., which equips skilled newcomers to integrate into sustainability careers. By addressing workforce gaps in Alberta's energy sector, this initiative fosters economic growth and combats anti-immigration sentiment, showcasing the vital contributions of newcomers to Canada's net-zero transition. Presenters will explore how innovative programs promote diversity, build pathways for inclusive economic participation, and demonstrate immigrant talent's role in driving long-term success in Canada's sustainability economy. The session will also share lessons learned and strategies for improving employment outcomes and fostering collaboration in evolving industries, offering practical insights for stakeholders.

- **Hasmik Asmaryan**, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society , “Driving Economic Participation for Newcomers Through Cross-Sectoral Collaboration: Insights from CCIS Programs”
- **Cheryl Knight**, Creative Links Inc., “Leveraging Labour Market Insights: Enhancing STEM Newcomer Fit for Careers in Sustainable Energy Sectors”

#### *E8 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

##### **Combating Anti-Immigrant Sentiment with Evidence**

Take action to combat anti-immigrant sentiment with evidence and lived experience. Join us for three research-driven presentations highlighting the critical need for equitable settlement services, effective employment programs for racialized newcomers, and the significant contributions of newcomer employment to the Canadian economy with the support of employment services. These examples showcase how research with the collaboration between government, settlement practitioners, and independent researchers can inform meaningful policy. Together, let's promote informed, inclusive dialogue that supports newcomers and strengthens Canada as a whole.

- **Sol Park** , Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, “Co-designing with immigrants and service providers to recognize and address racism and oppression in the settlement sector”
- **Taylor Shek-wai Hui** , Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, “Uncovering the realities of discrimination and oppression in employment for racialized newcomer women—Insights from a collaborative research project”
- **Audrey Appiah** , Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, “The need, effectiveness, and value for money of employment services for newcomers – evidence from a population database”

#### *E9 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

##### **Pathways to Protection: Canada's Immigration Levels Plan and Resettlement Support for Human Rights and Women Rights Defenders.**

Canada's new immigration levels plan emphasizes sustainable growth and a transformative approach to immigration pathways. This workshop examines the plan's impact on Government-assisted Refugees (GARs), with a focus on human rights defenders (HRDs) and women's rights defenders in need of protection. Participants will explore tailored pathways for temporary and permanent residency, strategies to enhance resettlement support systems, and approaches to advocate for unmet needs. The session will delve into the unique risks faced by HRDs, highlight integration mechanisms, and foster dialogue on strengthening Canada's commitment to human rights through inclusive and innovative immigration policies.

- **Hamidullah Muazam**, Centre for Newcomers (CFN)

- **Aziz Rafiee**, Afghanistan Civil Society Forum-org (ACSFo)

*E10 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Pushing Boundaries: How Cross-Sector Collaboration Strengthens the Sector**

Collaboration across sectors and new, unconventional funding sources are not only essential to meet the needs of newcomers but also benefit the sector at large. In this workshop, a settlement agency, employment agency, and mental health agency will highlight three case studies of innovative, successful collaborations that prove this statement to be true. Through these partnerships and varied funding streams, we increased service capacity in housing, employment, and mental health and trauma services to meet the needs of newcomers. These initiatives serve as examples of how we need to push boundaries to survive funding changes and meet future needs.

- **Elise Herzig**, Executive Director, JIAS Toronto
- **Ana Bernstein**, Director, Newcomer Employment Services, JVS Toronto
- **Brenton Diaz**, Coordinator, Newcomers Health & Wellbeing Program, Cedar Centre

*E11 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Building Resilient Communities: Addressing Anti-Immigrant Sentiment through Civic Engagement**

This presentation will showcase the Journeys to Active Citizenship project, which empowers newcomers to actively engage in Canadian civic life while fostering cross-cultural understanding. We will explore how the program equips participants with tools to counter discrimination and racism, building their capacity to address anti-immigrant sentiment in their communities. By highlighting innovative activities such as combating misinformation and fostering dialogue on shared values, the session will emphasize collaboration between service providers, policymakers, and researchers. Attendees will gain actionable strategies for reframing cross-cultural dialogues and promoting inclusive communities amidst growing polarization.

- **Paul Bishop**, North York Community House
- **Rustam Zadran**, New York Community House

*E12 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Whose job is it anyway ? Immigrant labour market transitions as a multi-stakeholder game**

How can newcomers overcome barriers to meaningful employment, and what role do employers and educators play in their success? This panel dives into new research on newcomer journeys, employer hiring practices, and the role of post-secondary institutions in workforce integration. Panelists will highlight strategies to align newcomers' skills with job market demands and explore how cross-sector collaboration can tackle systemic challenges.



Participants will gain insights on:

- 1) Barriers newcomers, employers, and post-secondary institutions face
- 2) Strategies for cross-sector alignment
- 3) Recommendations for sustainable workforce integration

- **Erin Rose**, Senior Research Associate, Education & Skills, The Conference Board of Canada, “Enhancing Study-to-Work Transitions for International College Students through Campus Career and Employment Support”
- **Alice Craft**, Research Associate, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada, “Small Business, Big Impact: Immigrant Hiring and Integration in Five Canadian Cities + Forthcoming research from the Centre for Business Insights on Immigration”
- **Laura Lam**, Researcher, Toronto Metropolitan University and PhD Candidate, University of Toronto, “Not All Platform Work is Equal: Migrants’ Labour Market Experiences Between ‘Relational’ and ‘Non-Relational’ Platform Work”
- **Rania Younes**, Senior Manager of Employer Networks and National Engagement, IEC-BC, “Engaging SMEs: National Business Networks and Local Design Perspectives: Insights and Lessons Learned from IEC-BC’s Service Delivery Improvement Project”

*E13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d’un panel*

### **From Coast to Coast to Coast: Supporting Smaller Urban and Rural Communities in Targeted Immigrant Attraction**

The Connecting Canada project helped pre-arrival immigrants make more informed choices about where to settle in Canada, and when they were informed, significantly more of them chose to settle in smaller urban and rural communities. This project will relaunch in 2025 with a focus on developing communities’ newcomer attraction capacity and producing modular place-based marketing materials that communities can leverage in their newcomer attraction activities. In this workshop, panelists will delve into the lessons learned from Connecting Canada, explore how place-based marketing can support immigrant attraction in smaller communities, and put forward several models for how communities can effectively collaborate in attracting newcomer talent.

- Session Moderator: **Sue Sadler**, ACCES Employment
- **Cameron Moser**, ACCES Employment, “Connecting Canada from Coast to Coast to Coast”
- **Julie Rodier**, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, “everaging Lessons Learned in Connecting Canada Phase 2”
- **Mohamed Bagha**, Saint John Newcomers Centre, “Building a community-oriented approach to newcomer attraction in Saint John, New Brunswick”
- **Gerard Keledjian**, New Horizons Media, “Helping communities tell their stories through place based marketing”
- **Mike Prociw**, Lethbridge Economic Development, “An Economic Development Lens for Immigrant Attraction in Lethbridge, Alberta”

*E14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**L'accueil des réfugiés ukrainiens au Canada et en France : un accueil des réfugiés ukrainiens en France et au Canada, dans un contexte de crise politique toujours en cours.**

Nous analyserons les ajustements des programmes d'accueil dans ces deux pays.

- **Moderatrice: Corinne Prince**, Institut Metropolis
- **Yves Fradier**, Directeur Grandes Enquetes et Méthodes chez Verian, Paris School of Business
- **Gregory Sharun**, Directeur - Ukraine, IRCC

*E15 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Ensuring Innovative Technology Supports a People-First Approach to Language Assessment: Achév's CLBPA Example**

Come on a journey to learn how innovative applications of technology were included in developing a low-stakes CLB-based language assessment tool that will support immigrants across Canada, including many in remote locations. We will explore how the team applied a people-first strategy, prioritizing innovations that reduce routine labor-intensive work and enhance person-to-person contact. Using a custom-built solution that includes integrated video capability and aspects of non-invasive fraud detection, the assessment can be administered remotely between assessors and learners as if they were in the same room. These innovations create faster access to national data for stakeholders and provide immigrants faster paths to language training

- **Natalie Renton**, Achev

*E16 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

**Settlement, Belonging, and Retention among Immigrants in and outside Quebec**

Papers on this panel examine the decision-making process of immigrants in and outside Quebec to decide where to settle in Canada as well as on the factors that shape retention after settlement, with a special emphasis on the role of belonging, exclusionary experiences and mental health. The results are discussed in the context of the federal government's Immigration Levels Plan and, in particular, the implications for Canada and Quebec's francophone immigration strategies. This panel is organized by the Immigration Research Initiative funded by the Secrétariat du Québec aux relations canadiennes.

- **Colin Scott**, Concordia University, "Deciding where to live: Community selection and settlement choices among Francophone and French-speaking immigrants to Canada"
- **Momoka Sunohara**, Concordia University, "Mental Health of Immigrants in Quebec: An Analysis of Parent-Child Relationships"
- **Carolina Reyes Marquez**, University of Toronto, "The Multilevel Governance of Immigrant

Integration Policymaking in Canada”

- **Antoine Bilodeau**, Concordia University, “Identity, Recognition, and Immigrant Retention in Quebec”
- **Stephen White**, Carleton University, “Identity, Recognition, and Immigrant Retention in Quebec”

*E17 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

*Dockside 6, lower level, hotel*

### **Industry-Community Strategies to Support Settlement in the North**

A well-documented set of factors including work permits, English language proficiency, transferable skills and experience, transportation, healthcare and childcare can present a dynamic set of barriers to successful settlement and employment in Ontario. A general housing and affordability crisis in Ontario’s urban centres can make these challenges even more acute.

This panel will explore the growing opportunities, and critical priority, to support settlement in Canada’s North. Panelists will discuss how employment service system managers (SSM’s), settlement, economic development and industry leaders are collaborating between Northern and Southern Ontario to provide viable, welcoming, pathways toward settlement and resilience.

- Moderator: **Adam Morrison**, Serco Canada
- **Sue Sadler**, ACCESS Employment, *Using an "All of the Above" Approach to Northern Settlement*
- **Oleksandr Bakal**, Atikokan Economic Development Corporation, *The Atikokan Refugee Initiative*
- **Chanelle Pepin**, Serco-EmployNext, *Sector Partnerships and Community Navigation in Northern Ontario*

### **3:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

Break / Visit the Exhibitors Booths and Poster Presentations - *Metropolitan Ballroom East*

Pause / Visite des Kiosques des exposants et des Présentations d'affiches - *Metropolitan Ballroom Est*

### **3:30 pm – 4:45 pm**

Block F of concurrent sessions (workshops)

Bloc F des séances simultanées (ateliers)

*F1 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

## **Counteracting Polarization: The Role of Cultural Brokers in Bridging Divides**

This workshop seeks to address the growing anti-immigrant sentiment in Canada and its negative impact on newcomers and society at large. Cultural Brokers, who navigate cultural and systemic barriers, are uniquely positioned to facilitate cross-cultural understanding, combat discrimination, and promote inclusivity. The session will focus on fostering collaboration among service providers, policymakers, and researchers to develop actionable strategies for countering polarization and reframing cross-cultural dialogues.

