

A Collaborative Model for Delivering Mentoring to Immigrants in Ottawa



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Prepared by: Hire Immigrants Ottawa
in collaboration with project partners

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Hire Immigrants Ottawa

HIRE IMMIGRANTS OTTAWA (HIO) is a community-based initiative that brings together employers, immigrant agencies and stakeholders to enhance employers' ability to access the talents of skilled immigrants in the Ottawa area.

Project Partners

This project was undertaken in collaboration with the following stakeholders:

- United Way Ottawa
- Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO)
- National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA
- LASI WorldSkills Inc.
- La Cité Collégiale
- Conseil Economique & Social d'Ottawa Carleton (CESOC)
- Algonquin College

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This document describes a collaborative model for delivering mentoring-to-employment programs for skilled immigrants in Ottawa. It was produced under the terms of a funding agreement¹ between the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and United Way Ottawa on behalf of Hire Immigrants Ottawa and local stakeholder organizations.²

Mentoring has proven to be an effective way to help immigrants (mentees) transition to skills-appropriate employment, as well as provide an opportunity for individuals (mentors) already successful in their fields to develop cross-cultural awareness.

Individuals paired with a local mentor benefit from the exposure to a Canadian workplace, networking and other professional opportunities, as well as enhanced access to job coaching. A 2006 study of the Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) Mentoring Partnership indicated that new immigrants who had participated in mentoring earned higher incomes and that 67 per cent of the immigrants who had completed the four-month mentoring program found jobs in their desired occupation, compared to 16 per cent of newcomers in a control group who did not participate.

A number of mentoring programs currently exist in Ottawa. They serve a variety of clients and offer a number of different program features and characteristics. The purpose of this document is to:

- describe current mentoring programs for immigrants in the Ottawa region;
- highlight best practices from mentoring programs in other Canadian municipalities; and
- propose a collaborative model for delivering mentoring for employment for immigrants in Ottawa.

Methodology

Research and stakeholder consultations for the development of the framework for the collaborative model included collecting and analyzing information about existing mentoring programs and services that are available for skilled immigrants in the Ottawa region and five other Canadian cities. A number of stakeholders were consulted, including immigrant and employment service agencies, organizations currently offering local mentoring programs, mentors and mentees involved in a local program, post-secondary educational institutions and interested employers. Local consultations were conducted in both English and French, as appropriate.

These findings form the basis for the collaborative mentoring model, which provides a framework for the evolution of collaborative mentoring from the existing suite of local mentoring-to-employment programs and services.

¹ "A Funding Proposal to Develop a Collaborative Model for Delivering Mentoring-to-Employment Programs for Immigrants in Ottawa," submitted to MTCU in September 2010.

² See list of project partners.

Local Mentoring Programs

An environmental scan of local mentoring-to-employment programs for skilled immigrants in the Ottawa region was conducted in late 2011, during which nine existing programs were identified. A summary of these programs is provided in Appendix A.

This exercise resulted in several significant findings:

1. Local programs can be classified into three main types:

Embedded Programs: An embedded mentoring program is one component of a broader program. The mentoring component is only available to registrants or participants in the broader program.

Internal Programs: Internal mentoring programs are offered by some organizations and professional associations. Participating mentors and mentees are, or potentially will be, employees of the organization or members of the association. Other individuals 'external' to the organization or association are ineligible to participate in the mentoring program.

Open Access Programs: An open access mentoring program stands alone and has minimal restrictions on program accessibility; it does not have the limiting eligibility and operational criteria that are inherent in embedded and internal mentoring programs. Apart from broad qualifying criteria, any experienced individual may be eligible to participate as a mentor, regardless of industry sector or professional association membership. An open access program provides service to the widest possible range of skilled immigrants — any job-ready skilled immigrant may be eligible to participate as a mentee.

2. While there are six local embedded programs and two internal programs, only one open access mentoring program operates in the Ottawa region: the Career Mentoring Program³ offered by Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO).
3. Local employment and immigrant service agencies currently make informal client referrals to OCISO's Career Mentoring Program. At the time the environmental scan was conducted, there was no documented, standardized process or guidelines for making referrals.
4. Informal efforts are being made to accommodate French-speaking mentees in the Career Mentoring Program by matching them with French-speaking mentors. There are no French-language materials.
5. Mentor recruitment activities are generally aimed at individual volunteers. A pilot project is under way to engage a corporate partner in mentor recruitment.

³ http://ociso.org/En/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=134&Itemid=116.

In late 2011 and early 2012, a literature review and a series of telephone consultations were conducted with organizations that offer mentoring-to-employment programs for skilled immigrants in five communities: Toronto (The Mentoring Partnership), Calgary (The Mentoring Collaborative), London (Mentorship for Immigrant Employment), Halifax (Connector Program) and Vancouver (Newcomers Mentorship Program). These cities and programs were selected because of their uniqueness and the perceived potential for Ottawa to derive lessons learned and best practices. A summary of these programs is provided in Appendix B.

