



TENT

# How to implement a refugee hiring pilot

## TRAINING PRESENTATION

A resource guide for Human  
Resources and Diversity, Equity,  
Inclusion Teams



**Why invest in setting up a thoughtful refugee hiring program?**

Companies that invest in creating a [welcoming environment](#) for refugees see dividends in [employee retention](#), enhanced [brand and reputation](#), and in their ability to [attract new talent](#) to the company.

# Explore Tent's [Members' Hub](#) to access our suite of exclusive trainings, webinars, research, case studies, and more.

## Member Resources

### Background on Tent >

Download useful documents and learn more about the Tent Partnership for Refugees. Materials are available in multiple languages.

### Events Calendar >

Get the latest information on Tent's upcoming events.

### Innovation Spotlights >

Discover the innovative and exciting ways that Tent member companies are integrating refugees through our Innovation Spotlight series.

### Training Materials >

Find training presentations designed to help companies implement their refugee programs, such as how to hire refugees or how to integrate refugees in the workforce.

### Guidebooks >

Explore Tent's collection of 15+ guides designed to aid companies around the world in their efforts to hire, mentor, and create more inclusive workplaces for refugees.

### Podcast >

Listen to episodes of "Refugees at Work", Tent's podcast which features conversations with refugees employees working at Tent member companies.

### Global Webinars >

View episodes of Tent's global webinar series which explores best practices for companies interested in undertaking refugee initiatives, as well as refugee-related policy and research topics.

### Country-Specific Webinars >

View episodes of Tent's country-specific webinars which explore best practices for companies interested in undertaking refugee initiatives in particular countries of interest. Episodes are recorded in the country's native language.

### Exclusive Research >

Take a deep dive into Tent's catalog of members-only research - including synopses of Tent's proprietary consumer perceptions data which reveals how consumers in various markets respond to brands taking steps to integrate refugees, and other refugee-related research reports.





# PHASE 1: SET YOUR INTERNAL STRATEGY

## Designate 1-2 leads for your refugee hiring program

- ▲ Company Leads are responsible for setting the internal strategy and driving your refugee hiring initiative forward
- ▲ These professionals tend to come from HR, DEI, or CSR/public policy



## Define goals for your refugee hiring program

- ▲ Once you assess your hiring needs, set measurable and specific goals for the number of refugees you will hire (e.g. hire 200 candidates from refugee population by 2024)
- ▲ Define early on what data your company will collect to measure progress of your refugee hiring program. Set up a system to collect this data.
- ▲ For example, you may want to measure metrics such as: refugee candidate job satisfaction/inclusion, hiring manager satisfaction, candidate experience, first-year



## Educate your key teams on refugee hiring

- ▲ Leverage Tent's guidebooks, research, and trainings to educate your team on refugee-hiring 101 topics (e.g. legal status refugee claimants in Canada, work authorization documents, cultural differences, general bias, etc.)
- ▲ Invite team members to join Tent's Coalition training sessions on best practices for refugee integration



### *Members' Hub Resources:*

- Training on "Recruiting refugee candidates in Canada"
- Training on "Setting up refugee employees for success"



## Communicate to your stakeholders that your company has joined Tent and will be hiring refugees

### ▲ Internal channels

- ▲ Employee newsletter, team meetings, Teams/Slack
- ▲ Invite Tent to speak at company/HR-wide meeting
- ▲ Spotlight a refugee employee

### ▲ External communication

- ▲ Social media and press
- ▲ Conferences and panels
- ▲ Tent events



**Members' Hub Resources:**  
*Training on "Consumer perceptions & communicating about your refugee efforts"*





# PHASE 2: DEVELOP A REFUGEE RECRUITMENT PIPELINE

## Identify 2-3 locations to pilot your refugee hiring efforts

- ▲ Ideally, pilot locations should be in urban or commuter-friendly areas with access to public transportation.
- ▲ The areas with the largest refugee populations include:
  - ✓ **Ontario:** Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, London
  - ✓ **British Columbia:** Vancouver, Surrey, Victoria
  - ✓ **Quebec:** Montreal, Quebec City
  - ✓ **Alberta:** Calgary, Edmonton
  - ✓ **Manitoba:** Winnipeg
  - ✓ **Nova Scotia:** Halifax
  - ✓ **Saskatchewan:** Regina, Saskatoon
  - ✓ **New Brunswick:** Moncton, Fredericton
  - ✓ **Newfoundland and Labrador:** St. John's