- **Traicy Robertson**, Newcomer Navigation and Support Unit, Manitoba Possible, MB
- **Samantha Lee**, National Cultural Broker Project
- **TBD**, Cultural Broker from Umbrella Multicultural Health Brokers Coop, BC
- **TBD**, Researcher from Laurentian University, ON

### *F2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Navigating Success: Empowering SMEs for Inclusive Hiring**

This panel presents the transformative potential and impact of the Employer Navigator Pilot Project, a collaboration between World Education Services (WES) and the Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC). Aimed at enhancing the labor market integration of immigrants and refugees across Canada, this project blends digital tools with customized services to empower employers and improve immigrant workforce integration. Discover how this innovative model can foster cross-sector collaboration, enhance coordinated services, and drives better employment outcomes for immigrants.

- **Session Moderator: Jessie Castello**, WES
- **Rania Younes**, IEC-BC, "Novel Approach to Employer Engagement"
- **Daniel Cervan-Gil**, WES, "The #ImmigrantsWork Initiative's Next Phase with Community Co-Design"
- **Manu Varma**, Head of People and Culture at SWITCH Energy

### *F3 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Renforcer la capacité du secteur de l'établissement afin de mieux répondre aux besoins en santé mentale des communautés francophones : meilleures pratiques, services inclusifs et renforcement des liens communautaires.**

Le Projet sur la santé mentale des immigrants et des réfugiés (PSMIR), une initiative nationale bilingue financée par IRCC, renforce la capacité des secteurs de la santé et de l'établissement afin soutenir la santé mentale des immigrants et des réfugiés. Il offre des formations en ligne, des outils et ressources tout en collaborant avec des leaders du secteur de l'établissement. Le volet francophone du projet se focalise sur les besoins uniques des fournisseurs de services francophones à travers le Canada. Reconnaisant les divers besoins du secteur, cet atelier présentera les meilleures pratiques pour des services inclusifs dans les communautés

francophones.

- **Sophia Mangala**, Bureau de l'équité en matière de santé, Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale (CAMH), *Renforcer les capacités du secteur pour les communautés francophones : le Projet sur la Santé Mentale des Immigrants et des Réfugiés.*
- **Luisa Veronis**, Département de géographie, environnement et géomatique, Université d'Ottawa, *"Le rôle clé des espaces communautaires dans l'intégration des immigrants francophones en contexte minoritaire : constats après une décennie de recherche"*
- **Christian Hirwa**, ; Directeur du Réseau TNO Santé NWT Francophone | Health Network Director; La Fédération franco-ténoise; *Accès à des services de santé mentale adaptés pour les nouveaux arrivants francophones : une approche culturelle et linguistique axée sur la personne.*

*F4 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Community-Based Models for Supporting Refugee Claimants in Ontario**

This session will present innovative approaches to serving refugee claimants in Ontario via three case studies: 1) Community Collaboration in Niagara: Coordinating services and leveraging support to assist refugee claimants in hotels in Niagara. 2) FCJ Refugee Centre's Ground-Up Approach: Addressing systemic challenges faced by uprooted individuals in Toronto. 3) The Asylum Seeker Assistance Program (ASAP): Integrated housing, resettlement and employment services in Hamilton.

Highlighting diverse roles of community-based organizations and best practices and challenges in the context of limited government funding and rising anti-refugee sentiments, this session will interest service providers, policymakers and researchers alike.

- Session Moderator: **Madeleine Nerenberg**, KEYS Employment & Newcomer Services
- **Janet Madume**, Welland Heritage Council & Multicultural Centre, "Collaboration in Action: Supporting Refugee Claimants through Coordinated Services in Niagara"
- **Rashed Afif**, Wesley Urban Ministries, "Asylum Seekers Assistance Program: Combining Housing, Resettlement and Employment Services for Refugee Success"
- **Tsering Lhamo**, FCJ Refugee Centre "Walking with Uprooted People: FCJ Refugee Centre's Ground-Up Approach to Tackling Systemic Challenges"

*F5 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Innovation and Entrepreneurship for Immigrants in Canada**

The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) often leaves refugees overly dependent on government support, hindering integration and psychological growth away from sustainable employment. To address this, the Refugee Empowerment and Independence Training Program (REITP) is proposed, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4, 8, and 10. Over three months, REITP offers coaching in two areas: "Personal Growth," enhancing self-efficacy, resilience, acculturation, and language skills (SDG 4: Quality Education), and "Professional Development," enabling meaningful employment (SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic

Growth).REITP fosters independence, reduces inequalities (SDG 10), and supports refugees' social and economic integration into Canada.

- **Mehran Rostamzadeh**, Professor, Department of medical Office Assistance, RCB college

*F6 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Collaborations among Immigrant-Serving Organizations: Bridging Legal Gaps and Improving Youth Wellbeing**

As Canada's immigration and funding ecosystem evolve, nonprofits remain critical to the wellbeing and legal protection of newcomers, including refugee claimants and individuals in precarious legal status. This panel of researchers, practitioners, and graduate students will discuss the landscape of nonprofits in addressing legal protections and fostering psycho-social wellbeing. The discussion brings together practitioner perspectives with place-based data examples from British Columbia. In reviewing research on interventions supporting newcomer youth mental health, the panel will identify crucial resources and resource gaps. Implications will be drawn for nonprofit collaborations with recommendations on bridging identified resource gaps.

- **Session Moderator: Afshan Paarlberg**, University of British Columbia
- **Hannah Feng**, University of Victoria
- **Sara Sehic**, AMSSA

*F7 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Optimizing Newcomer Support: Leveraging Data and Research for Impact**

This workshop explores how ISC leverages data and research to optimize operations, guide leadership decisions, and shape policies for enhancing newcomer services. Participants will learn how ISC data supports leadership in monitoring organizational performance and aligning strategies with goals; operational teams in tracking client progress, identifying service gaps, and delivering tailored support; and the research team in generating actionable insights, identifying trends, and making evidence-based recommendations. Preliminary findings from an institutional ethnography study will also be shared, exploring how Gateway processes and Planners sustain client-centered approaches while addressing neoliberal constraints. Practical strategies and

- **Vibha Kaushik**, Immigrant Services Calgary, "From Data to Decisions: Leveraging Dashboards for Organizational Impact"
- **Zohaib Ajaz Faridi**, Immigrant Services Calgary, "From Data to Decisions: Leveraging Dashboards for Organizational Impact"
- **Megan Gill**, University of Calgary, "Balancing Client-Centered Approaches with Systemic Constraints: nsights from Institutional Ethnography"
- **Jeff Halvorsen**, University of Calgary, "Balancing Client-Centered Approaches with Systemic Constraints: nsights from Institutional Ethnography"
- **Ajwang Warriall**, University of Calgary, "Balancing Client-Centered Approaches with Systemic Constraints: nsights from Institutional Ethnography"

*F8 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Collaborative Approaches to Rural Development: How collaboration between urban, francophone and rural Saskatchewan communities is leading to sustainable rural development**

This workshop explores how the synergy between urban, Francophone, and rural communities in Saskatchewan fosters sustainable rural development. It highlights collaborative efforts that address unique rural challenges, enhance economic opportunities, and promote cultural sustainability. Special focus will be placed on the role of Francophone communities in driving social cohesion and innovation. Attendees will gain insights into effective strategies and partnerships that contribute to resilient, inclusive, and thriving rural areas in Saskatchewan.

- **Janvi Tuteja**, SAISIA
- **Kira Epp**, SAISIA

*F9 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

**Roots of Resilience: How Islamic Spirituality Inspires Healing and Mental Wellbeing in Canadian Muslim Youth**

This study explores the challenges that Canadian Muslim youth (CMY) face in accessing culturally relevant mental health services, emphasizing Islamic spirituality as a vital coping mechanism. It recommends promoting Islamic counseling, fostering community trust, and combating structural anti-Muslim racism. Key Islamic principles—such as trust in Allah (Tawakkul), resilience (Sabr), and gratitude (Shukr)—are highlighted for their potential in enhancing well-being. The findings offer practical strategies for social workers, mental health professionals, and policymakers to integrate spiritual values into care, advancing preventive approaches and early interventions tailored to the needs of Muslim communities

- **Sarah Abouali**, University of Calgary
- **Abdul-Jawwad Al-Shawwa**, University of Calgary
- **Danial Jamal**, University of Calgary

*F10 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**From Click to Career: Harnessing Technology to Deliver Transformative Employment and Mentorship Experiences for Newcomers**

Non-profit organizations like JVS Toronto and The Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) are leading the way in creating innovative events that connect newcomers with meaningful mentorship and employment opportunities. This workshop will showcase their partnership with vFairs as a technology platform to deliver hybrid and in-person events, such as JVS Toronto's Bridges to Career Success and ICTC's Beyond the Cloud. Learn how these organizations use innovative approaches to bridge the gap between newcomers and employers, foster professional connections and empower immigrants to thrive in Canada's job

market

- **Muhammad Younas**, “Engaging Newcomers: The Power of Events”
- **Irene Vaksman**, JVS Toronto, “Case Study: JVS Toronto’s Virtual and Hybrid events”
- **Sharvari Jois**, JVS Toronto, “Case Study: JVS Toronto’s Virtual and Hybrid events”
- **Heileen Arias**, CTC-CTIC, “Case Study: ICTC’s Beyond the Cloud event”

*F11 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **Leveling the Playing Field: How Coaching and Sports Create**

Sports promote newcomer integration by fostering cross-cultural understanding, breaking barriers, and building shared identities. Amid rising anti-immigrant sentiment, sports provide a platform for inclusive dialogue and collaboration among service providers, policymakers, and researchers, helping combat discrimination and polarization. Becoming a coach amplifies this impact, empowering newcomers to lead, mentor, and build community connections. Through coaching, immigrants enhance leadership skills while contributing to cross-cultural dialogue, bridging divides, and creating inclusive spaces. Together, sports and coaching offer powerful tools to counter prejudice, promote unity, and build resilient, welcoming communities across Canada.

- **Jon Yee**, Centre for Newcomers
- **Isabelle Cayer**, Coaching Association of Canada

*F12 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Local Collaboration for Refugee Claimant Services**

Services for refugee claimants are generally not funded by the federal government and many of the organizations providing the most support to this population have struggled with resources and disconnection, but that is rapidly changing. This workshop will explore this service challenge through the examination of a new approach to supporting refugee claimants in Ottawa. The Collective Impact Initiative for Refugee Claimants (CIIRC) is a community-led effort aimed at addressing service barriers through collaboration, innovation, and equity-focused solutions.

