



TENT

Best Practices for Working with Refugee-Focused Service Providers in Canada



By the end of this presentation, you will:

- ▲ Gain a deeper understanding of the different types of organizations that support refugees in Canada
- ▲ Gain insight into services organizations provide to help refugees find employment
- ▲ Learn best practices on how companies can work with organizations to identify and hire refugee talent



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The needs of refugees and the support they require will evolve as they integrate into life in Canada

Integration stage	Time in Canada	Types of support required	Type of service provider providing service
Pre-arrival stage	Before arriving in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Information about moving to Canada</i> • <i>Funding to purchase tickets and essential items</i> 	Resettlement assistance providers
Initial arrival	0 – 12 months after arriving in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Temporary housing</i> • <i>Emergency healthcare</i> • <i>Information and Orientation services</i> • <i>Language</i> • <i>Needs assessment and referrals to relevant agencies</i> 	
Intermediate stage	6 – 60 months (5 years) after arriving in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Permanent housing</i> • <i>Primacy healthcare</i> • <i>Language and skill development</i> • <i>Employment preparation</i> • <i>Education and skills certification</i> • <i>Childcare</i> • <i>Crisis counseling</i> 	Settlement service providers
Long term and ongoing integration	5 years after arriving in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Integrating and contributing back to society</i> • <i>Community Connection</i> 	

Resettlement Assistance Providers (RAPs) provide government-assisted refugees with pre-arrival support and essential services when they arrive

[Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\)](#) provides funding to 34 Resettlement Assistance Providers (RAPs) to help refugees integrate more quickly.

A list of RAPs with location and contact details can be found [here](#).

- RAPs provide a similar suite of services to refugees that have recently arrived in Canada including:
 - ✓ Interest-free loans for travel to Canada
 - ✓ Temporary housing and assistance with looking for permanent housing
 - ✓ Support with registering for federal and provincial programs
 - ✓ Referrals to relevant community programs
 - ✓ Enrolling children in school
- Refugees will typically stay in cities where RAPs are located for at least a year
- Privately sponsored refugees are not eligible for services offered by RAPs and will receive similar support from their sponsors or sponsoring organizations

Settlement service providers offer a much wider range of services to support the holistic integration of all newcomers

[Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\)](#)

provides funding to 500 settlement service providers across Canada to support the holistic integration of newcomers

Newcomers can find settlement service providers in the link [here](#)

- Settlement service providers offer a wide range of services to all newcomers including economic immigrants and refugees:
 - ✓ Help with daily life
 - ✓ Help finding a job
 - ✓ Help preparing for the citizenship test
 - ✓ Help locating primary healthcare service providers
 - ✓ Language training and skills assessment
 - ✓ Services for vulnerable groups including women, LGBTQ individuals, the elderly, and youth
- All refugees and newcomers to Canada are eligible for services offered by settlement service providers

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Employment service providers support refugees with their job search

Employment service providers across Canada help refugees find jobs by providing:

- ✓ Job posting information and orientation
- ✓ Translation and interpretation
- ✓ Job-related language training
- ✓ Mentoring support
- ✓ Job search workshops
- ✓ Onboarding and post-hire support
- ✓ Referral to community resources

Employment service providers can help businesses recruit refugee talent by:

- Identifying refugee candidates whose skills match the needs of the job
- Completing new hire paperwork
- Offering translation or interpretation services
- Following up on refugees who have been hired to provide additional support

Note that employment service providers [are not staffing agencies](#), and cannot guarantee that they will be able to place refugees at a company



Tent can help companies connect with the relevant employment service providers across Canada



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Creating a welcoming environment for refugee employees

Refugee organizations want to partner with companies that will create a welcoming environment for refugee employees. These organizations will be particularly interested in learning about a company's approach to the following topics, that are critical to successful refugee integration:



Salary and benefits



Career pathways



Limited English language proficiency support

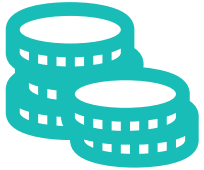


Hiring across skill levels



Transportation assistance

Salary and benefits



Refugee organizations want to make sure that **salaries offered are competitive** with offers from other companies in that area or industry, and that employers will offer comprehensive benefits (e.g., healthcare, paid time off) to refugee employees.

