# Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) with SMEs by the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council

**Final Evaluation Report**

14 March 2025

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF FIGURES

# LIST OF TABLES

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, AND ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) is a non-profit organization aiming to address immigrant underemployment in the Greater Toronto Area. TRIEC works towards this goal both by supporting employers to become more inclusive as well as helping newcomers expand their networks and understand Canadian labour markets. The Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) program by TRIEC was designed to create the conditions for change that would support the career advancement of newcomers working in organizations as team members and an inclusive work environment. The third iteration of this program, CAIP with SMEs, was a FSC-funded project implemented with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), intended to scale CAIP to more employers and to foster long-term sustainable change. This project included the following objectives:

1. Identify challenges and supports required by two SMEs to adapt CAIP for those employers.

2. Develop and test a more condensed version of CAIP that will provide a less intensive but still impactful immigrant inclusion initiative.

3. Continue the long-term evaluation of the CAIP program and knowledge mobilization for continuous improvement and to increase adoption of new practices.

From June to September 2024, TRIEC delivered a condensed version of CAIP with two SME employers. This consisted of four joint virtual sessions with participating newcomer team members and managers. Each session was 2 hours in duration and included a variety of topics such as intercultural competence and formal and informal hiring processes for career development and advancement in Canada. The project's anticipated outcomes for newcomers included:

- identifying the actions that will benefit their careers and how to implement them;

- enhanced ability to discuss their career goals with their managers;

- increased access to new professional development opportunities;

- an expanded professional network; and

- feeling more optimistic about their career advancement.

Outcomes anticipated for managers included their greater confidence in supporting immigrants' career advancement, perceived increases in their inclusive leadership skills to bridge cultural differences in their diverse teams and taking action to better support immigrant employees and to make their organizations more inclusive with respect to immigrant career advancement.

The CAIP with SMEs objectives outlined above align well with the Future Skills Center's thematic priorities of both SME adaptability and inclusive workforce development. Employers face challenges in retaining and investing in workers' training and development. CAIP with SMEs engages with employers for better newcomer career advancement; which should lead to better employee retention. Unlike many workforce development policies that focus on finding employment, CAIP with SMEs address the next phase after employment has been secured, by focusing on career advancement. By providing newcomers with the skills to advance in their careers and providing managers with the skills to support the advancement of their newcomer team members, CAIP with SMEs' activities and associated outcomes also align directly with the thematic priority of inclusive workforce development, specifically of newcomers.

## METHODOLOGY

SRDC was contracted as the evaluation and learning partner for CAIP with SMEs. The evaluation used both qualitative interviews and participant survey data. SRDC conducted interviews with 11 participants in CAIP with SMEs (n=9 newcomer team members and n=2 managers), 1 employee stakeholder, 1 program facilitator, and 2 TRIEC staff. SRDC also analyzed survey data collected by TRIEC from approximately 26 program participants (n=17 newcomer team members and n=9 managers). Finally, SRDC used TRIEC's project proposal and Learning and Reflection report to supplement the findings. Given the small number of CAIP with SMEs participants and the short timeframe for the evaluation, the analysis, results, and their interpretations presented in this report are limited.

## OUTCOMES AND FINDINGS

Through interview data, SRDC determined that CAIP with SMEs is relevant to newcomer team members and managers across a variety of roles and experience, and is likely to be relevant to other SMEs in the Greater Toronto Area. All newcomer team members and managers who responded to the surveys reported being satisfied with the program. Managers and newcomer team members also reported positive feedback on both the program content and delivery.

Interview and survey data provided examples of how managers and newcomer team members increased their knowledge and changed their behaviour after participating in CAIP with SMEs. Newcomer team members reported better understanding of expectations related to career

advancement, and managers reported more open communication with team members about their career progression. TRIEC staff interviewees noted that CAIP with SMEs has been effective so far, offering examples of participants receiving promotions or raises since the program.

## RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

SRDC concluded that TRIEC successfully achieved its first two program objectives (noting that the third objective falls outside the scope of the evaluation). TRIEC scaled CAIP to SME employers, tailoring the program to those workplaces. Administrative data shows high program completion rates and interview findings highlight positive program feedback. This condensed version of the program worked well for the SME context. Interview participants highlighted specific program impacts such as improving understanding and communication.

SRDC has identified a number of promising practices related to each evaluation question. Notable promising practices included the interactive nature of the program, actively including employees at all levels within an organization, having a skilled facilitator, and focusing on actionable and practical takeaways.

Program recommendations include: piloting CAIP with SMES with more employers; including unionized employers, as well as employers earlier on in their newcomer inclusion journey; and continuing market research to identify SMEs' willingness to pay for the program.

# INTRODUCTION

Through a number of thematic calls for proposals, the Future Skills Centre (FSC) has supported the development, refinement, and expansion of approaches to develop skills for workers from a variety of backgrounds and in a variety of sectors and regions (FSC, 2024). These projects identify emerging and in-demand skills and test new methods of training delivery. The insights that come from these projects will help inform governments, the private sector, labour, educational training institutions, non-profits, and academics on the broader adoption of novel approaches to training and skills development. Furthermore, the projects are required to mobilize knowledge and evidence among key stakeholders, institutions, and decision-makers for the purposes of improving policies and practices in Canada (FSC, 2024). FSC has engaged the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) to support this process by developing and then implementing a customized learning support plan for each of several projects, based on past activities and current status.