Participants will learn about CIIRC’s model, its initial achievements, ongoing learning, and the challenges encountered in building a collaborative framework for refugee claimant support

- **Louisa Taylor**, Refugee 613
- *Additional panelists to be confirmed*

*F13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Applying Service Design to the Dedicated Needs and Assets Assessment and Referral Services Journey**



This interactive workshop introduces the potential of service design principles as the Dedicated Needs and Assets Assessment and Referral Services (NAARS) Service Provider (DNS) model unfolds through communities of practice (COP).

We will cover how to leverage practical tools such as personas, journey mapping, ideation, prototyping, and co-creation. Attendees will be able to take back actionable frameworks to build informed, equitable, client-centered, and efficient DNS service pathways in their own community. Join us to explore innovative piloted approaches for a seamless and inclusive settlement journey for newcomers while enhancing sector collaboration and capacity through Settlement Success, Together with the WE Value Partnership.

- **Matthew Dunlop**, YMCA of Southwestern Ontario

*F14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Newcomers and Media**

This session will focus on the importance of understanding newcomers to Canada (arriving in the past 5 years) and their consumption of media and technology. Understanding how newcomers are engaging with Canadian (and foreign) media, the platforms and devices they use to consume content and their trust in news sources is critical when it comes to information sharing, hiring, education and community engagement.

- **Andrea Sharkey**, CBC/Radio-Canada

*F15 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **L'approche actionnelle où la langue française au service de l'immersion et de l'intégration des nouveaux arrivants dans la société Canadienne**

Thème 5. La présentation portera sur l'approche actionnelle mise en œuvre par le Centre d'apprentissage des langues du CCNB. Cette approche pédagogique préconise l'utilisation de situations réalistes et significatives, facilitant ainsi l'acquisition de compétences linguistiques dans des contextes authentiques et directement applicables. L'enseignement intègre aussi des aspects culturels favorisant l'immersion et l'intégration des apprenants. Cette approche collaborative vise à offrir une expérience d'apprentissage inclusive et ancrée dans les réalités linguistiques et socioculturelles des apprenants adultes issus de l'immigration. Elle contribue directement au développement des compétences linguistiques afin de faciliter leur intégration.

- **Nicole Poirier**, Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)
- **Mehdi El Idrissi**, Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)

*F16 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **What's Old is New – Navigating Xenophobic Discourses in Canada**

Featuring presentations from leaders in the post-secondary, settlement, and non-profit sectors,

this workshop will explore the worrying rise of anti-immigrant sentiment that has emerged in recent years in Canada. Although migrants have long had an outsized impact on the economic, social, cultural, and political development of Canada, they have served as convenient scapegoats in times of heightened socio-economic and political turbulence in this country. As such, this workshop will compare and contrast contemporary anti-immigrant narratives with those that emerged in past crises, and will challenge participants to develop their own strategies for combating racism and xenophobia today.

- **Session Moderator: Alexandru Calderaru**, NorQuest College, “International Students in Canada: An (In)Convenient Scapegoat”
- **Maria Angelica Quesada**, John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, “Digital Divides: How Contemporary Online Hate Reflects and Shapes Our Offline Interactions”
- **Oliver Kamau**, Edmonton Immigrant Services Association, “Fear of the Other: The Social Impact of Xenophobia on Immigrant Communities in Canada”

*F17 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

*Dockside 6, lower level, hotel*

### **The Value of The National Connector Program in your Community: Perspectives of Four Executive Directors**

In this fireside chat, Robyn Webb, National Connector Program Executive Director will chat with four Executive Directors currently hosting Connector Programs across Canada. They will discuss why they were inspired to host a Connector Program, what Connector brings to their organization, how they are supported by NCP, and how the Connector Program is contributing to their overall impact in their community.

Discussions will include adapting the Connector Program over time from a founding member, using Connector as an additional tool included with their overall workforce development initiatives of an Economic Development organization, implementing the program in rural settings, and experiences with the turn-key model from a new community.

- Session Moderator: **Robyn Webb**, Halifax Partnership
- **Enver Naidoo**, Westman Immigrant Services
- **Doug Piquette**, Edmonton Regional Immigrant Employment Council
- **Laura Aguirre Polo**, Amal Youth and Family Centre
- **Nausheen Ali**, Ignite Fredericton

## SATURDAY, MARCH 15 / SAMEDI 15 MARS

**7:30 am**

Frontenac Ballroom

### "Move for FUN"

#### **Special Physical Fitness Fun activity - Presented by Sports for Life**

Getting physically active doesn't have to be difficult! Engaging in physical activity offers numerous benefits for newcomers, including: building social connections and community, enhancing mental and physical well-being, and providing academic, economic, and career advantages. It also fosters inclusion and a sense of belonging.

Join us on Friday, March 14, and Saturday, March 15, at 7:30 a.m. in the Frontenac Ballroom to discover the benefits of physical activity through easy play. Come ready to move! No registration required

You will also find us at our exhibition table in the Metropolitan Ballroom East where you can get some cool tokens and learn more about our organization, Sport for Life.

#### **As of / À partir de 7:30 am**

Registration - Metropolitan Foyer

Inscriptions - Metropolitan Foyer

-

Visit the Exhibitors and Poster Presentations - Metropolitan Ballroom *East*

Visite des Kiosques des exposants et des Présentations d'affiches - Metropolitan Ballroom *Est*

#### **8:45 am – 9:00 am**

Metropolitan Ballroom

Plenary Session 3 / Séance plénière 3

#### **Global Cooperation on Migration**

In 2025, governments around the world face climate change, economic uncertainty, trade tensions, and cultural polarization. The recently inaugurated President Trump is holding Canada to account, by linking illegal migration and drug trafficking into the US to trade tariffs, heightening these issues for Canadians. Immigration is often cited as a solution to economic prosperity, yet it currently sits at the center of the possible collapse of the Canadian economy. How can we best manage waves of migrants from the US? How can we retain the highly skilled

talent we need for economic success? With reduced immigration levels and funding, can we continue to provide a safe haven for the world's most vulnerable? Is a new model needed for refugee/humanitarian migrant flows based on cooperation between sending and receiving countries? And how can Canada maneuver these challenges while maintaining the integrity of an Immigration Program that historically has been viewed as a beacon of hope.

- *Participants to be confirmed*

### **Coopération mondiale sur la question migratoire**

En 2025, les gouvernements du monde entier sont confrontés au changement climatique, à l'incertitude économique, aux tensions commerciales et à la polarisation culturelle. Récemment investi dans ses fonctions, le Président Trump tient le Canada pour responsable, en associant la migration illégale et le trafic de stupéfiants vers les États-Unis aux tarifs douaniers, exacerbant ainsi ces enjeux pour les Canadiens. L'immigration est souvent citée comme une solution à la prospérité économique, mais elle se trouve actuellement au cœur d'un éventuel effondrement de l'économie canadienne. Comment pouvons-nous gérer au mieux les flux de migrants en provenance des États-Unis ? Comment retenir les talents hautement qualifiés dont nous avons besoin pour réussir sur le plan économique ? Avec des niveaux d'immigration et des financements réduits, pouvons-nous continuer à offrir un refuge sûr aux personnes les plus vulnérables? Faut-il repenser les modèles de gestion des flux de réfugiés et de migrants humanitaires, en s'appuyant sur la coopération entre les pays d'origine et d'accueil ? Et comment le Canada peut-il relever ces défis tout en préservant l'intégrité d'un programme d'immigration historiquement perçu comme un symbole d'espoir ?

- *Participants à confirmer*

### **10:30 am – 11:00 am**

Break / Visit the Exhibitors Booths and Poster Presentations - Metropolitan Ballroom *East*  
Pause / Visite des Kiosques des exposants et des Présentations d'affiches - Metropolitan Ballroom *Est*

### **11:00 am – 12:15 pm**

Block G of concurrent sessions (workshops)  
Bloc G des séances simultanées (ateliers)

*G1 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Addressing Housing Needs for Newcomers- Government Sponsored Refugees (GARs) through Cross-Sectoral Collaboration**

This panel will share experience in addressing the housing needs of GARs with complex cases through cross-sectoral collaboration. It will explore how partnerships between SPOs and landlords, homeowners, local community and affordable home providers have led to successful housing solutions. By focusing on innovative approaches to affordability, cultural integration, and support services, we will highlight best practices and lessons learned in creating sustainable, inclusive housing for GARs. This presentation should provide valuable insights and concrete strategies for the development of effective approaches to house GARs in the future.

- **Hayat Ahmadzai**, Catholic Social Services Edmonton

*G2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **From Precarity to Security: Advancing Pathways to Citizenship and Equity in Child Welfare for Racialized Immigrant Families**

This roundtable convenes First Voice advocates, legal experts, and migration scholars to examine how systemic racism and immigration status affect racialized immigrants in Canada's child protection systems (CPS). We will discuss how structural exclusions and systemic racism drive the overrepresentation of noncitizen, Black, and racialized families involved in CPS and underscore the impact on immigrant settlement. Presenters will discuss strategies to better support Black and racialized immigrant families and share insights from grassroots campaigns, cross-sectoral collaboration, and policy advocacy to combat racism, promote pathways to citizenship, and implement equitable child welfare policies and practices.

- **Session Moderator: Rupaleem Bhuyan**, University of Toronto
- **Mandeep Kaur Mucina**, University of Victoria, "Aunties, cops & border(ing) agents: Everyday bordering of noncitizen children and their families through Canada's child welfare Systems"
- **Keishia Facey**, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, "Presenting child welfare and immigration statistics, and discussing how the OACAS Equity Department has addressed gaps in Duty to Report while exploring the impacts on immigration and other intersecting sectors."
- **Vania Patrick-Drakes**, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, "Presenting child welfare and immigration statistics, and discussing how the OACAS Equity Department has addressed gaps in Duty to Report while exploring the impacts on immigration and other intersecting sectors."
- **Liz Okai**, Peel CAS's Child Welfare Immigration Centre of Excellence, "Best practices for engaging children, youth and families experiencing immigration status issues within the Child welfare system"

- **Danielle Ungara**, Peel CAS's Child Welfare Immigration Centre of Excellence, "Best practices for engaging children, youth and families experiencing immigration status issues within the Child welfare system"
- **Demar Hewitt**, Black Legal Action Centre, "Advocating for Justice: Securing Citizenship for Black Children & Youth Disproportionately Impacted by Child Welfare and Immigration Policies"

*G3 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Une formation innovante et flexible dans un secteur en pleine croissance : l'enseignement du français langue seconde!**

Cette présentation portera sur le Microcertificat en enseignement du français langue seconde lancé par le Centre d'apprentissage des langues du CCNB. Financée par IRCC, cette formation en ligne est disponible dans l'ensemble du Canada depuis 2023. Elle a été conçue spécifiquement selon la perspective des communautés francophones en contexte minoritaire et de la diversité culturelle. Offerte de manière asynchrone avec accompagnement, elle compte présentement plus de 100 personnes inscrites. Son objectif principal est de développer les compétences pédagogiques des personnes enseignantes afin de mieux répondre aux besoins variés des personnes apprenantes et des communautés francophones.