## Determine the types of roles that refugees could fill at your company

- ▲ Refugees come to Canada with a wide array of educational/professional experiences, language capabilities, and skill sets.
- ▲ Ideally, you would have a skills assessment or needs of your company that can be matched with skills of refugees.
- ▲ Tent can provide guidance on the types of roles refugees can fill at your company and connect you with local partners that can help you recruit refugees at all skill levels.



## Working with local partners

### Refugee job seekers may not be aware of vacancies at your company:

- ▲ Recently-arrived refugees typically aren't tapped into professional or social networks to link them to jobs.
- ▲ They may also not be aware of common ways of finding jobs in their new country, such as online job boards or platforms.

Working with local partner/s can help you to reach refugee job seekers, so they don't miss out on opportunities at your company.

**Watch out:** Most potential local partners will focus on a specific city or region, rather than on an entire country. (Even national or regional organizations often have relatively independent local offices and programs). If you need support more broadly across a national market, you may need to work with multiple partners. Tent can help facilitate this!

## Connect with local organizations and build strong partnerships

- ▲ Tent works closely with newcomer employment service-providers and dozens of other refugee-focused NGOs and staffing agencies in Canada

**Employment service-providers can support companies** in identifying potential refugee talent and support refugee applicants with navigating the application process and Canadian job market. In some cases, local partners can pre-screen and provide a shortlist of refugee applicants for the roles you are looking to fill. Some organizations can also help to prepare candidates for the job market with other services like language training.

**Come prepared to these conversations** with job descriptions, salary/benefits, transportation assistance, solutions for language learners, career pathways. Be patient and persistent, align on process and timeline, showcase your commitment to supporting refugees



### ***Members' Hub Resources:***

Training on "Best Practices for Working with Refugee-Focused NGOs"

## Examine your screening and recruitment process to remove unnecessary barriers

- ▲ Train your teams to ensure they are not screening out refugees due to resume gaps, lack of local experience, unrecognized credentials, or for seeming “overqualified”
- ▲ Assess a candidate’s potential, not their interviewing skills



*Members’ Hub Resources:*  
Guidebook on [Employer’s Guide to Fostering Inclusion for Refugees in the Workplace](#)



## Anticipate language and cultural barriers in the interview process

- ▲ Examine whether your interview process and job description demands a greater level of English/French fluency than the role itself requires, and tailor it accordingly
- ▲ Calibrate what level of English/French proficiency is required, and implement work-arounds (e.g. pairing refugees with compatriots who can assist with translation), recognizing that refugees often improve English rapidly on the job
- ▲ Be mindful of differences in communication styles (e.g. eye contact, gender/age dynamics, direct vs. indirect communication, etc.)



### *Members' Hub Resources:*

- [Guidebook](#) and Training on "How to overcome language barriers and invest in immigrant and refugee talent"
- Training on "How to create a culturally inclusive workplace for refugee employees"

## Consider transportation barriers that may discourage refugees from applying

- ▲ Given that refugees are new to Canada, it can take them many months to secure a driver's license and save sufficient funds to rent and/or buy a car
- ▲ If your interview location is not accessible via public transportation, companies should invest in solutions to help refugees get to an interview/job (e.g. arrange a carpooling or shuttle van, allow for more remote work, etc.)



### *Members' Hub Resources:*

Guideline on "Addressing Transportation Barriers for Refugee Employees in Canada"



# **PHASE 3: CREATE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR REFUGEE EMPLOYEES**

## Set up a refugee-specific onboarding program

- ▲ Tailor your onboarding experience for refugee employees to reduce cultural and language barriers and ensure that they are set up for success.