All of these programs shared similarities with respect to the local partnerships and stakeholders involved on the mentee side of the mentoring relationship. In all cases, mentees (qualifying skilled immigrants) are identified by local immigrant and employment service agencies. These agencies are also involved in screening and preparing eligible skilled immigrants to help them meet the qualifying criteria for program entry. For some programs, the eligibility criteria specify certain industry sectors for mentee/mentor matching purposes, thus reflecting local employer engagement. The agencies have varying degrees of responsibility for program delivery, but in all cases they are key stakeholders and active participants in ensuring the success of the mentoring program.

There are significant differences among these programs with respect to the engagement and partnerships with organizations representing the mentor side of the mentoring relationship. In some cases, mentors are able to participate as volunteer individuals and/or are required to make a significant time commitment; in other cases, they must be affiliated with an organization and/or the time commitment can be very limited.

The unique elements of these programs that are considered to be most relevant for the purposes of this project are described here.

The Mentoring Partnership

The Mentoring Partnership (TMP), of the Toronto Regional Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) operates with an extensive network of service delivery organizations that identify qualifying mentees and deliver the mentoring services. There is also an extensive network of employers, business associations and professional associations involved in recruiting qualifying mentors. TMP also accepts qualifying mentors who are individual volunteers.

TMP itself provides no direct mentoring service delivery; rather it provides centralized resources and standards for quality assurance and operational support, along with critical technology support through a customized online system called MentorMatch. This technology provides mentee/mentor matching based on flexible criteria as well as detailed task management for service delivery partners.

The Mentoring Collaborative

The Mentoring Collaborative (TMC) was adapted from TMP for implementation in Calgary. However, the Calgary Regional Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC) provides mentoring service delivery; the local immigrant service agencies identify qualifying mentees and provide general employment services to their clients but do not provide direct mentoring services. TMC has established relationships with local employers, economic development agencies, business associations and professional associations that recruit qualifying mentors. TMC also accepts qualifying mentors who are individual volunteers. TMC has implemented a customized installation of MentorMatch.

TMC has also established partnerships with local post-secondary educational institutions, including Bow Valley College. The TMC program and the College cross-promote (e.g., college students in an English language program have access to the TMC program at no cost).

Mentorship for Immigrant Employment

The Mentorship for Immigrant Employment (MIE) program in London has evolved from a mentoring program that has been operating for years under the leadership of WIL Employment Connections. Unlike the Immigrant Employment Councils in Toronto and Calgary, the London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) is an informal network of partners and stakeholders; it is not an incorporated entity. Accordingly, when LMIEC took steps to enhance its local mentoring program, it built upon the foundation of WIL's existing program. The program continues to be managed by WIL with additional components and resources provided by LMIEC.

All mentors in the MIE program are affiliated with one of the partner organizations — local employers, economic development agencies, business associations and professional associations. Individual volunteer mentors are not eligible to participate.

Connector Program

The Greater Halifax Partnership operates the Connector Program, which involves an informal network of experienced professionals. These individuals volunteer to meet with a skilled immigrant (mentee) informally for at least half an hour, and refer the mentee to three professional colleagues for a similar meeting.

Newcomers Mentorship Program

The Newcomers Mentorship Program in Vancouver is designed and operated in conjunction with a sponsoring employer. The Immigrant Employment Council of British Columbia (IECBC) operates exclusively with host employers and supports the employer in operating an internal mentoring program. All mentoring activities take place in the workplace, and involve mentors selected from among the organization's employees.

The information collected in the research phase provided the foundation to build a framework for the collaborative program delivery model. An awareness of existing local programs has led to the realization that an open access program will reach the largest number of skilled immigrants. Unique elements of the other programs across Canada provide models that can be adapted and implemented appropriately in Ottawa.

Flowing from the research and stakeholder consultations, it is proposed that the collaborative model for mentoring be built around the Career Mentoring Program (CMP) delivered by OCISO. The CMP is the only “open access” mentoring program for skilled immigrants in the Ottawa area that is offered independently and open to individuals who meet the program eligibility criteria. It is also the largest mentoring program in the city. As well, by building the framework around the CMP, the proposed collaborative model will benefit from the infrastructure of an existing program, thereby enabling the framework to be implemented in short order with additional resource support. OCISO will be the lead operating agency for the collaborative mentoring model.

Open Access Program: The Career Mentoring Program

The existing Career Mentoring Program is the foundation upon which the open access components of the collaborative model will evolve. The information presented in this section of the document describes the program as it is currently structured and operates.

The CMP helps internationally educated professionals obtain employment in their field by matching them with an employed professional working in the same or a related field. The goal is to provide newcomers with insights and advice that will help them enter the Canadian labour force.

Mentees and mentors engage in a mentoring relationship for a period of approximately three months, meeting for at least one hour a week during that period. In most cases, mentors in the core program are not affiliated with their employer with respect to their mentoring activities; in other words, they engage in the mentoring relationship outside the scope of their employment. Their employer may or may not be aware of their mentoring activities, which take place outside of work hours and outside the workplace.

Mentees

The program provides mentoring-to-employment services for job-ready skilled immigrants who have received international post-secondary (or equivalent) education credentials and/or professional certification. A job-ready skilled immigrant possesses the required immigration status as well as any credentials and certifications required to become employed in their profession in the Ottawa region. Additionally, they have a defined career objective, a professional resumé, and an awareness of job search and interview practices in Canada.