- **Hélène Rochon**, CCNB, "Une formation innovante et flexible dans un secteur en pleine croissance : l'enseignement du français langue seconde!"
- **Mehdi Eldrissi**, CCNB, "Mon expérience vécue au cœur d'une formation innovante dans un secteur en pleine croissance : l'enseignement du français langue seconde"
- **Rébecca Huot**, CCNB, "Mon rôle de pédagogue au cœur d'une formation innovante dans un secteur en pleine croissance : l'enseignement du français langue seconde!"

*G4 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Internationally trained healthcare professionals**

Due to Canada's growing healthcare demands, aging population, and persistent labor shortages in the healthcare industry, international trained healthcare professionals (ITHP) are considered important resources that can fill gaps in the labour market. However, many ITHPs face various challenges in the labour market. This session starts with a macro-level study reflecting the labour market outcomes of ITHPs and changes in the professions over time. It is followed by presentations on various aspects of the topic, using a variety of methods, including a case study on pre-arrival services, a comprehensive review of barriers and enablers in the ecosystem, and policy recommendations.

- **Cameron Moser**, Access Employment
- **Arthur Sweetman**, Professor, Economics, McMaster University
- **Betina Borova**, Senior Research Associate, Diversity Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Joan Atlin**, Senior Director, Strategy, Policy, and Research, World Education Service

### *G5 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **La reconnaissance des compétences : une priorité pour tout**

Priorité de l'UNESCO, la reconnaissance des acquis, diplômes, expériences et compétences est un défi tant pour les personnes migrantes et exilées que pour les sociétés qui les accueillent. Au cours de cette séance, nous explorerons les initiatives mises de l'avant tant au Canada, qu'au sein d'organisations internationales comme l'Union africaine. Si l'idéal de mobilité de la CEDEAO se voit restreindre par des montées nationalistes, demeure-t-il un modèle ? Quels modèles créatifs le Canada a-t-il mis en place? Que peut-on faire de plus?

- Modératrice : **Raissa Sintcheu**, Institut Metropolis
- **Odette Bolly**, l'Union africaine
- **Maryam Assadi**, Analyste, World Education Services (WES)
- Immigrant qui a rencontré cette difficulté

### *G6 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **The Power of Knowledge: Engaging in Organizational Learning and Evaluation Capacity Building**

Evaluation capacity fosters an approach that focuses on results, helping organizations focus on achieving measurable results. Adopting this approach leads to greater success and progress toward desired outcomes. But where to start? Evaluation involves gathering data, analyzing insights, identifying areas for improvement, and using this information to drive program enhancements and system change.

Join us to explore evaluation capacity building, its benefits for practitioners and organizations, and strategies to strengthen organizational learning. Hear from practitioners who improved their evaluation skills through collaboration with researchers. Learn about PROSPECTS, a new initiative aimed at enhancing organizational learning & evaluation.

- Session Moderator: **Susanna Gurr**, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC)
- **Kim Lehrer**, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), "What is evaluation capacity? Why is it important? What are effective tactics to build evaluation capacity and organizational learning?"
- **Julie Rodier**, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), "What is evaluation capacity? Why is it important? What are effective tactics to build evaluation capacity and organizational learning?"
- **Larry Chan**, MOSAIC, "Hear from practitioners who, through collaboration with researchers, enhanced their evaluation knowledge and skills"
- **Sue Sadler** ACCES Employment
- **Taylor Hui**, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), "PROSPECTS—a new initiative aimed at enhancing evaluation capacity in immigrant-serving organizations"

### *G7 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

## **Collaboration Between Sectors: Working Together to End Gender-Based Violence**

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) impacts all communities, but systemic factors like migration stress, racism, and language barriers heighten risks for newcomers, immigrants, and refugees. Agencies serving immigrants play a key and crucial role in supporting newcomers but addressing GBV requires cross-sectoral collaboration between the settlement and anti-violence sectors. Our proposed roundtable aligns with Theme 5: Cross-Sectoral Collaboration for Long-Term Growth. This will include presenters from academia, anti-violence and settlement perspectives to explore collaboration in practice, challenges, and approaches.

- **Session Moderator: Kathryn Bates-Khan**, Targeted Programing, YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth
- **Nina Condo**, Elmwood Community Resource Centre, Winnipeg, MB, “Establishing and Strengthening Partnership between sectors”
- **Valerie Auger-Voyer**, Ending Violence Association of Canada, “Anti-violence sector perspective”
- **Maggie To**, Community Education - GBV project, OCASI, “Settlement sector perspective”
- **Salina Abji**, Researcher, “Community-based research on collaboration between sectors”
- **Briana Miller**, Local GBV prevention, YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth, “Best practices of collaboration in local GBV prevention program”
- **Pinash Akter**, National GBV project, YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth, “Collaboration across the country”

*G8 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

## **Beyond the Welcome Mat: Challenges and Opportunities of Immigrant Retention in Canada**

Canada is facing a crossroads of soon-to-be reduced immigration levels and growing challenges surrounding immigrant retention. This panel explores recent research and emerging discussions around factors influencing whether newcomers stay or leave. Panelists will examine trends in immigrant settlement, the impact of provincial policies, and the roles of economic, social, and cultural integration in fostering long-term attachment. The panel will address disparities in retention rates across immigrant groups and regions, with a focus on Ontario and Nova Scotia, while also highlighting actionable recommendations for targeted strategies and opportunities to support immigrant success and the nation's future growth.

- **Session Moderator: Stein Monteiro**, Lead Research Associate, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada
- **Federica Guccini**, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada, “Onward Migration Unpacked: Patterns and Implications for Immigrant Retention in Canada”
- **Melissa Kelly**, Mentorship Program Lead, CERC Migration and Integration, Toronto Metropolitan University, “Reflections on the Scale and Meaning of Newcomer Retention”
- **Nathalie Wuta**, Immigration Promotion and Employer Outreach Unit, Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, “Ontario's Immigration Strategy: Attraction and Retention through the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program”
- **Ather Akbari**, Professor, Chair Atlantic Research Group on Economics of Immigration, Aging, and Diversity; Saint Mary's University, “Why Immigrants Stay in or Leave Atlantic



## Canada: Insights from Nova Scotia”

### *G9 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Cross-Sectoral Collaboration for Employment Integration: Pathways to Newcomer Success**

This workshop provides evidence for building a more inclusive and sustainable workforce for Canada's future. It explores federal, provincial and local stakeholder collaboration to integrate newcomers into employment and health care—sectors critical to the nation's long-term development. Presenters will discuss (i) federal and provincial coordination in aligning immigration policy with local labour market needs; (ii) cross-sectoral approaches to employer engagement in hiring and integrating newcomers; (iii) working conditions for highly skilled female immigrants. Participants will gain insight into effective strategies and best practices for newcomer integration into the labour market.

- **Valentina Antonipillai**, Statistics Canada, “Job strain, precarious work and health: Differences among nurses and personal support workers in care homes by immigrant status”
- **Andrea Baumann**, McMaster University , “Cross-sectoral approaches to hiring and integrating internationally-educated nurses”
- **Mary Crea-Arsenio**, McMaster University, “National policies and local solutions to immigrant employment integration”

### *G10 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

#### **Art for Healing, Justice, and Prevention: Creative Pathways to Address Gender-Based Violence**

Gender-based violence is a global issue and a Canadian priority. Engaging with diverse populations, genders, and experiences needs to be prioritized in both creating healing spaces for survivors and working in prevention. This session will showcase presentations centering non-status, refugee, and immigrant (NSRI) women through theatre and explore how art can engage newcomer men and boys in preventing GBV. A significant portion of the session will be dedicated to an interactive discussion on leveraging art as a powerful tool to empower NSRI women survivors and involve men and boys in addressing and preventing gender-based violence.

- **Briana Miller**, YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth, “Part of the solution: Engaging men and boys around GBV Prevention through arts”
- **Berivan Kutlay Sarikaya**, OCASI, “We Lived to Tell: Performance Workshops for Non-Status, Refugee and Immigrant (NSRI) Women & Gender Diverse Peoples”

### *G11 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

#### **Information Gaps and Opportunities: Hot Topics for Navigating Life in Canada**

Access to timely, accessible and culturally relevant information is fundamental to the successful settlement experience of newcomers in Canada. Despite IRCC’s significant investments in

information and orientation services, many newcomers struggle to navigate the complex housing, health, education and employment systems. Refugee 613's Newcomer Info Hub creates multilingual informational resources to address this gap. With this interactive roundtable discussion, we invite settlement allies to share ideas and insights for selecting topics for future settlement information resources, and strategies for effective dissemination. The roundtable aims to foster national-level collaboration to improve settlement information delivery to newcomers.

- **Session Moderator: Laila Joud**, Refugee 613
- **Louisa Taylor**, Refugee 613, "Settlement Content: From Ideation to Dissemination"

*G12 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Finding Our Common Humanity**

In times of unprecedented conflict and division there has never been a greater need for cross-difference dialogue and interaction that helps us to authentically know one another and understand our common values and humanity. Storytelling and other arts-based practices have proven to be effective strategies for bridging differences and bringing people together. This session will discuss and demonstrate accessible examples of storytelling and arts-based strategies for building connection, community, and peace.

- **Kari McCluskey** , University of Manitoba, "Engaging Cross-Difference Dialogue in Tumultuous Times"
- **Damhat Zagros** , Aurora Family Therapy Centre, "Storytelling Journeys toward Peace"
- **Bonface Beti** , Aurora Family Therapy Centre, "Arts-based Interventions for Healing"

*G13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **A Growing Reality: Strategic Collaboration for Canada's New Immigration Levels Plan**

With Canada's New Immigration Levels Plan, the next few years are expected to alter the landscape for newcomer communities and organizations across the country. In this session, organizations that are using innovative cross-sector collaboration to support newcomers will share analyses on the plan: where it has fallen short, its impacts and implications, and strategic ways to collaborate on solutions. Drawing on their collective expertise, panelists will highlight the infrastructure needed to address economic migration, family reunification, and refugee admissions. They will explore how partnerships can enhance equity, resilience, and social prosperity, ensuring Canada's immigration framework supports both individual and community success.

- **Ashley Taylor** , WES Mariam Assefa Fund
- **Abdulla Daoud** , The Refugee Centre
- **Nour Kachouh**, Rainbow Refugee

*G14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

## Increasing Focus on Retention: From Meaningful Employment to Career Growth

With the decrease of immigration levels and the upward trend in onward migration, Canada must address immigrant retention and be more strategic in leveraging the skills and experiences of immigrants, both newly arrived and those already here. Three recent projects demonstrate insights and learnings from different approaches to this challenge.