The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) is a non-profit organization aiming to address immigrant underemployment in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). TRIEC works towards this goal both by supporting employers to become more inclusive as well as helping newcomers expand their networks and understand labour markets (TRIEC, 2024). TRIEC developed and implemented the Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) with SMEs program - one of many funded by the Future Skills Centre as part of a larger strategy of supporting five thematic priorities: 1) pathways to jobs, 2) SME adaptability, 3) sustainable jobs, 4) technology & automation, and 5) inclusive opportunities. CAIP with SMEs aligns with thematic priorities 2) and 5).

This document presents an evaluation of CAIP with SMEs. The project involved the planning, delivery, and assessment of the CAIP with SMEs program at two SMEs in the GTA. By providing training to both newcomer team members and managers, CAIP with SMEs helps employers retain and advance existing newcomer talent. Newcomer team members are supported to develop the knowledge and skills to effectively navigate inclusion, while managers are coached to better support newcomer team members with career advancement. CAIP with SMEs is the third iteration of the CAIP program delivered by TRIEC, preceded by CAIP 2.0 and the original CAIP program, all funded by FSC.

# PROJECT OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, AND ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

CAIP with SMEs had one primary objective and three secondary objectives. These were as follows.

1. Scale CAIP to more employers including SMEs and make long-term sustainable change. This includes:

    a. Identify challenges and supports required by two SMEs to adapt CAIP for those employers.

    b. Develop and test a more condensed version of CAIP that will provide a less intensive but still impactful immigrant inclusion initiative.

    c. Continue the long-term evaluation of the CAIP program and knowledge mobilization for continuous improvement and to increase adoption of new practices[1].

As previously described, the CAIP with SMEs activities were a condensed version of CAIP 2.0 and included four joint virtual sessions with participating newcomer team members and managers. Each session was 2 hours in duration and included a variety of topics such as intercultural competence and formal and informal hiring processes for career development and advancement in Canada. The project's anticipated outcomes for newcomers included:

- identifying the actions that will benefit their careers and how to implement them;

- enhanced ability to discuss their career goals with their managers;

- increased access to new professional development opportunities;

- an expanded professional network; and

- feeling more optimistic about their career advancement.

Outcomes anticipated for managers included their greater confidence in supporting immigrants' career advancement, perceived increases in their inclusive leadership skills to bridge cultural differences in their diverse teams and taking action to better support immigrant employees and to make their organizations more inclusive with respect to immigrant career advancement.

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[1]    This objective is outside the scope of SRDC's evaluation.

# THEORY OF CHANGE

## Project Rationale

SMEs[2] are critical to the Canadian economy. As of December 2022, there were 1.22 million employer businesses in Canada, of which 97.8% were small and 1.9% were medium-sized (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2024). Moreover, as of 2022, SMEs employed 7.8 million individuals or 63.8% of the total private labour force (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2024).

Immigrants' contributions to the Canadian economy are also critical and, since the mid-2010s, recent immigrants (foreign-born individuals who became permanent residents in Canada within the past 10 years) have seen important improvements in employment, earnings and skills utilization (Hou, 2024). However, there is strong evidence that, compared to their Canadian-born counterparts, skilled immigrants and immigrant professionals continue to earn less and are less likely to find employment matching their skills (Banerjee, Lamb, & Lam, 2024, Chowdhury & Turin, 2023). Chowdhury & Turin (2023) posit that they are less likely to find employment matching their skillset due to a lack of inclusive post-immigration professional integration policies and support.

Despite their importance, SMEs face challenges in attracting and retaining talent, which limits their growth (Business Development Bank of Canada, 2023). However, smaller businesses may not think of immigrants as a source of talent (Business Development Bank of Canada, 2023) and may face challenges in recruiting and retaining newcomers (Craft and Rose, 2024). Additionally, the career advancement of immigrants in Canada is slower than their Canadian-born counterparts (TRIEC, 2019).

The CAIP with SMEs program was designed by TRIEC to create the conditions for change for career advancement of newcomer team members within SMEs and an inclusive working environment. It builds on TRIEC's previous experience with CAIP and CAIP 2.0. Moreover, TRIEC's knowledge and experience working with SMEs effectively enabled them to adapt the design of CAIP to the unique needs and constraints of SMEs. CAIP with SMEs connects directly with two of FSC's thematic priorities: SME adaptability and inclusive opportunities. SME participation in CAIP with SMEs is intended to increase their adaptability by better equipping them to retain and promote newcomer team members within their organizations. It is relevant to the thematic priority of inclusive opportunities, specifically for newcomers, by providing them, and their employers, with skills and knowledge to improve their career advancement. The

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[2]   A small business is defined here as having 1 to 99 paid employees and a medium-sized business as having 100 to 499 paid employees (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2024).

CAIP with SMEs Theory of Change, prepared by TRIEC, is presented in Table 1. The theory of change assumes that the CAIP with SMEs curriculum is relevant and that there are opportunities for both newcomer team members and managers to apply their learnings in their workplace. External factors that may influence the effectiveness of CAIP with SMEs include the availability of newcomer team members and managers to participate in CAIP with SMEs as well as the workplace environment, including the processes surrounding career advancement.

