

London Immigration Strategy Consultation Guide

DIAAC

Background and Context

Creating increased supports for the recruitment, retention and integration of immigrants, newcomers and international students is a top priority for Londoners, City Council and City Administration. City Council's 2015-2019 Strategic Plan established "Growing Our Economy" as an area of focus which specifically includes "diverse employment opportunities" with particular direction to "attract and retain newcomers, including international students, foreign trained professionals, and multigenerational immigrants to strengthen London's workforce". To achieve this goal, it was identified that an *'Immigration Strategy'* with support from the London Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership, along with key input from local stakeholders and community consultations, be developed.

There is a demographic and workforce imperative to attracting, integrating and retaining newcomers to London to balance and compensate for the declining birthrate and the aging population of Canadians. The growth rate of London Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) was only 4.1% between 2011 and 2016, with only 3.6% growth rate in the London Economic Region. The London Economic Development Corporation has said that at any one time, there are at least 5,000 openings in the local labour market which could be filled by newcomer immigrants. According to labour market information, the three sectors that are facing the highest projected labour/skill shortages in London are Construction, Healthcare and Information technology.

As noted above, it is anticipated that the attraction, retention, and integration of all newcomers, especially International Students, International skilled workers and Entrepreneurs, will play an important role in growing London's economy.

Based on stakeholder input to date, the objectives of the strategy are as follows:

- Create an action-oriented immigration strategy developed through a Steering Committee along with community and stakeholder consultations
- Develop clear and achievable priorities, an action plan with timelines and outcomes, and identify the resources needed to be successful with clear objectives, action plans and measurements
- Brand and promote London as a welcoming and inclusive community, therefore an ideal destination to settle long term

This new *Immigration Strategy* will be aimed at facilitating the:

- attraction, integration and retention of Newcomers, in particular international students, entrepreneurs and skilled workers; and
- championing of London as a welcoming and inclusive community for all Immigrants and Newcomers.

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee of 13-15 volunteers comprised of local stakeholders and newcomers¹ with lived experience was created in March 2017 and has met six times. To date this committee has developed their Terms of Reference, including a definition of key terms¹, and have completed:

¹ Defined Terms: "Newcomers" means individuals who are Immigrants or are Prospective Newcomers.

"Immigrants" means individuals, including their accompanying family member(s), who when they arrived to Canada from another country were not citizens of Canada and are living in Canada as temporary residents (includes all study and work permits), permanent residents (all categories, including Government Assisted and Privately Sponsored Refugees), or new citizens of Canada. "Prospective Newcomers" means individuals:

- (i) who are not living in or citizens of Canada and by virtue of their education, training, and/or business experience have skills that would be of benefit to London's economic and social development, or

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- An extensive resource mapping on current resources, services and programs;
- A review of international and domestic best practices; and
- Literature review of related documents and reports.

This work is primarily focused on the following three groups of Newcomers: International Students, Internationally skilled workers and Entrepreneurs and Newcomers. For each group, all information gathered has been broken down into the three key themes of attraction, integration and retention.

Mission and Vision

Based on municipal council direction and with Steering Committee input, the Mission and Vision of the strategy are as follows:

Vision: *“Newcomers choose London as Canada’s leading community to live, learn and work”*

Mission: *“To successfully attract, integrate and retain Newcomers, in particular international students, skilled workers and entrepreneurs, to and into the local economy and society”*

Questions for Discussion

- 1) Please review the attached document highlighting the services and programs currently being offered in our community through local stakeholders aimed at attracting, integrating, and retaining.
 - i) Are there any services and programs that should be added that were missed?
 - ii) Which services and programs are the most effective? Least effective? Why? Are there specific barriers preventing certain services and programs from being more effective?
 - iii) What do you feel are the most significant gaps that, if addressed, would maximize the attraction, integration and/or retention? Opportunities? Other suggestions/comments

Notes:

ⁱ To make sure that the strategy addresses to the needs of London’s newcomers community, the City put a call out through the London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership for Newcomers Champions with lived experience. These successful newcomer candidates were invited to be a part of the Steering Committee as they play an essential role in creating the strategy.

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- (ii) who are not living in or citizens of Canada and have the requisite academic and/or other credentials to gain admittance to a University, College or high school in London.