Mentees access the program through referral from local immigrant-serving agencies or through word of mouth and self-referral. Eligibility criteria for mentees to participate in the program include:

- landed immigrant or convention refugee;
- internationally educated;
- Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) assessment at level 5 or higher;
- Ontario resident; and
- completion of a Job Search Workshop or equivalent.

Prospective mentees are identified as potential program candidates by their service agency as part of the routine client service delivery. The agencies apply the eligibility criteria to identify potential candidates.⁴ Working with the agency, the client develops and implements an action plan to prepare themselves for the most appropriate mentoring program by building the required skills and supporting documentation. When the potential mentee is deemed ready, the agency then recommends him or her for acceptance into the Career Mentoring Program.

Upon receiving the recommendation, a CMP staff member verifies that all eligibility requirements have been met. The mentee is either accepted into the mentoring program or referred back to the agency with specific reasons for non-acceptance. If accepted, program orientation begins and the mentee becomes available for matching with a mentor.

Mentors

Mentors currently gain access to the CMP in one of two ways: they are recruited directly as part of the program's routine operations; or they apply individually.⁵

- Current eligibility requirements for mentors include:
- at least two years of work experience in the Ottawa region;
- contacts in employment and professional networks;
- good interpersonal, communication and listening skills;
- sensitive to employment and cultural transition experiences; and
- commitment to a mentoring relationship for at least three months.

Mentors are currently recruited through referrals from professional organizations, existing mentors, community newspaper ads and e-blast communications.

⁴ The agencies apply the eligibility criteria for all local mentoring programs (Embedded, Internal and Open Access) to identify potential candidates for any of the programs.

⁵ Individual applicants may have been encouraged to apply through a service agency or another program partner such as HIO.

Career Mentoring program staff assesses potential mentors according to the eligibility criteria. Those who meet the criteria are accepted into the program. Program orientation begins and the mentor becomes available for matching with a mentee.

Orientation

Before engaging in mentoring relationships, both mentors and mentees participate in different orientation activities.

Mentees attend a one-on-one meeting with a Mentorship Facilitator, who performs a complete needs assessment. Qualifying mentees are invited to attend an orientation session where they learn about the various aspects of the program, how to conduct an effective employment search with the support of a mentor and what is reasonable to expect from the mentoring relationship. At this session, they also begin to develop an action plan and to assess their employment search needs.

Mentors are required to participate in a one-on-one meeting with a CMP staff member, followed by an orientation training session. At this orientation, they learn about the various aspects of the program and what is expected of them as career mentors. Upon completion of the orientation, mentors have the opportunity to participate in a workshop, offered in two half-day sessions, where they learn a strategic approach to mentoring to employment. Elements addressed include the aspects involved in managing the mentoring relationship, career objective definition, labour market research, professional networks and information meetings, cross-cultural competency enhancement and interview preparation.

Matching

Mentee-mentor matching is done manually by CMP staff, with some automated support. The matching criteria include professional industry/sector, career goals and objectives, cultural background, personality fit and other factors such as geographic proximity.

When a suitable match has been identified, a CMP staff member arranges for the potential mentee and mentor to review the proposed match in order to determine whether the match seems to be a good one. If so, a meeting is arranged between the staff member and the proposed mentee and mentor. If the match is accepted by both parties, they enter into the mentorship agreement.

Mentoring Activities

Under the mentorship agreement, mentors and mentees meet weekly for approximately three months, or until they agree that the objectives have been met. The action plan developed by the mentee in the orientation session provides a roadmap for guiding the mentoring activities. Other than the required one-hour face-to-face meeting, other contacts are by mutual agreement (e-mails, phone calls, additional meetings or technology-enabled virtual meetings).

Additional program elements that offer supplemental supports to participants include regular professional networking events, mock interview sessions, Linked-In group facilitation, panel discussions, guest speaker events, and information meeting and speed networking opportunities.

A CMP staff member is available to provide ongoing referrals, advice and general strategizing. Regular contact is made with mentors and mentees to inquire about the mentoring and to offer support. As needed, case meetings are held to celebrate progress and determine strategies moving forward.

Closure

The mentoring relationship ends by mutual agreement when the mentee's needs and objectives have been met or after a period of three months, when the mentor's time commitment expires. Both parties may continue the relationship beyond three months if desired.

The end of the mentoring relationship may not be related to an employment outcome; the mentor is not expected to remain in the mentoring relationship until the mentee gains employment.

Evaluation

Mentors and mentees provide feedback regularly during the mentoring relationship and upon program completion. Monthly evaluations are conducted by a program facilitator as a routine part of the monthly check-in with the mentee/mentor.

Evaluation of individual mentoring relationships is not tied to any employment outcome for an individual mentee. However, employment outcomes are tracked upon completion of every mentoring relationship and are reported on an aggregate basis over a given time period.

Using a customized mentoring database, the Career Mentoring Program tracks client/mentor activity, interviews granted, events attended, changes to employment status and general client satisfaction with and perception of the mentoring process. This information can be extracted in a variety of formats depending on requirements. Currently the program tracks and reports exits to school, exits to employment, events attended and length of time to employment. Information regarding program participation, match experiences and events attended is also tracked for mentor participants.