From June to September 2024, TRIEC implemented CAIP with SMEs with two employers. In this report, we will refer to the SMEs as Employer A and Employer B. Both are medium-sized enterprises in the IT sector, with one having around 150 employees and the other about 450 employees. CAIP with SMEs was delivered virtually twice, once for each employer, and consisted of four sessions each. Newcomer team members and managers attended sessions together. Each session was 2 hours in duration and included a variety of topics such as intercultural competence and formal and informal processes and practices for career development and advancement in Canada.

Once employers had agreed to participate in CAIP with SMEs, they then promoted the program within their own organizations to recruit program participants. Employers used a variety of strategies in engaging participants in their organization. For example, one employer representative described posting a company wide message on Slack describing the program as an opportunity to better understand the unique experiences of newcomers, specifically how to self-advocate as a newcomer and how to support newcomer career development as a manager. They then reached out to interested employees and shared more details about registering for the program.

In one instance, TRIEC accepted a participant into the program who did not neatly fit into the newcomer team member or manager categories. This newcomer team member also had manager experience but was not currently managing people. After the program began, TRIEC also learned that another newcomer team member participant was, in fact, at a manager level but was not managing people. Moreover, one additional newcomer team member participant from the United States, who had worked in the United Kingdom, shared with TRIEC that while she anticipated learning from the program, she did not believe her gap in career advancement knowledge to be as large as other newcomer team member participants. While these individuals were still expected to benefit from the program, their experience may not align as well with the intended theory of change and their reported knowledge gains/improvement may be lower given their initial knowledge may have been higher, thus lowering estimates of average gains/improvements.

## Table 1 CAIP with SMEs Theory of Change[3]

| What is the problem you are trying to solve? | Who is your key audience? | What are your key activities? | What steps are needed to bring about change? | What is the measurable effect of your work? | What are the wider benefits of your work? | What is the long-term change you see as your goal? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Immigrants are not advancing as far or as quickly as their Canadian-born counterparts.**<br><br>Most employment services for immigrants are for getting a first job. Limited resources exist that can help immigrants with career advancement, especially for Small— and Medium-sized organizations.<br><br>Employers struggle to retain employees | **Immigrant** professionals who want to advance their careers in their organizations.<br><br>**Employers,** including EDI champions, HR teams, leaders and people managers who want to support immigrants' career advancement and workplace inclusion and to address issues of | Collaborate with program champions at employer partners (medium-sized org) to implement the program (e.g., set up a meeting for the CAIP team with key contacts and recruit participants).<br><br>Engage with leaders, HR and key contacts to conduct needs assessment and review the employer's existing formal and informal talent management practices. | Help **immigrants** enhance their understanding around how they can better navigate career advancement in their organization<br><br>Help **managers** build the inclusive leadership skills and knowledge needed to better support immigrant professionals in their career advancement<br><br>Help **employers** deepen their understanding around the barriers and gaps their immigrant employees experience at their organizations around career advancement and which | **Outcomes:**<br><br>Immigrants have identified which actions will benefit their careers and how to implement them<br><br>Immigrants express that they enhanced their ability to discuss their career goals with their managers<br><br>Immigrants increase access to new professional development opportunities<br><br>Immigrants increase their professional network<br><br>Immigrants feel more optimistic on career advancement | Immigrant employees are equipped with skills and knowledge for career advancement at their organization.<br><br>Immigrants gain promotions, salary increases, more responsibilities and access to professional development opportunities after the program.<br><br>Managers are better able to support | Immigrants are better able to advance within their organizations.<br><br>Many organizations eliminate the barriers and gaps that limit immigrant career advancement and their workplaces become more inclusive.<br><br>There is better employee retention at an |

[3] Provided by TRIEC.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Systemic barriers and gaps exist within organizations that negatively impact immigrant career advancement. | employee retention. | Deliver customized sessions for immigrant employees and managers<br><br>Present evaluation findings, insights and recommendations to leaders, HR and the employer champion. | changes the organization can make to make the process more inclusive.<br><br>**Output:**<br><br>2 mid-sized employers in GTA<br><br>10 Immigrant professionals who currently work at each employer<br><br>5 People managers who manage diverse teams at each employer<br><br>4 to 6 Senior leaders, HR, and EDI team (if they have) who are championing/supporting CAIP at each employer | Managers express greater confidence in supporting immigrants' career advancement<br><br>Managers express increased inclusive leadership skills to bridge cultural differences in their diverse teams<br><br>Managers report taking action to better support immigrant employees.<br><br>Employers take action or commit to taking action around making their organizations more inclusive around immigrant career advancement. | immigrant's career advancement.<br><br>Employees' retention increases for our employer partners | employer in the GTA |

# METHODOLOGY

SRDC began the evaluation by reviewing TRIEC's project proposal. SRDC and TRIEC then collaborated on the project's Evaluation and Learning Plan, which included the theory of change for CAIP with SMEs, prepared by TRIEC. The resulting evaluation matrix appears below in Table 2. SRDC then reached out to both newcomer team members and manager participants (recruited by TRIEC) for key informant interviews. SRDC also interviewed program facilitators and one employer stakeholder, for a total of 16 key informant interviews between September and November 2024. SRDC analyzed survey data collected by TRIEC. Finally, SRDC shared and discussed the findings with TRIEC to ensure their accuracy and appropriateness.