Companies should be prepared to share salary ranges and benefits during introductory conversations with these organizations.

Solutions for refugees with limited English proficiency



Organizations will be looking to partner with companies that are committed to effectively integrating refugees, even if they don't speak English proficiently just yet.

To ensure the success of refugees who are still learning the language, companies should:

1. **Consider which roles** at their company could be filled by someone with limited English proficiency
2. **Express to the local organizations that they plan to create a welcoming environment for refugees who are English language learners** (e.g., by translating key documents to other languages, assigning refugees a team lead or manager within the company who speaks their native language, etc.).

Strategies for how to hire low-language proficiency employees and ensure their success as they work towards proficiency can be found in Tent's latest guidebook, [Bridging Language and Work: Solutions to Invest in Immigrant and Refugee Talent](#).

Transportation assistance



Many recent refugee arrivals do not have access to a car or a driver's license.

Organizations will be looking to partner with companies that can **help refugees without a car get to work**, whether it be through carpooling with other employees, chartering a van to pick up multiple refugee employees, or offering transportation subsidies.

Career pathways



Even though many refugees will join companies at entry-level roles, organizations will be looking to partner with companies that are committed to the long-term growth and career development of refugee employees.

Companies should express a desire to [help refugee employees grow within their business](#), particularly given that refugees are a very loyal talent base.

Hiring for a range of skill levels



Refugees in Canada arrive with a variety of educational and professional backgrounds.

Companies should be **open to hiring refugees at all skill levels**, and go into introductory conversations with non-profits with a general sense of the type of positions they are looking to fill, including the skills and backgrounds they expect of applicants.

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Be patient and persistent

- Refugee organizations in Canada are undertaking herculean efforts to integrate tens of thousands of Afghans into the country. Given that their staff have limited bandwidth as a result, they might sometimes be a bit slower to respond to company outreach.
- The slate of refugee clients that a local affiliate is working with changes frequently. Just because an agency does not have any refugee candidates that might fit a company's needs at one time, it does not mean that they will not have relevant candidates in the future.
- Companies should email their contacts at the refugee resettlement agencies on a monthly basis to share their current hiring needs and inquire to see if the agency has any relevant refugee candidates.