- Immigrant inclusive career advancement: TRIEC's Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) program.
- Connecting immigrants with high-demand sectors and roles: IEC-BC's FAST program.
- Optimizing connections: The Association for New Canadians (ANC)'s Newcomer Employment Resilience Network (NERN) program.

After individual presentations, there will be a panel discussion and a Q & A

- **Rania Younes**, IEC-BC, *IEC-BC's FAST program*
- **Rachel Crowe**, TRIEC, *TRIEC's CAIP program*
- **Bizu Muche**, Employer Engagement Manager, Association for New Canadians, *ANC's NERN program*

*G15 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*  
**Session to be confirmed**

*G16 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

## **Navigating Policies and Narratives: Housing, Employment, and Lived Experiences of International Students**

Canada was ranked third globally in attracting international students. However, in 2023, the admission of over one million international students to the country, a record high, has heightened public concerns and sparked policy debates, leading many to scapegoat international students for driving up housing costs and exacerbating the already limited resources. The federal government then cap international student visas at 360,000, effective in Jan 2024. Within this context, this roundtable will explore the impact of changing policies on international students, focusing on their precarious lived experiences related to housing and employment.

- **The Honourable Ratna Omidvar**, Toronto Metropolitan University, *Precarity: the new lived experience of International Students*
- **Marshia Akbar**, BMO Newcomer Workforce Integration Lab, CERC, TMU, *Shifting Policy Context and Employment Integration Challenges for International Students Post-Graduation*
- **Zhixi Zhuang**, Toronto Metropolitan University, *Building inclusive housing infrastructure for international students*
- **Ashmita Sandhu**, WES/UofT, *The impact of changing policies on international students*

**12:15 pm – 1:30 pm**

Lunch / Dîner

*Metropolitan Ballroom*

**1:45 pm – 3: 00 pm**

Block H of concurrent sessions (workshops)

Bloc H des séances simultanées (ateliers)

*H1 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Paving a Path for Digital Equity and Digital Transformation in Peel Region**

The path to achieve digital equity is multi-pronged. Digital transformation of the sector should also go hand in hand with the realities of newcomers' digital access. It is important to understand who is falling through the gap in the shift to digital. Innovations and digital transformation of service providers is effective if it is accessible to all. Two parallel projects in Peel that contribute to the transformation of digital in the settlement sector will discuss how these aspects are linked and contribute towards digital equity in the sector, examining from the lens of the service providers as well as service users.

- **Session Moderator: Jessica Kwik**, Peel Newcomer Strategy Group - United Way Greater Toronto
- **Kay Nadalin**, Code for Canada, "Digital Maturity in the Peel-Halton Settlement Sector"
- **Dorothy Eng**, Code for Canada, "Digital Maturity in the Peel-Halton Settlement Sector"
- **Mariam Mian**, Peel Newcomer Strategy Group - United Way Greater Toronto, "Exploring Digital Equity for Newcomer Services: Perspectives on Access and Challenges in Peel Region"
- **Danielle Ungara**, Peel CAS Child Welfare Immigration Centre for Excellence "Exploring Digital Equity for Newcomer Services: Perspectives on Access and Challenges in Peel Region"
- **Ghezal Wallid**, Peel CAS Child Welfare Immigration Centre for Excellence "Exploring Digital Equity for Newcomer Services: Perspectives on Access and Challenges in Peel Region"
- **Prihan Algothary**, Peel Multicultural Council "Exploring Digital Equity for Newcomer Services: Perspectives on Access and Challenges in Peel Region"

*H2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Let's Go to School! Amplifying Newcomer Voices in the Classroom**

As champions of newcomers, settlement agencies are uniquely positioned to play an important role in public education. We already tell stories for the sake of grant reporting, fundraising, and engagement – we can leverage those stories to amplify the resilience and contributions of immigrants and refugees, dispelling dangerous myths and stereotypes. This session will share experiences and outcomes from JIAS Toronto's public education with school-aged audiences, both as a host of the Pier 21 Museum of Immigration's Refuge Canada Tent travelling exhibit

and in partnership with the Leo Baeck Day School. Join us and let's do more of this, together!

- **Jodi Block**, Manager of Community Engagement, JIAS Toronto
- **Dan Abramson**, Tikkun project Director, Leo Baeck Day School
- **Sara England**, Curator, Temporary and Travelling Exhibitions, Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21

*H3 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **Regionalization policies and newcomer retention in smaller communities**

In Canada, despite federal government's proactive regionalization policies, 75% of immigrants concentrate in three gateway cities. There is a need to explore immigrant attraction, integration, and retention in smaller non-gateway cities. Considering that integration and retention are multi-scalar processes involving many actors, it is important to understand the relationship between local, regional, provincial, and national immigration policies and contexts, as well as the lived experiences of newcomers in smaller communities. This roundtable will bring together diverse perspectives from researchers, policymakers, and community organizations to explore the multifaceted geopolitical dynamics, policy outcomes, and newcomers' lived experiences.

- **Rana Omidvar**, Toronto Metropolitan University, "Is regionalization working?"
- **Melissa Kelly**, Canada Excellence Research Chair, Toronto Metropolitan University, "Improving the outcomes of Canada's regionalization policies"
- **Michelle Nguyen**, New Canadians Centre Peterborough, "Building a Welcoming Community to Promote Newcomer Retention in Peterborough, ON"
- **Zhixi Zhuang**, Toronto Metropolitan University, "Fostering a sense of belonging and wellbeing for newcomers in non-gateway cities"

*H4 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Immigrant Entrepreneurs**

A panel discussion on the immigrant entrepreneurial ecosystem in Canada and immigrants' pathway in the ecosystem.

- **Jo-Ann Johnson**, PhD student, Université de Montréal
- **Zohreh Hassannezhad Chavoushi**, Senior Research Associate, Diversity Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Gueye, Bassirou**, Chef de sous-section, production et diffusion, Statistics Canada
- **Yolande Pottie-Sherman**, Associate Professor of Geography, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador

*H5 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **United for Change: Advancing Equity and Sustainability through Community-Driven Solutions**

Skills for Change's United for Change conference explored innovative pathways to sustainable communities, aligning with the United Nations SDGs. Key themes included fostering diverse representation in the sustainability sector, promoting green jobs for underserved groups, and addressing environmental racism. The conference also highlighted youth leadership in sustainability through workshops on Indigenous wisdom, mental health, and climate communication. Collaborative sessions empowered stakeholders to co-create actionable strategies for climate resilience, economic equity, and inclusive practices. Findings emphasize the importance of community-driven solutions, and the integration of diverse voices to advance the SDGs on a community level.

- **Mallory Hillkewich**, Skills for Change
- **Nya Lazarus-Munnick**, Skills for Change

*H6 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Impact of Policy Changes on the Settlement and Integration of International Students**

In January 2024, IRCC announced new measures to cap international student permits at 360,000 annually in the next 2 years. Sparking widespread debate across the country, critics argue that these changes perpetuate false narratives about the contributions of international students (IS). This panel will explore the impact of these changes on the school-to-employment transitions of IS, emphasizing their lived experiences, structural challenges, and the broader socio-economic implications of these new policies. Featuring academics, community representatives, and international students, the discussion aims to provide critical insights into how these policies affect their settlement and integration.

- **Session Moderator: Luisa Veronis**, University of Ottawa
- **Amandeep Kaur**, Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS), "Insecure, Unfed, and Lonely: The Saga of Punjabi International Students in Ontario"
- **Noor Din**, Human Endeavour, "Navigating Settlement: The Role of Community in Dealing with South Asian International Students"
- **Henry Akanko**, Hire Immigrants Ottawa, "Employing Immigrants in Ontario: Overcoming Stereotypes"
- **Mehnaz Lamia**, Canadian Student Federation, "The Good, the Bad, and the Troublesome: Perspectives from an International Student in Ontario"
- **Nancy Mandell**, York University, "Pathways to Employment: The Experience of Alumni International Students in Canada"
- **Jana Boras**, York University, "Pathways to Employment: The Experience of Alumni International Students in Canada"
- **Mercedeh Safarian**, York University, "Pathways to Employment: The Experience of Alumni International Students in Canada"

*H7 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Creating Safety for LGBTQ+ Refugee Claimants when Concerns Arise Around Credibility**

The global rise in risks to LGBTQ+ Communities worldwide, including the passage of Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality act in 2023, has led to a rapid increase in LGBTQ+ Refugee Claimant cases. This has in turn raised concerns among front line practitioners that not all of the individuals seeking support on these grounds are credibly part of the LGBTQ+ community. This workshop will explore how to create safe spaces for all regardless of identity, the importance of having good connections to legal teams well versed in LGBTQ+ claims, the importance of not allowing stereotypes to impact your perception of credibility, the emotional effects on service providers, and space to explore actionable solutions.

- **Elliot Dewhirst**, End of the Rainbow Foundation
- **Basel Abou Hamrah**, Newcomer Centre (Rainbow Refugee Program)

*H8 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Expanding the Canadian Index for Measuring Integration and Inclusion (CIMII): Strengthening Research and Community Engagement**

Join us for a dynamic and interactive workshop on how the Canadian Index for Measuring Integration and Inclusion (CIMII) can empower the settlement sector to drive meaningful change. Discover how this powerful tool helps identify key challenges and opportunities in economic integration, social inclusion, civic participation, and healthcare access at local, provincial, and national levels.

In its next phase, CIMII is expanding to Canada's North, improving data collection in underserved regions, and deepening collaboration with settlement organizations through targeted community outreach. Plus, be among the first to learn about a new initiative to identify and share best practices and programs that enhance newcomer settlement across Canada.

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with experts, strengthen your research skills, and be part of shaping the future of immigrant integration!

- **Paul Holley**, Research and Evaluation Director
- **Ravindra Shrestha**, Research Manager

*H9 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

### **From national to local: Adapting gender-based violence interventions to address systemic issues and integration needs faced by racialized refugee youth through cross-sectoral collaboration**

An engaging roundtable discussion focused on the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration in Canada to improve the acceptability and effectiveness of gender-based violence (GBV) intervention programming for racialized refugee youth. Although important, the majority of GBV

interventions focus solely on individual skill-building, and fail to address the complex integration needs of newcomer youth, nor the ongoing systemic concerns and racism and oppression. Focused on community- and lived-experience informed adaptations, this roundtable brings together speakers from non-profit organizations and academia who will speak about the importance of flexible, federal support to deliver truly effective GBV prevention programs.