A case study approach was used for evaluating CAIP with SMEs. SRDC used two primary sources of data in this evaluation: qualitative interviews and CAIP with SMEs participants' survey data. SRDC also used some secondary sources of data to supplement these primary sources, comprising supporting documentation provided by TRIEC about the project, including the project proposal and Learning and Reflection report. Moreover, in order to compare results from CAIP with SMEs to CAIP 2.0, SRDC used evaluation results from CAIP 2.0 provided by TRIEC.

Due to the nature of the program design, the sample size per employer is small and the overall sample size limits the scope of analysis. All survey data is analyzed for both employers together and, although we present results separately for newcomer team member and manager participants, the sample size (particularly of managers) is very small and outliers or accidental misreporting by even one participant could skew the group results. This is a limitation of the analysis presented here. To ensure the results are interpreted carefully, the survey results are presented on an individual respondent count basis and analyses largely exclude group-based statistics (e.g., averages).

Another limitation of this project is the lack of a comparison group. In the absence of a relevant comparison group, our ability to attribute observed outcomes to CAIP with SMEs is limited because we cannot rule out influences other than the program. Finally, the short timelines mean that three program participants were accepted despite not fitting neatly into the target newcomer team member or manager categories, as described above. Furthermore, the anticipated knowledge changes and career advancement associated with CAIP with SMEs would be expected to take place over a longer timeframe than the project funding period. Generating meaningful and sustained change takes time, and measuring such changes takes even longer. Future evaluation would benefit from piloting with more SMEs and adopting a longer timeframe to support participant recruitment and better observe anticipated outcomes.

## Table 2    Evaluation and Learning Questions, Metrics, and Data Collection Methods

| Key learning questions (including FSC strategic questions) | Sub-questions | Key metrics (disaggregated where possible) | Data collection methods and sources (including target populations, where relevant) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Inclusive opportunities: Integrating newcomers** | | | |
| ▪ How can we incentivize and support more employers to change their HR practices to recognize newcomer skills and support their growth?<br>▪ How might we reduce the time and cost needed to meaningfully engage employers? | ▪ Is the program relevant to the intended audience?<br>▪ Does the design of the program enable effective delivery?<br>▪ How do employers take action or commit to taking action around making their organizations more inclusive around immigrant career advancement? | ▪ % of SMEs that responded to the offer of the program<br>▪ % of SMEs that participated in CAIP of those who responded after being offered it<br>▪ % of training completed by each employer<br>▪ Manager satisfaction of CAIP (and specific components / trainings)<br>▪ Effectiveness of CAIP and specific components / trainings according to TRIEC CAIP staff/external consultants<br>▪ What aspects and components of CAIP made it effective according to TRIEC CAIP staff/external consultants<br>▪ What aspects and components of CAIP made it effective according to managers<br>▪ How can CAIP be improved according to managers<br>▪ How can CAIP be improved according to TRIEC CAIP staff/external consultants<br>▪ Actions taken by employers around making their organizations more inclusive to immigrant career advancement post-participation in CAIP<br>▪ Actions employers have committed to (but not yet put in place) around making their organizations more inclusive to immigrant career advancement post-participation in CAIP | ▪ Key informant interviews (within the employer partner organizations including Senior Leaders, HR, and/or key contact)<br>▪ Interviews with participating managers<br>▪ Interviews with TRIEC CAIP staff and a sample of external consultants<br>▪ CAIP administrative data |

**Inclusive work opportunities: Integrating newcomers, Canadian work experience/soft skills**

- How can we more quickly enable newcomers to acquire or translate the transferable skill sets (e.g., soft skills) associated with successful integration and advancement in the Canadian workplace context?
- How can employers be enabled to better assess and recognize these skill sets in newcomers?

- How does the condensed version of the CAIP program contribute to the participant's knowledge and behaviour change after each session and after the program?
- Does the condensed version of CAIP maintain similar participant satisfaction levels as the CAIP 2.0 program?

- % of participants reporting increased knowledge and/or behaviour change after each session (average) and after the program (note small sample size)
- Participant self-reported increased knowledge after the program
- Participant self-reported changes in behaviour after the program
- Self-reported contributions of CAIP according to participants
- % of CAIP activities completed by participants (average)
- Participant satisfaction with CAIP (refer to how this was measured for CAIP 2.0) (note small sample size)

- Newcomer participant interviews
- Post-session surveys from newcomer participants
- CAIP administrative data

**SME adaptability**

- How can approaches that effectively address SME barriers to investing in training and adopting better HR management practices be scaled up to become sustainable or self-sustaining?

- Is this condensed version of CAIP of interest to the larger SME sector in the GTA? If so, to SMEs with what characteristics?

- Key informant opinions of to what extent they think other SMEs would be interested in the program and, if so, SMEs with what characteristics?
- Key informant opinions of whether they think other SMEs would be open to paying for the program in the future and how much.

- Key informant interviews (within the employer partner organizations including Senior Leaders, HR, and/or key contact)
- Participating managers

**Longer-term impacts of CAIP 2.0 (outside the scope of the evaluation)**

- Does the CAIP 2.0 program achieve its middle-term goals for

- # of employment changes for immigrant professionals
- # of immigrants who maintain the actions that they learned from the CAIP
- # of managers who take actions that they learned from the CAIP

- 1 year follow up survey with CAIP 2.0 participants

immigrant professionals
and managers?