Ex: Connect them with internal champions/'buddies'. Conduct a benefits and resources info session, set up "lunch and learns" on workplace readiness, distribute onboarding materials in refugee employees' native language, share info helpful to newcomers (e.g. how to access public transport to work)



### **Members' Hub Resources:**

*Training on "Setting up refugee employees and their teams for success in Canada"*



## Support the professional development of your refugee employees

- ▲ To maximize the benefits refugees can bring to your company, invest in the professional growth and development programs of your refugee talent.

*Ex: mentorship, on-the-job training, education grants, re-credentialing, English language training, and assisting in creating personalized career development plans*



### **Members' Hub Resources:**

*Training on "Setting up refugee employees and their teams for success in Canada"*



## Invest in creating a more inclusive workplace

- ▲ Companies should take steps to ensure that their workplaces and benefits are inclusive of their refugees, such as ensuring they have time off for their cultural/religious holidays and making sure they have food to eat in the cafeteria.
- ▲ Since refugees might not be familiar with Canadian workplace norms, companies can run a training on this topic or pair refugees with a “buddy” who will help them get accustomed to their new workplace and ease social integration.



### **Members' Hub Resources:**

- Training on “How to create a culturally inclusive workplace for refugee employees”
- Guidebook on [“Employer’s Guide to Fostering Inclusion for Refugees in the Workplace”](#)



# PHASE 4: CONTINUE TO DRIVE IMPACT

## Track and monitor your refugee hiring efforts

- ▲ Companies should collect data around their refugee hiring throughout the talent lifecycle, - from application, to offer, to retention, and growth, -as it will enable you to better serve your refugee employees and understand successes and challenges with your refugee hiring program.



### **Members' Hub Resources:**

*Guidelines on "Tracking refugee status in the workforce: a guide for companies in Canada"*



## Publicly communicate about your refugee-engagement

- ▲ Companies that publicly communicate about their support for refugees benefit from [positive consumer perceptions](#), while also motivating their peer companies to similarly step up on this topic.
- ▲ Tent's communications team can work with your company to help you develop social media posts, and videos and other content around your refugee engagement.
- ▲ Tent provides companies with regular high-profile opportunities, like our [Business Summits](#), to announce measurable and specific commitments in support of refugees.



### **Members' Hub Resources:**

- *Training on "Consumer perceptions & communicating about your refugee efforts"*
- *Tent's "Refugees at Work" Podcast*

# Guidelines for Implementing a Refugee Hiring Program (or Pilot)

## PHASE 1: SET YOUR INTERNAL STRATEGY

- ❑ Designate 1-2 leads for your refugee hiring program
- ❑ Define goals for your refugee hiring program
- ❑ Educate your Human Resources teams on refugee hiring
- ❑ Communicate to your stakeholders that your company has joined Tent and will be hiring refugees