Embedded and Internal Programs

Local embedded and internal mentoring programs will continue to evolve at the discretion of their respective operating agencies. They will continue to recruit mentees and mentors as part of their routine program operations. Under the collaborative model, linkages between program operators and local immigrant and employment service agencies will be established or strengthened, particularly with respect to mentee recruitment. Program operators will be encouraged to work with the service agencies to ensure that the eligibility criteria are understood and appropriately reflected in the agencies' client service referral procedures.

Recommendations

This section presents a consolidated list of the recommended areas of new activities or program enhancements. The recommendations are numbered solely for reference purposes; there is no implied order of ranking, priority or importance.

1. Referral and Assessment Procedures

Immigrant and employment service agencies should work with the Career Mentoring Program as well as with local embedded and internal programs to develop standardized procedures for identifying, assessing, preparing and referring their skilled immigrant clients to these mentoring programs.

2. Mentees – Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for mentees should be periodically reviewed by the employment and immigrant service agencies that use them, and adjusted as required to reflect the agencies' client needs within the parameters of program funders.

3. Monitoring and Reporting

Existing tools and methods for monitoring the progress and achievements of individual mentoring relationships (mentee-mentor interactions and results) should be reviewed with a view to improving timely feedback. Opportunities for program enhancements should be identified.

4. Employment Outcomes

Employment outcomes for mentees are currently reported only once, at the end of the mentoring relationship. These outcomes should be tracked at various times after program completion to provide more meaningful assessment of the impact of the CMP.

5. Bilingual Services

An effective community-based mentoring program in the National Capital Region must offer its services in both official languages, tailored to the needs of all eligible skilled immigrants. Effective bilingual mentoring service delivery is not achieved by simply providing a French translation of materials designed and developed for the anglophone community. Customized materials need to be developed for francophone participants in mentoring programs. As programs evolve, bilingual requirements should be considered at all stages of the evolution, especially during program design, materials development and recruitment activities.

6. Access to Service at Multiple Locations

As the program expands, certain agencies and/or geographic locations in the service area may represent a concentrated source of mentee referrals. Consideration should be given to providing Career Mentoring Program staff at these service locations, funded by the program on a part or full-time basis as appropriate.

7. Program Closure

The termination process for the mentoring relationship should be clarified and include some element of recognition for those who complete the Career Mentoring Program (e.g., a certificate of completion).

Learning From Others

Ottawa has the advantage of learning from programs in other cities that offer unique program features in order to enhance the variety and scope of mentoring programs offered in the city. The following programs are recommended for adoption and adaptation as part of the collaborative model.

8. Assess Technology Support

Toronto and Calgary use the MentorMatch IT system, an online system to facilitate and integrate key processes of their mentoring programs. Vancouver is in the early stages of implementing MentorMatch. Further exploration of MentorMatch and other similar systems, if any, should be conducted to identify whether any available technology system that supports mentoring would provide a cost-effective tool for managing an expanded program and coordinating stakeholders' participation in the delivery of mentoring programs.

9. Develop a Connector Component

A Connector Component based on the Halifax model should be developed. This would provide mentees and mentors with access to mentoring that involves a much smaller and more flexible time commitment. The mentoring activity involves a commitment for a 30-minute meeting, arranged by mutual agreement. Both mentor and mentee can engage in any number of meetings with different individuals. There is no ongoing mentee-mentor relationship between a pair of individuals beyond one meeting unless by mutual consent. Individuals engaged in the Connector Component may or may not expand their involvement in mentoring at a later date.

10. Corporate Partnership in Mentor Recruitment

In addition to volunteer mentor recruitment efforts, corporate partnerships should be engaged in mentoring. The TRIEC, CRIEC and LMIEC programs should serve as models. These mentors are affiliated with their employer organization, as distinct from being individual volunteer mentors. The organization would actively promote the mentoring program, recruit mentors and support their participation in concrete ways, such as allowing mentors to conduct their mentoring activities during working hours and to invite mentees into their workplace where appropriate for certain activities (e.g., workplace tours, job shadowing and department meetings).

11. Develop an Employer-Hosted Component

An employer-hosted mentoring component based on the Vancouver model should be explored and adapted in Ottawa. This component is essentially a mentoring program owned and operated by an employer organization; as such, it is an internal (rather than open access) mentoring program. Successful engagement of corporate partners in mentor recruitment would be a solid base from which to develop an employer-hosted component. The collaborative mentoring model would provide resources, assistance and support to employers as they develop and implement a custom mentoring program within their workplace. Mentors would be recruited, prepared and assigned to mentees by the employer organization. Immigrant and employment service agencies should incorporate knowledge of these employer-hosted mentoring programs as they are established, and would identify, prepare and recommend qualifying mentee candidates.

Roles and Responsibilities of Partners and Stakeholders

The partners in the project to develop a collaborative mentoring model are Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO), LASI WorldSkills Inc., the National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA, Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO), the Conseil Economique et Social d'Ottawa Carleton (CESOC), La Cité collégiale and Algonquin College.