**Knowledge mobilization (outside the scope of the evaluation)**

- Does knowledge mobilization for CAIP 2.0 deliver as intended?

- # of downloads of handouts
- # of videos that CAIP created
- # of views for the videos
- # of views on CAIP website
- Social media impressions

- CAIP's administrative data
- CAIP staff interviews

We number and summarize the CAIP with SMEs evaluation questions below and refer to them using this number in Table 4.

1.  How can we incentivize and support more employers to change their HR practices to recognize newcomer skills and support their growth? How might we reduce the time and cost needed to meaningfully engage employers?

    a.  Is the program relevant to the intended audience?

    b.  Does the design of the program enable effective delivery?

    c.  How do employers take action or commit to taking action around making their organizations more inclusive around immigrant career advancement?

2.  How can we more quickly enable newcomers to acquire or translate the transferable skill sets (e.g., soft skills) associated with successful integration and advancement in the Canadian workplace context? How can employers be enabled to better assess and recognize these skill sets in newcomers?

    a.  How does the condensed version of the CAIP program contribute to the participant's knowledge and behaviour change after each session and after the program?

    b.  Does the condensed version of CAIP maintain similar participant satisfaction levels as the CAIP 2.0 program?

3.  How can approaches that effectively address SME barriers to investing in training and adopting better HR management practices be scaled up to become sustainable or self-sustaining?

    a.  Is this condensed version of CAIP of interest to the larger SME sector in the GTA? If so, to SMEs with what characteristics?

As noted earlier, CAIP with SMEs was delivered to two employers. Table 3 presents the number of participants in CAIP with SMEs by employer. Sixteen newcomer team members and five managers registered to join CAIP with SMEs at Employer A while eight newcomer team members and six managers joined at Employer B. All registered participants started the program at Employer B while one newcomer team member and one manager at Employer A registered but did not start the program. The program completion rate at both employers was very high. Completion is defined by TRIEC as attending at least three of four sessions. The completion rate was 100% for all managers at Employer A and all newcomer team members at Employer B. Twelve of 15 newcomer team members at Employer A and four of six managers at Employer B completed the program.

### Table 3    CAIP with SMEs Participants

| | Employer A | | Employer B | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Newcomer Team Members | Managers | Newcomer Team Members | Managers | Total |
| Number who registered for CAIP with SMEs | 16 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 35 |
| Number who started CAIP with SMEs | 15 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 33 |
| Number who completed CAIP with SMEs | 12 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 28 |

Table 4 presents a description of each data source as well as its alignment with the strategic research questions.

**Table 4      Data sources for CAIP with SMEs evaluation**

| Source | Type | Strategic question alignment |
|---|---|---|
| Newcomer team member interviews (n=9) | Key informant interview | Questions 1 and 2 |
| Manager interviews (n=2) | Key informant interview | Questions 1 and 2 |
| TRIEC staff interviews (n=2) | Key informant interview | Questions 2 and 3 |
| Facilitator interview (n=1) | Key informant interview | Questions 1, 2 and 3 |
| Employer stakeholder interview (n=1) | Key informant interview | Questions 1 and 3 |
| Newcomer team member pre-surveys (n=22) | Survey data | |
| Manager pre- survey (n=11/8[4]) | Survey data | |
| Newcomer team member end of session surveys (39[5]) | Survey data | Question 2 |
| Manager end of session surveys (19[5]) | Survey data | Question 2 |
| Newcomer team member post-survey (n=17/16[6]) | Survey data | Questions 1 and 2 |
| Manager post- survey (n=9/6[7]) | Survey data | Questions 1 and 2 |
| TRIEC project proposal | Document | Questions 1, 2 and 3 |
| TRIEC Learning and Reflection report | Document | Questions 1, 2 and 3 |

[4]    11 managers completed most questions of the pre- survey while 8 completed it in its entirety.

[5]    These are unique survey responses to one of the three end of sessions surveys. The number includes multiple surveys for the same participant.

[6]    17 newcomers completed most questions of the post- survey while 16 completed it in its entirety.

[7]    9 managers completed most questions of the post- survey while 6 completed it in its entirety.

## Semi-structured Interviews

SRDC conducted 16 semi-structured key informant interviews as part of its evaluation. These included 9 interviews with newcomer team members (Employer A: n=5, Employer B: n=4), two interviews with managers (one each from Employer A and B), two interviews with TRIEC staff, one interview with a CAIP with SMEs program facilitator, and one interview with a stakeholder at Employer B. These interviews were completed throughout September, October, and November 2024 (Table 5).

**Table 5      Semi-structured interview participants**

| | Employer A | | Employer B | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | **Newcomer Team Members** | **Managers** | **Newcomer Team Members** | **Managers** | **Total** |
| Manager and newcomer team member interview participants | 5 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 12 |
| | **TRIEC** | **Facilitator** | **Employer Stakeholder** | | |
| TRIEC staff, facilitator, and stakeholder interview participants | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 4 |
| | | | | **Total** | **16** |

TRIEC staff recruited newcomer team member, manager, and employer stakeholder interview participants while SRDC scheduled and completed the interviews. Newcomer team member and manager interview participants received $100 honorariums.