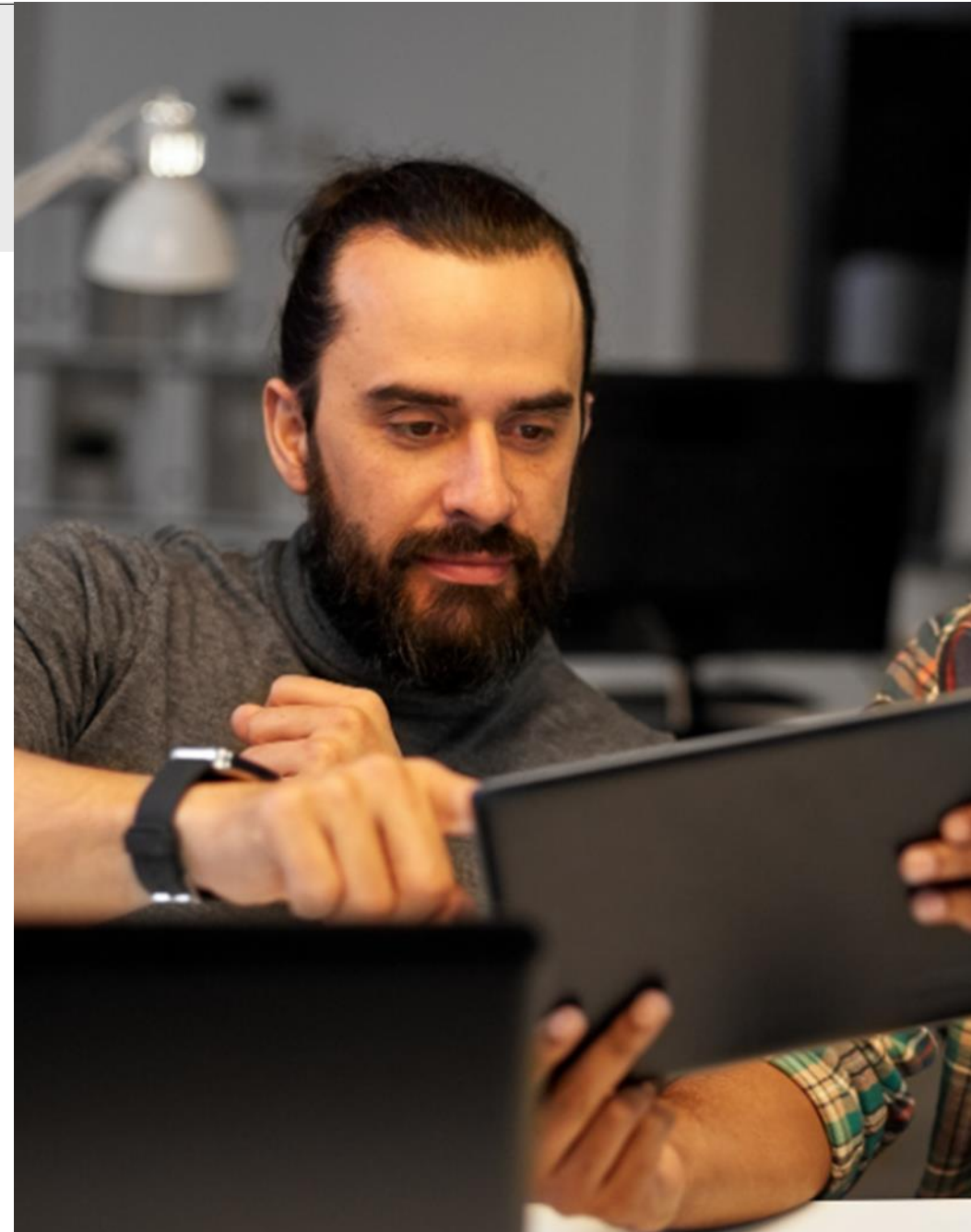
Align on recruitment process and timeline

- During the introductory conversation, **companies and refugee organizations should align on the process and timeline** for how the latter will identify and refer potential refugee candidates for job openings.
- **Both the company and refugee resettlement agency should identify a main point of contact** so that all parties know who to reach out to for next steps.



Ask for a phone number and e-mail address

- Companies should ask for both the direct phone number and email address for the employment specialist at these organizations so that companies have multiple avenues to reach the organization if needed.



Showcase commitment to refugee hiring

- Refugee-focused NGOs are looking for corporate partners that are committed to forming a long-term working relationship and properly evaluating applications from their refugee clients.
- Companies should showcase that they are committed to seriously considering all refugee applicants, whether that be through assigning a HR point of contact that can receive refugees' resume via email or creating customized career websites (or referral codes) that companies share with refugee-focused NGOs so that they can track applicants that were referred by these organizations.
- Companies should also work together with refugee-focused NGOs to track refugee applicants and the status of their application.

Flexibility and patience are key

- Even with following these best practices, **companies might face delays** with recruiting refugee talent given the challenges this crisis has presented to the refugee resettlement system.
- **Please be patient and persistent with your engagement on this topic** – while hiring refugees can require an initial investment in time and energy, there are long-term dividends for hiring this population.



The Tent Partnership for Refugees can connect companies to relevant refugee NGOs



Companies should reach out to the Tent team to align on the organizations that are best suited to support their hiring needs.

After this initial assessment, the Tent team can facilitate relevant introductions to these organizations.

Companies should reach out to the Tent team if they are facing challenges connecting with refugee organizations after following the best practices previously highlighted.



Thank you!