Immigrant and employment service agencies (including Employment Ontario Service Agencies), employers and mentoring program operators are already working together through informal arrangements. As collaborative mentoring evolves under the model, it may involve new partners and stakeholders in the Ottawa region. It is expected that employers, business and professional associations will become more directly involved and that linkages among the service agencies and program operators will strengthen. Linkages will also be made to ethno-cultural associations and other relevant organizations in order to reach qualified immigrants who may not be receiving employment services from one of the partnering service agencies.

The following diagrams illustrate the stakeholders and partners as well as their primary role in the collaborative model for delivering mentoring programs in Ottawa.

FIGURE 1: Collaborative Model - Stakeholders and Partners

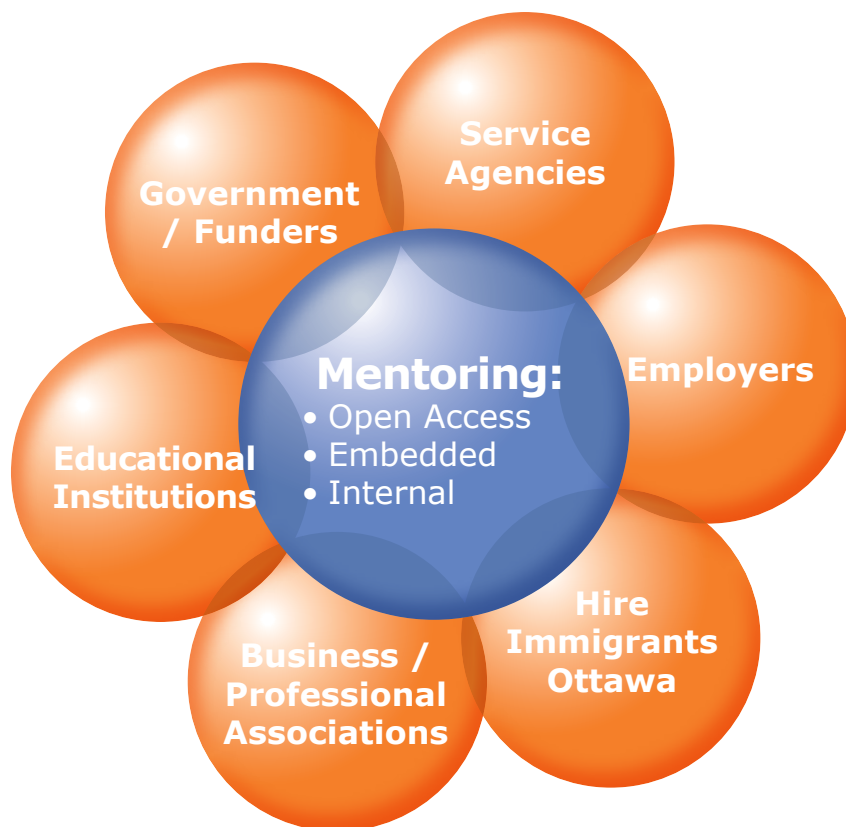


FIGURE 2: Primary Roles of Stakeholders and Partners

Enhanced coordination and stakeholder linkages lead to increased opportunity for immigrants to participate in mentoring					
OCISO	Service Agencies	Educational Institutions	HIO	Employers and Bus/Prof Associations	Government / Funders
Lead Agency for collaborative model. Primary delivery agency for open access career mentoring program.	Participate in mentoring program delivery, particularly mentee recruitment, in collaboration with other community stakeholders and partners.	Deliver mentoring as part of educational programs and make referrals to other mentoring programs.	Promote and facilitate connections between employers and organizations delivering mentoring programs.	Champion, promote and support the participation of their employees and members in mentoring programs	Promote and support the delivery of mentoring programs, including providing funding support.

Collaborative Approach in Ottawa

The following paragraphs describe the stakeholders and partners that will participate in the collaborative model, as well as their responsibilities in the collaborative.

Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO): In addition to participating as one of the immigrant service agency partners described below, OCISO will be the lead agency in the collaborative model. As the lead agency, OCISO will:

- continue to deliver the Career Mentoring Program;
- provide the governance structure for the collaborative model, including overseeing the operations of an advisory committee as well as providing contract and financial management; and
- work with an advisory committee to:
 - lead the development of funding proposals to seek additional resources to implement recommended program enhancements
 - develop and implement the collaborative mentoring program marketing and communications plan
 - develop and implement the collaborative mentoring program evaluation plan.

Immigrant and Employment Service Agencies: Participating immigrant service agencies include LASI WorldSkills Inc., which partners with eight local immigrant service agencies to provide employment-related services to immigrant clients in the region. The Employment Ontario Service providers in Ottawa provide employment-related services to a clientele that includes a large number of immigrants. Together, these partner service agencies will identify the vast majority of skilled immigrants who will become mentees in mentoring programs.

Immigrant and employment service agencies will:

- incorporate knowledge of local embedded and internal mentoring programs into their client services;
- identify suitable mentee candidates for all local mentoring programs, particularly the open access program, based on program eligibility criteria;
- prepare qualifying candidates to fully meet all eligibility criteria where possible;
- recommend eligible candidates to program operators;
- participate in the advisory committee as requested; and
- participate in the implementation of the collaborative mentoring program marketing / communications and evaluation plans.