Across participants, these interviews addressed all three strategic evaluation questions by inquiring about participant/facilitator experiences and feedback regarding the CAIP with SMEs program, as well as thoughts on program scaling and expansion. All four interview protocols can be found in Appendix A.

After interviews were completed, SRDC analyzed the interview transcripts using NVivo. Key project findings were identified and are summarized in the Results section.

## Survey Data

Three types of surveys were administered by TRIEC as part of the evaluation of CAIP with SMEs. Their content was based on the survey instruments for the evaluation of CAIP 2.0 with modifications to customize them for CAIP with SMEs. The surveys were drafted by TRIEC with feedback from SRDC. TRIEC hired a consultant with anti-racism and anti-oppression expertise to review the CAIP with SMEs workshops and materials and to provide feedback and recommendations on how to make them more inclusive. The consultant also reviewed the surveys to ensure that they were anti-oppressive and anti-racist.

TRIEC administered the surveys to both newcomer team member participants and manager participants. The instruments differed slightly in terms of content. Both newcomer team members and managers were asked to complete a pre-intervention survey, a post-session survey after each of the first three sessions, and one post-intervention survey after the final session. The surveys collected socio-demographic and employment information, beliefs about career advancement opportunities (newcomer team members), support of newcomer team members (managers), professional development knowledge and experience, and satisfaction and learning from CAIP with SMEs.

The pre- and post-intervention surveys included a participant identifier and, as such, could be matched at the individual level. However, the post-intervention survey directly asked participants to report pre-post changes and it is these changes that are used in the analysis. The post-session surveys were anonymous. Therefore, each observation, at the individual-session level, is treated as unique in the analysis. Due to the small sample sizes, only frequencies are reported and no disaggregated analysis was conducted.

For each data collection instrument, we report the number of responses. The pre- survey response rates are very high (22 of 23 newcomer team members and 100 per cent of managers who registered for CAIP with SMEs completed the pre- survey). While the post- survey response rates are lower, they remain relatively high at 17/23 for newcomer team members and 9/11 for managers. However, the overall response rate for the end of session surveys for newcomer team members and managers together is much lower at 55 per cent (54 per cent for newcomer team members and 58 per cent for managers). Thus, results from these surveys are interpreted with caution.

### TRIEC Documents

*TRIEC Project Proposal*

The project proposal for CAIP with SMEs includes key information about the project's development. This includes the project rationale, objectives, deliverables, and results from the previous iterations of the CAIP program.

*TRIEC Learning and Reflection Report*

The Learning and Reflection report for CAIP with SMEs included more details regarding the project context, approach, learnings, and impact. In the report, TRIEC describes how their experiences with the original CAIP program and CAIP 2.0 helped in fine tuning CAIP with SMEs. Understanding an organization's culture with respect to career advancement was noted as key, including both formal processes and 'unwritten rules'. In order to understand this culture, TRIEC reviewed employers' HR documents, interviewed key stakeholders, and conducted surveys in order to best customize CAIP with SMEs to each organization.

In developing CAIP with SMEs, TRIEC also condensed content from CAIP 2.0 based on participant feedback and facilitator observations, removing less impactful pieces and reducing course sessions.

# RESULTS

## FINDINGS

We present the interview and survey findings together by evaluation question.

1. **How can we incentivize and support more employers to change their HR practices to recognize newcomer skills and support their growth? How might we reduce the time and cost needed to meaningfully engage employers?**

   a. **Is the program relevant to the intended audience?**

Based on both program participation and satisfaction, CAIP with SMEs is relevant to SMEs in the GTA, their newcomer employees, and their managers. TRIEC's CAIP with SMEs extension investment proposal to FSC proposed piloting the program with two SMEs. During the recruitment period, TRIEC reached out to 10 potential employer organizations and spoke to at least six of them specifically about CAIP with SMEs. However, because one of the TRIEC

employees involved in outreach is no longer at the organization and because TRIEC introduces all of its relevant programs when having an initial conversation with an employer, TRIEC is unable to confirm whether the other four employers were also told about CAIP with SMEs.

During the short project time period, three SMEs showed interest in joining CAIP with SMEs, although one was unable to commit within the limited timeframe. CAIP with SMEs was successfully implemented with two employers. That this was achieved despite the short period, demonstrates, in SRDC's opinion, the relevance of the program to its intended SME audience.

TRIEC delivered all four sessions of the CAIP with SMEs training to both employers. However, not all participating newcomer team members and managers at each employer completed the training. Table 3 reports the number of newcomer team members and managers who registered for, started, and completed CAIP with SMEs by employer. At Employer A, 94 per cent of registered newcomer team members started CAIP with SMEs with 80 per cent of those who started the program completing it (and 75 per cent of those who registered completed it). At Employer B, 100 per cent of newcomer team members who registered for CAIP with SMEs started and completed it. Eighty per cent of managers at Employer A and 100 per cent of managers at Employer B who registered for CAIP with SMEs started it. All managers who started CAIP with SMEs at Employer A (and 80 per cent of those who registered for it) and 67 per cent of managers at Employer B who registered/started CAIP with SMEs completed it.