- **Aynslie Hinds**, University of Winnipeg
- **Gode Katembo**, Elmwood Community Resource Centre
- **Magi Hadad**, IRCOM
- **Megan Marques**, IRCOM

*H10 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**“Wherever we go, we create neighborhoods”: Arab Families' Settling Experiences in Ontario**

This presentation will discuss the preliminary findings from the project exploring Arab Refugee Families' Experiences in the settlement process. The project examines the intersection of settlement processes and parenting experiences among Arab newcomers in Ontario. The presentation highlights key themes such as cultural differences, language barriers, social support, and education engagement using a descriptive phenomenological study design. It will explore the challenges Arab parents encounter in preserving their cultural heritage while adapting to their new environment. Additionally, it proposes collaborative solutions involving Arab families, communities, and municipal governments.

- **Aicha Benayoune**, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Yousra Amari**, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Henry Parada**, Toronto Metropolitan University

*H11 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Perspectives croisées sur la Politique en matière d'immigration : Constats, occasions et défis**

La Politique en matière d'immigration francophone d'Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada (IRCC) aspire à la fois à une présence accrue de communautés francophones enrichies par une immigration croissante et à une intégration réussie des immigrants francophones au sein de ces communautés. En janvier 2025, la Politique célébrera sa première année d'existence, ce qui représente une occasion de dresser un portrait des premières avancées en appui à cette vision. Ce panel rassemble des perspectives gouvernementales, en matière de recherche et communautaires diverses pour faire le point sur la Politique et son alignement avec les besoins des communautés et des immigrants, ainsi que pour identifier les opportunités futures et les défis qu'il reste à relever.



- **Nadine Bernier**, Directrice-adjointe, Direction générale de l'immigration francophone, Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada (IRCC)
- **Alphonse Ndem Ahola**, Directeur général, Francophonie Canadienne Plurielle
- **Morgan Owen**, Directrice, Direction des politiques d'immigration et des initiatives stratégiques, Ministère du Travail, Immigration, Formation et Développement des compétences, Gouvernement de l'Ontario
- **Linda Cardinal**, Vice-rectrice adjointe à la recherche, Université de l'Ontario français

*H12 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Defying Discrimination: Negotiating Complex Relationships Between Immigrant, Newcomer, and Refugee Families and the Child Welfare and Other Systems.**

Children, youth, and families from immigrant, newcomer, and refugee backgrounds often face exclusion and alienation due to systemic barriers, including poverty, racism, cultural biases, and linguistic differences. These challenges are particularly pronounced in the child welfare system, where power imbalances can deepen inequities. Cultural brokers navigate this "middle space," negotiating power dynamics between families and the child welfare system in Alberta. This workshop will explore how brokers provide culturally sensitive support, challenge discrimination and foster equitable collaboration and cross-cultural dialogue, empowering families and promoting their meaningful inclusion and participation.

- **Sophie Yohani**, University of Alberta, "Resistance and Collaboration: The Role of Cultural Brokers in the Education System"
- **Stephanie Fernandez**, Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative, "Negotiating Power in the Middle Space: Cultural Brokers in Child Protection"
- **Jastinne Diaz**, Laurentian University, "The Pre-and-Post Migration Experiences of Immigrant, Refugee, and Newcomer Families in Canada"
- **Sally Ogoe**, Laurentian University "Experiences of Racism & Discrimination by Cultural Brokers: A Survey"
- **Sara Torres**, Laurentian University, "Community Partners' Reflections on Research Collaboration in the Child Welfare System"

*H13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

*Session to be confirmed*

*H14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Leveraging the skills and knowledge of Internationally Trained Physicians as Patient Navigators: Lessons Learned and Impact.**

Internationally trained physicians (ITPs) can have a significant impact on community health, especially in patient navigation roles. To address the need for integrating ITPs into Canada's labour market, AIMGA created a novel Patient Navigator Program (PNP). This Government of

Alberta funded program aims to bridge ITPs into non-physician roles in healthcare in the areas of patient navigation, health promotion, and interpretation. To date, 66 ITPs have taken PNP and have supported diverse newcomer communities. Many lessons have been learned from the four cohorts that have been implemented to date. This session will breakdown the program achievements and lessons learned that have resulted in a success rate that has grown from 50 to 83%.

- **Deidre Lake**, AIMGA

*H15 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**The role of private sector in the economic advantage for Canada**

FIREx3 is a ground breaking two-year Public-Private Partnership (P3) initiative that empowers refugees by integrating government, private sector, and community resources to create employment opportunities and foster economic growth. The program addresses barriers such as credential recognition and workplace integration through structured milestones, including skill-building, certifications, and job placements. By equipping participants with in-demand skills and meaningful employment, FIREx3 reduces reliance on public assistance and strengthens local economies. This model demonstrates how strategic private sector engagement can transform refugees into economic drivers, showcasing Canada's potential as a global leader in inclusive growth.

- **Hyder Hassan**, Fire-X3, "The Role of the Private Sector in Unlocking Canada's Economic Advantage: A P3 Approach to Empowering Refugees through FIREx3"

*H16 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Leveraging data to support continuous improvements in the delivery of newcomer services: FAST Program Case Study**

Immigration Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) and Blueprint will showcase cross-sectoral collaboration in improving the online service delivery of newcomer services. We will discuss Facilitating Access to Skilled Talent (FAST), an online skills assessment and development platform supporting skilled newcomers in closing skills and accreditation gaps. As the evidence partner, Blueprint will share about the evaluation of FAST, interim findings, and how data informs continuous iteration. IEC-BC will discuss benefits, experiences and challenges with mobilizing evidence for program iteration in a non-profit, funding-driven context. The presentation will be followed by workshopping evidence-thinking and data interpretation skills with attendees.

- **Rania Younes**, IEC-BC
- **Sheetal Lodhia**, Blueprint
- **Joshua Loo**, Blueprint

### **3:00 pm – 3:30 pm**

Break / Visit the Exhibitors Booths and Poster Presentations

Pause / Visite des Kiosques des exposants et Présentations d'affiches

### **3:30 pm – 4: 45 pm**

Block I of concurrent sessions (workshops)

Bloc I des séances simultanées (ateliers)

#### *I1 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Strategies for Effective Collaboration Between Settlement Workers and School**

The Settlement Workers in Schools initiative is a very important leverage for the settlement and inclusion of immigrants in schools and their communities across Canada. This workshop will highlight the collaboration between the three (3) local partners to improve the capacity of schools to welcome newcomer youth as well as their parents to ensure a successful school journey and experience for newcomer youth. Participants in this workshop will learn the keys to a successful collaboration between a SWIS service provider and a School Board or Division. Francophone are welcome to attend.

- Session Moderator: Melanie Kidder, Community Engagement Coordinator, Edmonton Catholic Schools
- **Ngena Ali-Ebenga**, Directeur des services aux écoles et de la Coordination Régionale des TÉE PNT, Francophonie Canadienne Plurielle
- **Oliver Kamau**, Director of Programs, Edmonton Immigrant Services Association

#### *I2 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Health equity and immigrants**

Newcomers often encounter financial hardships and unemployment, leading to lowered quality of life and heightened health risks. However, the literature identified multiple barriers to accessing healthcare faced by newcomers, including stigma, cultural and language barriers, limited information about the healthcare system, limited affordable healthcare options, and lack of settlement support for accessing healthcare services. This session includes researchers and community leaders representing diverse perspectives to have a conversation about how to advance health equity for immigrants. The topics range from quantitative research to case studies, touching upon the supports needed for immigrants, community partners, and healthcare providers.

- **Josephine Wong**, Professor, Daphne Cockwell School of Nursing, Research Chair in Urban Health, Toronto Metropolitan University

- **Ariadna Pauliuc**, Senior Research Associate, Diversity Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University
- **Kwame McKenzie**, CEO, Wellesley Institute
- **Samantha Jackson**, Board Chair, Newcomer Women's Services

*13 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

**Empowering Immigrants through Inclusive Innovations in FinTech and DEIA Frameworks**

This roundtable delves into two groundbreaking initiatives that empower internationally trained professionals (ITPs) and foster equity in the workplace. The “Innovations in FinTech” program connects highly skilled ITPs in finance and technology with Ontario’s thriving FinTech sector, leveraging technology to promote entrepreneurship, integration, and inclusive growth. Meanwhile, the “Paving the Way for Immigrant and Racialized Women” project integrates DEIA principles to transform workplace cultures and create equitable pathways to employment for skilled immigrant women. Together, these initiatives showcase how technology and strategic DEIA frameworks can dismantle systemic barriers and drive inclusive labor market integration, ensuring that immigrants become vital contributors to Canada’s economic and social growth.

- **Cynthia Taylor**, Achēv
- **Kosalina Vignarajah**, Achēv
- **Harpreet Kaur**, Achēv
- **Jamachi Chris Osluka**, Achēv

*14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Promising practice: Neighborhood Nursing Team**

This session highlights a promising collaboration between Reception House Waterloo Region and Public Health’s Neighborhood Nursing Team. The team provides on-site nursing support in temporary accommodation to provide timely health services, reduce reliance on emergency care, and enhance connections to public health resources. Through cross-sector collaboration, this initiative addresses health care gaps, fosters capacity building, and supports client-centered care. Participants will explore insights from this initiative and discuss strategies to address similar challenges in their contexts.

- **Craig Baila**, RECEPTION HOUSE WATERLOO REGION
- **Abdi Mohamed**, RECEPTION HOUSE WATERLOO REGION

*15 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

**An examination of the success of CCLB’s TRF project in supporting French Communities in Minority Situation**

This workshop will demonstrate and evaluate how the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmark's innovative TRF/Training and Resources for Francophone and training foster belonging, and support language retention for newcomers. and support instructors working with them in second language programs across Canada. The workshop will provide examples of modules, workshops and videos using authentic resources to spotlight topics such as Canada's First Nations, Francophone culture, education, and welcoming communities. Three panelists will discuss the how the resources support Newcomers, Instructors and the Government of Canada in ensuring the social economic well-being of Francophone Newcomers in Francophone minority communities.

- **Session Moderator: Anne Senior**, CCLB Center for Canadian Language Benchmark
- Additional panelist to be confirmed

#### *16 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **Passeurs et gardiens: le rôle des établissements postsecondaires dans l'accès aux services des étudiants migrants**

En tant que point de contact pour les étudiants migrants francophones pour obtenir accès à des services et programmes, les établissements d'enseignement postsecondaire francophones en situation minoritaire ont un rôle de "passeurs"; cependant, ils agissent également comme des gardiens de ces services, auxquels ils peuvent et doivent parfois refuser l'accès.

Cet atelier-discussion multisectoriel examinera le rôle des établissements postsecondaires francophones dans l'accès des étudiants migrants francophones aux services, ainsi que les pratiques innovantes pour renforcer les capacités des établissements d'enseignement dans le soutien inclusif des étudiants migrants tout en contribuant au continuum de l'immigration francophone hors Québec.