## PHASE 2: DEVELOP A REFUGEE RECRUITMENT PIPELINE

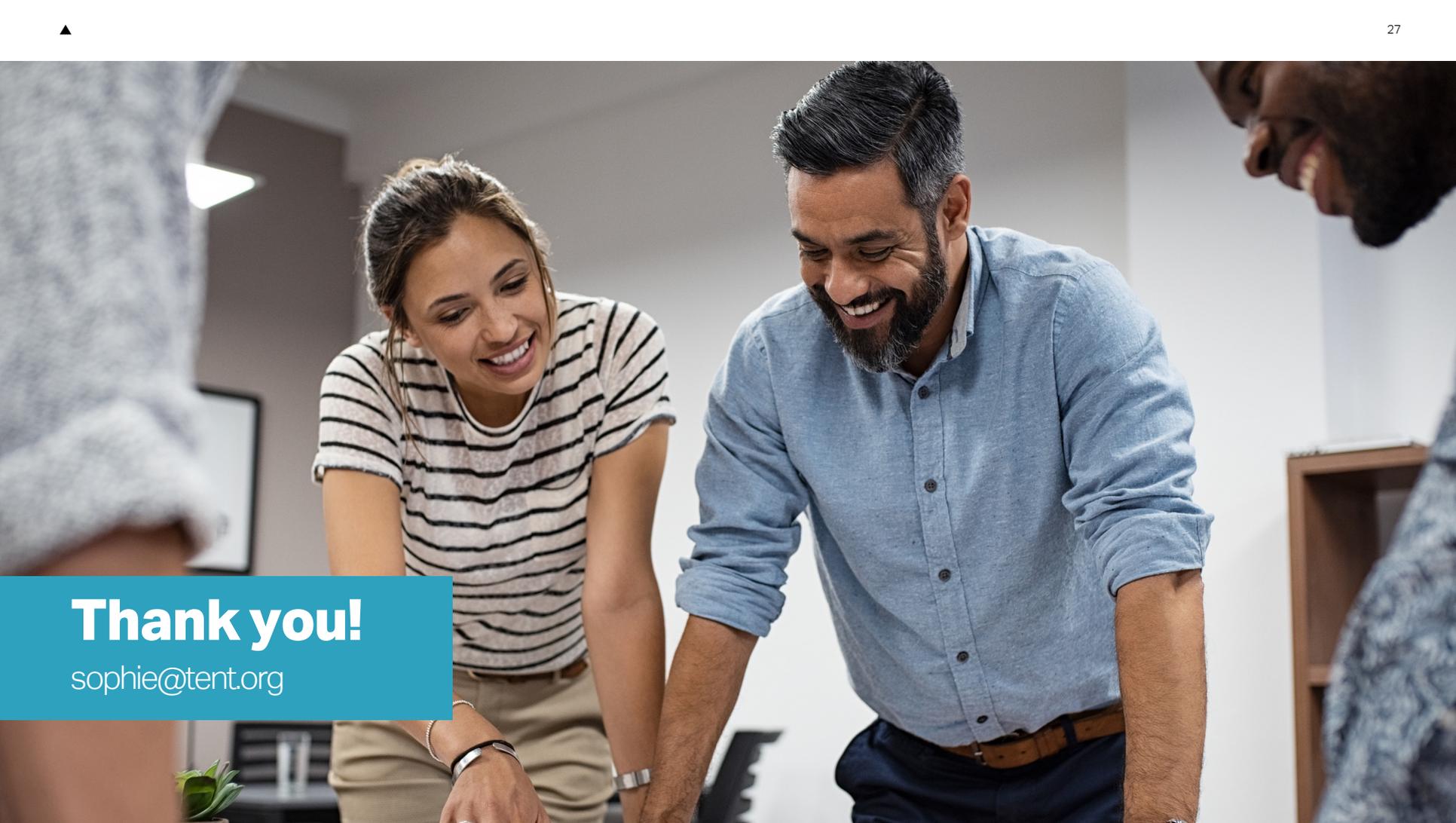
- ❑ Identify 1-2 locations to pilot your refugee hiring efforts
- ❑ Determine the type of roles that refugees could fill at your company
- ❑ Connect with local organizations and build strong partnerships
- ❑ Examine and modify your screening/recruitment process to remove unnecessary barriers
- ❑ Anticipate language and cultural barriers in the interview process
- ❑ Consider transportation barriers that may discourage refugees from applying

## PHASE 3: CREATE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR REFUGEES EMPLOYEES

- ❑ Set up a refugee-specific onboarding program
- ❑ Support the professional development of your refugee employees
- ❑ Invest in creating a more inclusive workplace

## PHASE 4: CONTINUE TO DRIVE IMPACT

- ❑ Track and monitor your refugee hiring efforts
- ❑ Publicly communicate about your refugee-engagement
- ❑ Expand your refugee hiring program to new locations
- ❑ Check in regularly with Tent to provide updates and request additional support



**Thank you!**

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