For both newcomer team members and managers, satisfaction with CAIP with SMEs is measured using a 4-point scale (very much, somewhat, a little, not at all). We define satisfaction with the program as being somewhat or very much satisfied with CAIP with SMEs. All newcomer team members and managers who answered this question[8] reported being satisfied with CAIP with SMEs. These satisfaction rates are equivalent to those of CAIP 2.0.

Managers were also asked, on the same 4-point scale[9], how five aspects of the CAIP with SMEs program supported their learning. The results are presented in Table 6 below. Most managers found that CAIP with SMEs either somewhat supported their learning or supported it a lot.

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[8]    Nine of 11 managers and 17 of 23 newcomer team members answered this question.

[9]    With "a lot" replacing "very much".

**Table 6      Managers' Assessments of CAIP with SMEs Learning Support**

|  | A lot | Somewhat | A little | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| In-session small group activities (breakout room) | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| In-session large group activities and discussions | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Newcomer team members participate in session discussions | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Reviewing the next session topics at the end of the session | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Shared materials for post session activities | 3 | 4 | 2 | 0 |

In interviews, managers and newcomer team members were asked if they felt the program was relevant to them. Manager and newcomer interviewees held a diversity of roles within their organizations, including positions in information technology, customer support, marketing, finance, engineering, and human resources. CAIP with SMEs participants noted joining the program for a variety of reasons. Managers mentioned wanting to recognize their own internal biases and to better understand the perspectives of their newcomer team members.

> *"As somebody who's also relatively new to the Canadian cultural experience, as it were, I wanted to try to and recognize my own internal, like, biases and behaviours around culture and stuff. And get a better understanding of my own team's needs."*
>
> *Manager, Employer B*

Many newcomer participants mentioned joining the program to assist with career advancement and learn more about career progression at their organization. Specifically, newcomer team members mentioned a desire to learn about the cultural context of career development in Canada in order to become more confident and active in their career progression.

> *"I was looking into if there are any skills that, you know, we still have to learn or equip ourselves, [...] how to deal with the senior leadership, you know, when you have to discuss your portfolio with them."*
>
> *Newcomer team member, Employer A*

Finally, some newcomer participants mentioned networking with others at their organization as an incentive for joining CAIP with SMEs.

**Manager and newcomer interviewees unanimously felt that CAIP with SMEs was relevant to their roles and experiences.** Manager interviewees mentioned that the program did a good job at targeting middle management, directors, and other management levels.

> *"I'd even go as far as saying [CAIP] exceeded my expectations."*
>
> *Manager, Employer B*

Newcomer participants valued that the program touched on both manager and employee points of view. Specifically, newcomer team members felt that the program did a lot to clarify the process of career advancement and development in Canada (e.g., interview process, hiring process, switching roles internally, promotion process), which was often different from their experiences in their home countries.

> *"Back in [home country] we do things different. For example, if you want a promotion, you don't need to apply for the promotion. They will offer it to you based on your performance. While here, if you don't say, like, 'I really want to move forward', nobody's gonna do anything. Nobody's gonna offer you a better job."*
>
> *Newcomer team member, Employer A*

Newcomer team members also gave positive feedback on the interactive nature of the program and valued the space it provided for themselves and their colleagues to share their own experiences. The opportunity to have facilitated conversations between team members was helpful in discussing the nuances to career development at their organizations.

> *"[CAIP] turned out to be more casual, more open-ended, more intimate, in a way. And I mentioned this to someone, but it seemed more like a therapy session."*
>
> *Newcomer team member, Employer A*

One newcomer team member mentioned that they would have liked the opportunity to network with different companies, not just within their own company.

The employer stakeholder interviewed, from Employer B, also participated in CAIP with SMEs as a newcomer team member. They also felt that the program was relevant to employees at their organization. They had no suggestions for improvements and felt that CAIP with SMEs did a great job of ensuring it was relevant to the unique experiences of all participants.

> *"It was always very interactive, so it wasn't like a 'one size fits all' approach by any means."*
>
> *Stakeholder*

This stakeholder also shared some actions their organization had since taken that were informed by CAIP with SMEs. For example, the 'growth coach' program was already being implemented by

the organization prior to their participation in the program, but CAIP with SMEs helped to inform finalizing the program design. The growth coach program involves employees having access to a growth coach, who acts as a kind of mentor to assist with career development by discussing skill building, developing competencies, and so on. CAIP with SMEs helped to inform the growth program by highlighting the importance of taking unique backgrounds into consideration when communicating. For example, the different cultural contexts of career development in Canada, such as asking for promotions and being a more active participant in your career advancement.

The employer stakeholder also noted that their organization had the intention to be clearer in its overall communication regarding career advancement. They noted that CAIP with SMEs helped to highlight communication barriers that can exist related to the career advancement of newcomers. Therefore, the organization is working to remove ambiguity in communication and make information as objective as possible in order to address these barriers.

### b. Does the design of the program enable effective delivery?

During interviews, manager and newcomer participants were asked for program feedback, both on program content and delivery. Both managers and newcomer team members described liking the discussion-oriented format of CAIP with SMEs, citing its focus on being interactive and being structured around activities (as opposed to being more lecture-based). Manager and newcomer participants also appreciated that both groups took part in the program together, helping managers and employees learn from one another and build connections. Interview participants described a diversity of perspectives as being helpful in learning more about the cultural context of employment in Canada.