Employers: Local employers are already actively engaged in some mentoring programs, and have existing relationships with program operators and with local service agencies. They would play a major role in mentor recruitment. Participating employers will:

Collaborative Approach in Ottawa

- champion and promote mentoring within their organizations;
- recruit qualified mentors within their organization and support their participation;
- participate in the advisory committee as requested; and
- participate in program tracking and evaluation.

Business and Professional Associations: Local business and professional associations, including the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce and the Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la Capitale nationale (RGA), would be engaged to ensure that their members are encouraged to participate in the collaborative model.

- Participating business and professional associations will:
- promote mentoring programs to their members;
- refer candidate mentors to OCISO; and
- participate in the advisory committee as requested.

Hire Immigrants Ottawa: HIO provides services to enhance employers' capacity to more effectively integrate skilled immigrants into their workplaces. HIO will:

- promote the collaborative mentoring program, particularly to participating employers;
- participate in the advisory committee as requested; and
- participate in the implementation of the collaborative mentoring program marketing / communications and evaluation plans.

Education Institutions: Participating post-secondary educational institutions will:

- deliver embedded/internal mentoring programs as part of their bridge training curricula, where appropriate;
- refer candidate mentees and mentors to OCISO;
- participate in the advisory committee as requested; and
- participate in the implementation of the collaborative mentoring program marketing / communications and evaluation plans.

Government/Funding Agencies: Government, agencies and foundations have an important role to play in providing financial support to implement, sustain and promote the collaborative model. Their specific investment goals and objectives will be reflected in future project plans.

Local Mentoring Program Operators: The project has identified a number of relevant mentoring programs that currently operate in the region (see Appendix A). Except for OCISO's Career Mentoring Program, these represent embedded and internal mentoring programs. All of these programs provide mentoring services to a clientele that includes skilled immigrants; some programs also provide services exclusively to skilled immigrants. The list of relevant local mentoring programs may evolve over time. At all times, efforts will be made to ensure that all program operators are included in the collaborative model.

Local embedded and internal mentoring program operators will be invited to share information about their programs with local immigrant and employment service agencies, and will be presented with information about the collaborative mentoring program.

Governance

The collaborative model will be managed under the OCISO governance structure, which currently manages the Career Mentoring Program. OCISO will establish an advisory committee and develop its terms of reference. This committee will comprise selected mentoring partners and stakeholders, who will provide guidance and advice on program evolution.

Marketing and Communications

Marketing and communications strategies, plans and materials for the collaborative model will be developed by OCISO with guidance from the advisory committee. Program delivery partners will plan and implement targeted marketing and communications campaigns aimed primarily at employers and mentors. Program partners and stakeholders will support some marketing and communications activities, especially the promotion and distribution of program materials and resources. For instance, local immigrant and employment service agencies will make use of the materials where practical within the course of their normal client and employer engagement activities.

Evaluation

Evaluation plans, tools and methodologies for the evolution of the open access mentoring program and the overall collaborative model will be developed by OCISO with guidance from the advisory committee.

- Program elements to be evaluated on an ongoing basis may include:
- post-program employment tracking for mentees;
- effectiveness of mentee and mentor recruitment activities, particularly with respect to local labour market fluctuations;
- effectiveness of mentee and mentor preparation and orientation activities;
- suitability of mentee/mentor matching;
- suitability and impact of mentoring program activities;
- range and effectiveness of program partnerships;
- range and effectiveness of employer engagement activities and relationships; and
- effectiveness and composition of the advisory committee.

Conclusion

Expanded and enhanced mentoring programs in Ottawa will be a significant step for the city in supporting immigrants to enter and participate in the local labour force at skills-appropriate employment. Mentoring promotes a more welcoming environment that generates fresh ideas, new insights and a global perspective. The synergy of a collaborative model for mentoring program delivery would provide a number of benefits:

- more immigrants will have an opportunity to participate in a mentoring program;
- employers will have a clear pathway to participate in mentoring, thereby increasing the number of mentors available for program delivery;
- partners and stakeholders will have an opportunity to establish more formalized arrangements for ongoing and enhanced collaboration; and
- local professionals who serve as mentors gain opportunities to grow personally and professionally, develop potential links to global markets, and explore new and innovative approaches in their field.

The project partners and the stakeholders consulted have demonstrated an interest in working together to enhance the quality of and access to mentoring programs for immigrants in Ottawa. By building on existing programs and implementing the set of proposed recommendations, this model provides an opportunity for enhanced mentoring programs, coordination and stakeholder linkages in the community.

Appendix A: Local Mentoring Programs

An environmental scan of local mentoring-to-employment programs for skilled immigrants in the Ottawa region was conducted in late 2011. The following programs were identified. Each program is described in terms of Program Provider, Program Description, Mentees and Mentors. The description also includes a link to the program website for more information.

Embedded Programs

A mentoring component is embedded in the following identified programs. Because of its embedded nature, the mentoring program component is accessible only to those participating in the broader program. Hence, access for mentees is restricted. Similarly mentors are generally selected from a narrow professional field or sector, which is the focus of the broader program.