- **Jasmine Bégin Marchand**, Université de Toronto
- **Sébastien Laperrière**, Collège La Cité Toronto
- **Aissa Nauthoo**, Centre Francophone du Grand Toronto
- **Luisa Veronis**, Université d'Ottawa
- **Adjmal Younoussa**, Université d'Ottawa

#### *17 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

#### **La contribution de l'immigration au Canada**

Statistique Canada a considérablement augmenté son offre de tableaux et de produits statistiques sur les résidents non permanents (RNP) disponibles sur son site web dans les dernières années. Cette présentation introduira plusieurs de ces nouveaux produits et le potentiel qu'ils offrent pour les utilisateurs.

- **Mélanie Meunier**, Statistique Canada, "Les nouveaux produits statistiques sur les résidents non permanents disponibles à Statistique Canada"

*18 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**A sum of all it parts: An intersectional perspective of BC's housing crisis**

For the past several years, Canada's housing crisis has been growing in severity, the impacts of which is doubly felt by newcomers who face additional challenges. At the same time, a wave of anti-immigration sentiment is sweeping across Canada, largely due to a misplaced belief that newcomers are the cause of said crisis. This session will examine the intersection between newcomers and housing and highlight both the growing need for the housing and settlement sectors to work in partnership. Moreover, AMSSA will highlight the root of this growing sentiment and the actions the settlement sector can take to address it.

- **Sabrina Dumitra**, AMSSA

*19 - Roundtable / Table Ronde*

**Holistic Approaches to Sustainable Development: Decent Work, Reproductive Justice, and Gender Equity for Racialized Migrant Women in Canada**

This roundtable with grassroots leaders, academic, and policy researchers will discuss the approaches community-led holistic settlement models adopt towards sustainable development for racialized migrant women (RMW) in Canada who face labor inequity, underemployment, gender-based violence, and poverty. Speakers will present findings and implications of holistic models addressing systemic barriers, resisting social, economic, and civic exclusion, and fostering long-term, sustainable growth for RMW. Presenters provide insights on how South Asian Women's and Immigrants' Services (SAWIS) and Citizenships for Public Justice (CPJ) advocate for equitable employment opportunities and sustainable solutions to structural issues faced by RMW.

- **Session Moderator: Rupaleem Bhuyan**, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto
- **Rushdia Ahmed**, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, "The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Framework in the Context of Immigration, Settlement, and Reproductive Justice in Canada: A Critical Discourse Analysis"
- **Anna Miedema**, Public Justice Intern for Refugee and Migrant Rights, Citizenships for Public Justice (CPJ), "Adopting a Rights-Based Approach to Migrant Labour in Canada"
- **Swarna Tyagi**, SAWIS and University of Toronto, "Empowering Racialized Migrant Women through Holistic Community-Based Settlement Services: An example from SAWIS/SAWRO"
- **Sultana Jahangir**, South Asian Women and Immigrants' Services (SAWIS), "Using Popular Theater to Amplify Immigrant Workers' Voices for Safer and Fairer Workplace Conditions – Insights from SAWIS/SAWRO's Work in East Danforth of Toronto"

*110 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

**Anti-Racism Tools for Promoting Cross-Cultural Dialogue and Combatting**

## **Anti-Immigration/Anti-Immigrant Sentiments**

In the context of rising anti-immigrant and anti-immigration sentiment, NorQuest College leaders present two tested anti-racism tools useful for framing cross-cultural dialogues, combatting racism aimed at newcomers, and mitigating harms associated with discrimination within settlement and other workplace sectors. In this interactive workshop, presenters apply a scenario-based pedagogy to demonstrate how the microaggressions and microaffirmation tools in their Anti-Racism toolkit can be leveraged or adapted to challenge othering and polarization, while promoting inclusive perspectives and praxis in a variety of work engagement and interaction situations. Strategies for sustaining transformational change through these tools are discussed.

- **Session Moderator: Benjamin Denga**, NorQuest College
- **Maroro Zinyemba**, NorQuest College
- **Rebekah Currie**, NorQuest College

*I11 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Meeting the Moment: Building Sustainable and Impactful Volunteerism for Newcomers in Canada**

This interactive workshop explores Canada's volunteer landscape, helping attendees co-create practical tools and strategies to enhance community engagement for newcomers. Participants will gain insights into diverse volunteer opportunities, from community service to skills-based roles, and how these can support newcomer integration.

The session includes: an introduction to various pathways for newcomers to engage in volunteerism, space to share best and emerging practices in the sphere of newcomer community engagement and an opportunity to offer insight into the development of the National Volunteer Action Strategy (NVAS) and guidelines for volunteer involvement in Canada.

- Session Moderator: Sara Lyons, Volunteer Canada
- **Harar Hall**, Volunteer Canada

*I12 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Session to be confirmed**

*I13 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

### **Session to be confirmed**

- **Carol Mitcha**, Gov of Ontario

*I14 - Workshop - Panel Presentation / Atelier - Présentation d'un panel*

DRAFT



## POSTERS / PRÉSENTATIONS DAFFICHES

*Metropolitan Ballroom East /Metropolitan Ballroom Est*

### **P2- Améliorer les pratiques d'inclusion pour contrer une assimilation jugée inefficace par des immigrants francophones d'origine Africaine | Improve inclusion practices to counter assimilation deemed ineffective by Francophone immigrants of African origin**

Tirant d'une ethnographie critique explorant la cohésion communautaire dans la communauté francophone en situation minoritaire du Grand Vancouver, nous partageons les résultats d'une analyse secondaire d'entrevues avec immigrants africains francophones. Les thèmes identifiés abordent le rôle paradoxal des institutions francophones, les éléments facilitateurs et barrières aux sentiments d'appartenance communautaire, ainsi que les dynamiques de pouvoirs qui façonnent les expériences d'oppression des nouveaux arrivants racisés. Nos recommandations portent sur les pratiques d'inclusion qui peuvent contrer la violence d'assimilation qui entretient des solitudes parallèles au sein de la communauté Francophone du Grand Vancouver. | Drawing on a critical ethnography exploring community cohesion among the Francophone minority community of Metro Vancouver, we shared the results of a secondary analysis of interviews with African Francophone immigrants. The themes identified address the paradoxical role of Francophone institutions, the facilitating elements and barriers to feelings of community belonging, as well as the power dynamics that shape the experiences of oppression of racialized newcomers. Our recommendations focus on inclusion practices that can counter assimilation violence that nurtures parallel solitudes within the Francophone community of Metro Vancouver.

**Astou Thiam**, University of British Columbia

### **P3 - Source Country Regime Influence on Asian Landed Immigrants' Non-Institutional Political Participation in Canada**

When explaining Asian landed immigrants' lower non-institutional political participation level in Canada, existing studies do not distinguish the source country influence of Asian authoritarian versus democratic regimes. I fill the gap by examining the regime influence on Asian landed immigrants' participation level in high versus low-commitment political activities. My regression

results based on the 2021 Canadian Election Study explain Asian authoritarianism suppressing effect on their emigrants' participation level for low-commitment but not high-commitment political activities. Asian immigrants have a higher political participation level in high-commitment activities than native-born Canadians, which requires further theorization.

**Hongshu Wang**, Western University

#### **P4 - This is ME: Lived Experiences and Positive Impact of Newcomers**

Explores the diverse journeys of individuals who have settled in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Through personal stories, the poster highlights the challenges and triumphs of adapting to a new culture and environment, building a sense of belonging, and giving back. These narratives reveal both the systemic barriers newcomers face and their resilience in overcoming them. The poster aims to foster understanding and support for newcomers, contributing to more inclusive communities and underscoring the importance of newcomers' voices. These stories also provide a glimpse of the profoundly positive impact that newcomers have in their communities, be it socially, economically, or culturally.

**Valeria Castellanos**, MANSO

#### **P5 - The influence of cultural fusion on navigating cultural conflicts: Perceptions of cannabis use in Canada among Chinese international students**

Cannabis use is a cultural conflict between China and Canada, as it is criminalized in China but legalized in Canada. This study explored how Chinese international students navigated this conflict through cultural fusion theory. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 Chinese international students. Reflexive Thematic Analysis was adopted to analyze data. Results showed that participants' strategy of accepting the existence of cannabis but not using it is shaped by cultural fusion (e.g., individualistic Canadian values vs. collectivistic Chinese values). This study helps the public better understand cross-cultural conflicts and facilitates policy changes to support im/migrants when they navigate cultural conflicts.

**Kedi Zhao**, Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina

#### **P6 - An Introduction to The Diversity Youth Fellowship**

Discover how the Diversity Youth Fellowship is transforming municipal governance by empowering underrepresented youth in Toronto. This innovative program provides Black, Muslim, Tamil, Filipino, and Chinese youth with paid placements at City Hall, where they gain hands-on experience, mentorship, and leadership skills to bridge gaps in representation. Join us to explore how DYF fosters equity, cultivates community engagement, and prepares the next generation of changemakers. Learn how this model of inclusivity can inspire systemic change and be adapted to other cities striving for diverse, impactful governance.

**Trevohn Baker**, Urban Alliance on Race

**Neethan Shan**, Urban Alliance on Race Relations

#### **P7 - Supporting women entrepreneurs: a feminist perspective**

This poster will present findings from a qualitative evaluation of the Women Business Hub - a program supporting immigrant women entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan since 2019. By traditional measures, WBH is doing great: it consistently hits most service targets and has a business launch rate of 67%. Yet, these traditional metrics do not capture the full value and impact of the program. This evaluation assesses the WBH from the perspective of collective feminism by documenting how feminist values are embedded into the program's design, what transformative impacts not captured in traditional metrics are generated, and how success can be re-defined.

**Ashraf Mirmontahai**, Saskatoon Open Door Society

#### **P8 - Positive Outliers in Immigrant Integration**

Due to lack of comprehensive immigrant integration policy in the United States, new immigrants have no clear pathway for entering the professions for which they were trained, resulting in significant underutilization of their human capital. Yet, some immigrants are able to overcome these challenges and successfully integrate in the U.S. labor market. They are the outliers who succeed, who can be termed "positive deviants," despite well documented barriers to integration. Based on 90 in-depth qualitative interviews with immigrants, we answer the research question: What factors and social relationships contribute to successful socio-economic integration of foreign-educated immigrants in the United States?

**Saltanat Liebert**, Virginia Commonwealth University

**Grant Rissler**, University of Richmond

**Gabriela Leon-Perez**, Virginia Commonwealth University

**Daniel Morales**, Virginia Commonwealth University

**P9 - How (besides refugee sponsorship) churches in Canada can support the settlement of newcomers**

The 2021 census indicates 40% of immigrants arriving in Canada between 2011 and 2021 were Christians. Some found religious homes in existing Christian congregations in Canada, many did not find a place of belonging. This poster session will highlight practices existing Christian churches in Canada can adopt to support newcomers to Canada.