The Mentorship Experience

Program Provider: Algonquin College

Program Description: The Algonquin College mentorship experience is a mandatory component embedded within some of the College's bridge training programs, including the Internationally Trained Civil Engineering Technology (ITCET) and International Finance and Administration Professionals (IFAP) bridge training programs. The mentorship experience involves one-on-one interactions with an industry professional, augmented by participation in an online community.

Mentees: All students registered in the associated bridge training program

Mentors: Mentors are employees of the companies participating in the associated bridge training program.

More Information: www.algonquincollege.com/acap/newcomer/programs_for_you.htm

Multicultural Achievement Program for Learning Employers (MAPLE)

Program Provider: Ottawa Chinese Community Services Centre (OCCSC) as well as agencies in Calgary and Vancouver

Program Description: MAPLE is a project that brings together employers and recent immigrants to create employment opportunities for immigrants. Employers engaged in MAPLE provide work placements for skilled immigrants with an appropriate background, and assign an employee to work with the skilled immigrant in a mentor-to-mentor workplace relationship.

Mentees: Participants in the MAPLE program

Mentors: Mentors are employees of the companies participating in the MAPLE program.

More Information: http://occsc.org/?page_id=140

The Federal Internship for Newcomers (FIN) Program

Program Provider: Foreign Credentials Referral Office, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Program Description: FIN provides newcomers with valuable temporary Canadian work experience and training opportunities with federal government departments. A mentor is matched with an intern for the duration of the internship.

Mentees: Interns participating in the FIN program

Mentors: Mentors are employees of federal government departments and crown corporations participating in the FIN program.

More Information: www.credentials.gc.ca/jobs/what-you-can-do/internship-program.asp

Career Transitions Program for International Medical Doctors

Program Provider: A joint initiative of the Catholic Immigration Centre, LASI World Skills and Skills for Change

Program Description: Provides international medical doctors with a comprehensive employment preparation program designed to support their entry into unregulated or alternative health sector employment. The project partners have contact with health sector employers in Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton, and work with them to find employment exposure opportunities in the workplace. Working together, the project partners and employers explore possibilities for full- and part-time positions, co-op placements, volunteering and mentoring.

Mentees: International medical doctors

Mentors: Practising medical doctors, licensed in Ontario

More Information: www.imd-info.ca/

Ontario Self-Employment Benefit (OSEB) Program

Program Provider: Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, Government of Ontario

Program Description: The Ontario Self-Employment Benefit provides unemployed people who are or have recently been eligible for employment insurance with income and entrepreneurial support while they develop and start their business. Participants are provided with ongoing business advisor counselling services and income support for up to 42 weeks.

Mentees: Job seekers (including immigrants) who are unemployed can apply to participate if they meet one of the following conditions:

They established a claim for employment insurance benefits or their employment insurance benefit period ended within the past three years.

They established a claim for employment insurance maternity or paternity benefits and were

paid benefits within the past five years, and are re-entering the labour force after having left it to care for newborn or newly adopted children.

Mentors: Successful entrepreneurs in Ontario

More Information: www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/employees/selfEmployment.html

Youth Futures Program

Program Provider: A partnership with the City of Ottawa, Ottawa Community Housing and University of Ottawa

Program Description: A seven-month program designed to give youth a taste of the post-secondary experience; includes a one-week intensive mentorship

Mentees: Youth (including immigrants) 16 to 21 years of age who are interested in obtaining more information about attending college or university, and who want to develop leadership skills and gain important work experience

Mentors: Post-secondary students

More Information: http://ottawa.ca/en/social_com/efa/yzj/youth_futures/

Internal Programs

A mentoring program operated by a professional association or an organization for their members or employees. The following programs have been identified:

HRPA Ottawa Mentoring Program

Program Provider: Human Resources Professionals Association, Ottawa Chapter

Program Description: The program pairs seasoned HR professionals (mentors) with new and mid-level individuals (protégés) to facilitate learning and networking opportunities within the Ottawa chapter. The program is divided into four categories representing the different needs and interests of individuals at different stages of their career: career interest, career entry, HR professional and HR leader.

Mentees: Members in good standing with HRPA⁶ who are committed to the field with limited or no HR experience, seeking or making a career transition to HR, or currently practising in HR

Mentors: Mentors are volunteer members in good standing with the HRPA and who have experience as practising HR professionals.

More Information: www.hrpa.ca/HRPACChapterSites/Ottawa/Pages/MentorsProtegesProgram.aspx

⁶ Membership fees are not intended to be a deterrent to skilled immigrants wanting to participate in the program.

Volunteerism to Employment Program

Program Provider: Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre

Program Description: The program is designed to develop and refine the knowledge, skills and experience of internationally trained professionals related to professional practice in Canada. The program includes a job mentoring placement (up to three months; 12 hours a week).

Mentees: Internationally trained professionals who have a minimum of two years work experience outside Canada, have been in Canada five years or less and have no Canadian work experience in their profession

Mentors: Mentors are volunteer employees of the Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre and its service delivery partners.

More Information: www.pqchc.com/itp.htm

Open Access Programs

A mentoring program is accessible to any qualifying mentee or mentor. Eligibility criteria are based on skills and experience, and do not include participation in a broader program or membership in a specific association or organization. Only one open access program has been identified in the Ottawa region.

Career Mentoring Program

Program Provider: Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO)

Program Description: The Career Mentoring Program supports internationally educated professionals to obtain employment in their field. Clients are matched with a volunteer career mentor working in the same or a related field. Mentees and mentors meet weekly for at least one hour for approximately three months.

Mentees: Job-ready skilled immigrants actively searching for work and prepared to make the time commitment

Mentors: Employed volunteers with at least two years of Canadian work experience, contacts in employment and professional networks, and prepared to make the time commitment

More Information:

http://ociso.org/En/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=134&Itemid=116

Appendix B: Selected Mentoring Programs in Canada

In late 2011 and early 2012, a literature review and a series of telephone consultations were conducted with the following organizations that offer mentoring-to-employment programs for skilled immigrants in five communities. The programs are summarized here.

The Mentoring Partnership

Program Provider: The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) in collaboration with local service providers, other community partners and employer partners

Program Description: Mentor-mentee matching is based on the National Occupational Classification (NOC) and North American Industrial Classification (NAIC) codes that are assigned to each mentor and mentee during recruitment. The mentoring relationship is designed to provide approximately 24 hours of direct contact over a period of four months. The program's service delivery partners are responsible for delivering the program and supporting the mentor-mentee relationships while TRIEC provides centralized coordination, technology support, partner relationship management and program evaluation.

Mentees: Job-ready skilled immigrants identified by service delivery partners

Mentors: Employed professionals who have worked in their field for several years and have a combination of industry knowledge and experience, as well as active links to professional associations and professional networks. Many mentors are recruited by employer partners while others are volunteers who are not affiliated with their employer in their mentor role.

More Information: www.thementoringpartnership.com/

The Mentoring Collaborative

Program Provider: The Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council (CRIEC) in collaboration with local service providers and post-secondary educational institutions, particularly Bow Valley College

Program Description: The program model is based on TRIEC's TMP and has been adapted to a smaller community. Service delivery partners conduct the intake and registrations while CRIEC delivers the program.

Mentees: Job-ready skilled immigrants are identified by service delivery partners and by CRIEC outreach to ethno-cultural associations and faith-based organizations.

Mentors: Employed professionals who have worked in their field for at least five years and have a combination of industry knowledge and experience, as well as active links to professional associations and professional networks. Many mentors are recruited by employer partners while others are volunteers who are not affiliated with their employer in their mentor role.

More Information: www.criec.ca/

Mentorship for Immigrant Employment

Program Provider: WIL Employment Services, jointly with the London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC); other partners include service delivery agencies, local economic development agencies, and business and professional associations.

Program Description: Three distinct program components are offered: one-on-one mentoring, group mentoring and peer mentoring:

The one-on-one mentoring matches a mentor with a mentee in a related professional field. It is similar in design and intent to the TRIEC and CRIEC mentoring programs.

Group mentoring events bring together eight to 10 mentees and two to three mentors in the same industry. These events provide mentees with some guidance while they are waiting to be matched in a suitable one-on-one mentoring relationship.

Peer mentoring events bring together job-seeking mentees and successfully employed newcomers. Established newcomers share their experiences in navigating the job search process and their successes in acquiring and retaining employment, and provide information about the available tools/resources they found most helpful.

Mentees: Job-ready skilled immigrants are identified by service delivery partners.

Mentors: Mentors are affiliated with one of the partnering economic development agencies and business and professional associations. These partners recruit qualifying mentors from within their memberships.

More Information: www.lmiec.ca/mentorship-program

Connector Program

Program Provider: The Connector Program falls under the Greater Halifax Talent Strategy, which is an initiative of the Greater Halifax Partnership. This public-private partnership includes all three levels of government and over 130 private-sector investors who are committed to working together towards accelerating economic growth in the region

Program Description: The program is a simple but effective referral process that puts newcomers in touch with established professionals (referred to as 'connectors'). The purpose of the program is to help immigrants broaden their professional networks through a series of approximately 30-minute meetings between immigrants and local business professionals. During these meetings the connectors are asked to refer immigrants to a minimum of three people in their networks. The newcomer follows up and maintains these relationships, building a solid business network.

Mentees: Mentees are skilled newcomers who are looking to integrate into the local employment market. They are often identified through Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services

(ISIS), the leading provider of services to immigrants in Nova Scotia. Mentees also include international students in Greater Halifax who participate in the International MBA Student Connector Program and International Masters of Finance Program.

Mentors: Mentors, called Connectors, are established business professionals in the community who volunteer to meet with newcomers.

More Information: www.immigrationworksinalifax.ca/default.asp?mn=1.215.277

Newcomers Mentorship Program

Program Provider: The Immigrant Employment Council of British Columbia (IECBC) in collaboration with employers and local service providers

Program Description: IECBC works exclusively with specific employers to establish an employer-driven workplace mentoring program. The employer is responsible for the mentoring initiative, which operates exclusively within their organization; IECBC supports them to implement their program.

Mentees: Mentees are internationally trained immigrants referred to the program by local service organizations.

Mentors: Mentors are employees of the participating employer.

More Information: www.iecbc.ca/our-services/mentoring