The practices include:

Sharing religious space

Recognition of Christian church leaders from other countries

Education of church members about the world Christian community in Canada

Developing connections between newcomers and long-time Canadians

**Peter Bush**, St. Andrew's Church, Fergus

**P10 - Growing Roots: The Role of Collective Community Gardening in Cultural Food Security and Social Integration of Immigrants in Edmonton, Alberta**

Cultural Food Insecurity remains a critical issue for Black immigrants currently experiencing elevated risk of Food Insecurity. As Canadian cities welcome immigrants and refugees, programs that support cultural food security will be crucial in promoting health equity and successful integration. Our findings contribute to a growing body of evidence. The identified areas of impact of collective community gardening addressed not only this aspect, but also broader challenges of isolation. In our study, such "third spaces" have emerged as a means for social place-making and preservation of food ways. In addition, the high interest in gardening that was observed suggests potential for expansion of such existing community-driven initiatives.

**Destiny Otoadese**, University of Alberta and Sinkunia Community Development Organization (SCDO)

**P11 - Factors Associated with Social Isolation Among Older Immigrants in British Columbia: Insights and Recommendations for Targeted Interventions**

This study examines factors associated with social isolation among older immigrants in British Columbia, focusing on dimensions such as loneliness, social, community, civic, and political engagement. Using data from 106 participants in Vancouver and Victoria, the analysis identifies key protective and risk factors associated with social isolation and highlights critical areas of concern, including limited language proficiency, lack of information on support services, and financial challenges. Based on these findings, we present recommendations for targeted interventions to address the identified areas of concern. City-level and language group comparisons are included to provide additional context and insights.

**Kingsley Ivande**, University of Victoria

**P12 - Harboring Justice for K-12 International Students: Cross-Sectoral Strategies to Support International Students in Homestays**

K-12 international students in unregulated homestays face neglect, unfair treatment, and health risks due to inadequate housing conditions. This study used thematic analysis of a one-day storytelling forum with 19 participants to explore structural barriers in homestay sector and propose cross-sectoral strategies to promote students' welfare. Results revealed systemic failures: inadequate culturally-sensitive support, power imbalances, and accountability gaps. This poster proposes solutions, including monitoring technology, professional training, and student empowerment through advocacy. By amplifying neglected voices, this study provides implications for policymakers to establish regulations and equip professionals for tailored support.

**Patricia Quan**, SafeHarbor Project

**P13 - The contributions of internationally educated nurses to the Canadian health care system and broader social fabric**

We will draw on interviews with internationally educated nurses (IENs) (n=27), faculty who teach IENs (n=10) and external stakeholders (n=10) to describe how IENs contribute to not only our health care system, but also the broader social fabric, through their professional care, mentorship, support of their peers, and unique qualities and qualifications. Drawing on their

interviews, we strive to present these IENs as whole people. We will also discuss some of the systemic barriers preventing these nurses from making even further contributions, and recent policy and programming decisions that have impacted IENs.

**Linda Sheiban Taucar**, Centre for Health Care Research & Innovation, Conestoga College

**Sharon Tarbotton**, School of Health and Life Sciences, Conestoga College

**Catherine Tong**, Centre for Health Care Research & Innovation, Conestoga College

**Gunjan Vaghasiya**, Centre for Health Care Research & Innovation, Conestoga College

#### **P14 - Northern Ark: How Canada Could Harness Climate Migration**

We explore how policymakers can effectively manage the anticipated influx of people fleeing the adverse effects of climate change or climate hardship migrants. Our focus is Canada, a state with decades of experience admitting and integrating immigrants. Specifically, this article makes four three contributions: first, it conceptualizes climate hardship migrants as a distinct group. Second, it argues that Canada should create a specific visa for these migrants which entails raising current immigration levels. Third, it considers the political feasibility of such a policy.

**Nicholas Fraser**, Toronto Metropolitan University

**Mark Robbins**, Department of Defense

#### **P15 - Building Social Capital and Resilience Through Culturally Relevant Mentorship for New Immigrants**

Social capital and resilience are essential for success, especially for new immigrants facing systemic barriers in economic and social integration. The Mentorship and Resilience Project (MRP) supports Black youth in Edmonton, most of whom are new immigrants, by connecting them with volunteer Black professional mentors. This program enhances networking, career development, and personal empowerment through structured mentorship and tailored workshops. MRP helps participants navigate systemic barriers, build professional networks, advance their careers, and foster resilience. Through this approach, MRP demonstrates how culturally relevant mentorship effectively builds social capital and resilience among immigrants.

**Cecilia Bukutu**, Concordia University of Edmonton

**Viola Manokore**, Norquest College

**P16 - Co-Creating Mental Health Education (MHE) Programs with Migrant Communities: Insights from Community Learning Empowerment Groups (CLEGs) in Alberta**

This poster presents a community-engaged research project aimed at enhancing mental health equity for immigrants to identify post-pandemic mental health needs and co-design mental health education interventions. The poster will demonstrate the process of using Community Learning for Empowerment Groups (CLEGs) with two immigrant organizations in Alberta to identify current needs and co-design mental health education interventions that are honor community healing practices while addressing historical trauma and social determinants of mental health. The poster includes recommendations for developing mental health education programs that enhance equity through meaningful community engagement.

**Sophie Yohani**, University of Alberta

**P17 - Young Immigrants Matter**

The bulk of existing knowledge on people's experiences of forced migration focuses on understanding family experiences, with children's voices being subsumed under those of their parents/caregivers. Most of the research has identified barriers to accessing housing, employment and health care from the perspective of adults. Young immigrants' have been relegated to the position of 'luggage' carried by adults. This paper is based on a review that was conducted to underscore the importance of privileging young migrants as knowers and tellers of their post-arrival narratives.

**Doreen Katto**, Samaritan House Ottawa

**P18 - Understanding Housing Insecurity and Discriminations Faced by Asylum Seekers in Montreal**

In this study, we have explored the housing realities of 324 asylum seekers who came to Quebec in 2017-2018, analyzing their experiences in 2 critical moments of the housing trajectory: (1) their search for housing on the private housing market; and (2) occupation of their first housing. Our findings depicted a vulnerable condition of asylum seekers where it was found that more than 30% of our respondents were refused rental due to their asylum seeker status. The situation was worse for female respondents (56%). Additionally, respondents experienced

discrimination in seeking housing due to their country of origin, having children, and not having a credit history in Canada.

**Mahmudul Hassan**, PhD Candidate, School of Social Work, McGill University, Canada

**P19 - Bridging for Equity Between the Academy, Industry, and Black Canadian Youth: The Case of a Three-tiered Innovative Internship Program**

This poster presents a case study of a public university and the Black community taking initiative to build bridges between skilled Black youth and the STEM industries to challenge inequalities in the labor market. We describe the structure and delivery of these efforts embodied under an internship program named Experiential Learning in Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship (ELITE) Program at the University of Alberta. We also present recent evaluation research outcomes of the program and highlight the potential directions of similar future efforts.

**Sophie Yohani**, University of Alberta

**P20 - Homescapes: A Lefebvrian Analysis of Iranian Immigrants' Residential Behaviour in Suburban Toronto**

This paper introduces a Lefebvrian approach to understanding immigrant residential pathways, focusing on Iranian immigrants in suburban Toronto. Using mixed methods, it analyzes factors shaping neighbourhood and housing choices. The study reveals how lived experiences, spatial perceptions, and engagement with conceived space influence residential patterns. Iranians concentrate in affluent suburban "Iranian neighbourhoods" offering desired safety, social class, and ethno-racial composition. Unlike other visible minorities, Iranians uniquely access privileged areas. The approach captures the multi-layered nature of immigrant settlement, revealing nuanced ethno-racial geographies and questioning ethnic hierarchy in gateway cities.

**Negar Valizadeh**, University of Ottawa

**P21 - Negotiating cultures, living with uncertainty: Gendered experiences of Japanese immigrant women in Canada**

While the first Japanese immigrant settled in Canada over 150 years ago, the situations of the recent Japanese immigrants, of which 76% were women since the 2000's, are not well



understood. The results of the online focus group interviews with 38 Japanese immigrant women across Canada will be presented. Their experiences are coloured by the gendered care needs for their (mixed racial/ethnic) families, their “sandwiched” lives with their aging parents in Japan, and (uncertain) future planning partly due to Japan’s mono-cultural policy. The recommendations for social policy and long-term services for “settled” immigrants will be discussed.

**Izumi Sakamoto**, University of Toronto

**P22 - Anti-Asian Racism in Canada: Lived Experiences, Impact on Mental Health, and Access to Services and Support**

This study focuses on the lived experiences of anti-Asian racism among Asian Canadians, emphasizing its mental health impacts and barriers to accessing services. Findings highlight significant challenges, including anxiety, depression, and trauma, exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. The poster presents actionable strategies such as public education, culturally responsive mental health services, community-based initiatives, and affordable support systems to bridge the gap between policy and practice, fostering inclusion and equity in Canada’s multicultural society.

**Matsuyuki Hara**, University of Calgary

**P23 - GEO Nova Scotia: Transforming Lives Through Digital Inclusion**

Our poster highlights GEO Nova Scotia's programs and milestones, showcasing our journey towards digital inclusion. We define digital inclusion as we see it and illustrate what it means to be a Digital Champion. The poster also features a list of our Digital Champion training sessions, real-world stories, and impactful statistics that demonstrate the positive outcomes for program partners and participants.

**Brenda Lavandier**, GEO Nova Scotia

**Josie Lake**, GEO Nova Scotia

**P24 - The Contribution of Immigration to Canada/ Cross Sectorial Collaboration for Long Term Growth**

Integrating internationally educated nurses (IENs) into Ontario's healthcare workforce is essential to address nurse shortages and meet healthcare demands. Despite the need, IENs encounter significant integration challenges, especially following registration examination changes in 2015 and the COVID-19 pandemic. This study used qualitative methods, interviewing twelve IENs to explore their integration experiences. Analysis revealed themes around pre- and post-registration experiences and a call for improved support. Findings underscore the importance of collaboration among stakeholders to address barriers and streamline IEN integration into the Canadian nursing workforce.

**Nasrin Alostaz**, McMaster University

P24 - DLEP POSTER

**Sarah Kooi**, Metropolis Institute

**P25 - Enhancing students' perspective in equity and justice via engagement with older South Asians in Hong Kong**

To prevent racism and enhance understanding of social justice, this project aims to engage Chinese university students in meaningful interactions with older South Asians in Hong Kong. Through semi-structured training workshops, co-creation sessions, and experiential service-learning activities, the university students gain hands-on experience in interacting with older South Asians. Key outcomes include a deeper understanding of the experiences of racialized minorities and increased cultural sensitivity, both of which are essential for fostering a just and culturally inclusive community.

**Daniel Lai**, Hong Kong Baptist University