Newcomer interview participants valued the opportunity to communicate their perspectives to managers and felt that managers left with a better understanding of the different previous work contexts their newcomer employees had experienced in their home countries.

Interview participants also described managers and employees being separated for some parts of the program. One employee mentioned wanting to hear more from managers during the session.

> *"A lot of the breakout rooms we are in, it's mostly with like nine other fellow employees. And I guess the managers are together, which I think maybe it's their way of wanting us to feel more comfortable. But then, it does create, like, a clear division between, 'Okay, you're the employees, you're the managers'."*
>
> *Newcomer team member, Employer A*

However, participants recognized the pros and cons of managers and employees taking part in discussions both together and separately.

> *"It's a double-edged sword, in my opinion, having managers in the room with non-managers. Because I think, you know, some people may have tempered their answers or not spoken as honestly as they maybe wanted to."*
>
> *Manager, Employer B*

Interviewees had no critical feedback on the topics covered by CAIP with SMEs. Some interview participants mentioned that they would have liked the program to be longer to allow for deeper discussions of some topics.

Feedback on program delivery was also very positive. In particular, both managers and newcomer team members had highly positive feedback regarding program facilitators. Participants noted that the facilitators were very experienced and skilled at phrasing questions, using examples to support points, making everyone comfortable, and ensuring everyone got a chance to speak.

> *"[The facilitator] did a really good job at, you know, saying, 'We've heard a lot from men in the room. Is there any woman who wants to speak up?', which I really appreciate."*
>
> *Newcomer team member, Employer A*

Interview participants also had positive feedback about the scheduling of the program. One participant noted that CAIP with SMEs was paced helpfully on alternate weeks and during the lunch hour, which meant that participants could take part while eating. Multiple interview participants noted that they felt the length of each session was good, with some noting that the program could even have been longer (either by having longer sessions or by having more sessions over a longer time period). Some interview participants did note that the course felt a bit constrained, and that pacing could be improved by increasing the number of sessions.

The employer stakeholder interview participant also had positive feedback on the effectiveness of CAIP with SMEs. In particular, this interviewee felt that the program gave employees a better learning and understanding of other colleagues' lived experiences (e.g., different types of privilege).

### c. How do employers take action or commit to taking action around making their organizations more inclusive around immigrant career advancement?

In the post-intervention survey, managers were asked to indicate which actions they had taken to support newcomer team members in achieving their career goals since the beginning of CAIP with SMEs. They could select all relevant behaviours from a list of six options and could add additional behaviours if appropriate, although none did. The number of managers who selected each behaviour is presented in Table 7 below. The most commonly reported behaviour was

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asking team members questions to learn about them in the context of their career progression. All respondents identified at least one action they had taken.

Table 7    **Behaviours Supporting Newcomer Team Members**

| | Number of Managers (n=9) |
|---|---|
| Asking team members more questions to learn about their skills, expertise, credentials, and their understanding/assumptions around career progression. | 7 |
| I have discussed career progression goals with newcomer team member(s). | 5 |
| I have connected newcomer team member(s) with people within the organization/within my network. | 4 |
| I have discussed internal professional development opportunities with newcomer team member(s) (e.g., training, job shadowing, special projects, stretch assignments). | 4 |
| I have discussed the formal processes for career advancement with newcomer team member(s). | 3 |
| I have discussed the organizational culture around career advancement with newcomer team member(s) (e.g., informal processes or actions that contribute to career advancement opportunities). | 2 |

During interviews, TRIEC staff highlighted that the program was designed to focus on incremental, actionable results that a manager could then implement and communicate as they saw fit. TRIEC staff also mentioned that in their own interviews with CAIP participants, they noticed that managers started to use the communication strategies outlined in the program with their team members.

2. **How can we more quickly enable newcomers to acquire or translate the transferable skill sets (e.g., soft skills) associated with successful integration and advancement in the Canadian workplace context? How can employers be enabled to better assess and recognize these skill sets in newcomers?**

    a. **How does the condensed version of the CAIP program contribute to the participant's knowledge and behaviour change after each session and after the program?**

Both the interview and survey data analysis suggest that managers and newcomer team members increased their knowledge and changed their behaviour after participating in CAIP with SMEs. Manager and newcomer interview participants were asked for their key program takeaways from CAIP with SMEs. Manager participants noted that they now knew to be clearer and more specific about expectations in order to be mindful of cultural distinctions, and not to assume all employees were aware of the same norms. One manager mentioned that they had begun using one of the discussion activities learned during the program in their own team meetings. These findings are similar to those reported for CAIP 2.0 in TRIEC's project proposal, which described an increase in newcomer career advancement knowledge and an increase in manager knowledge about supporting newcomers.

Newcomer participants valued learning about the different lived experiences and employment journeys of colleagues in other departments. Colleagues with different experiences shared the different communication styles that they were used to in their home countries. Newcomer team members also valued their managers participating in the program, as they felt this would help with all team members being on the same page regarding expectations. Specifically, newcomer participants mentioned that an important takeaway from the program was learning how to have open communication with managers about their career development. They noted that CAIP with SMEs helped reduce their fear of asking questions, and realize that it was okay to bring up concerns with their manager instead of looking for a new role outside of the company.

TRIEC staff interviewees noted that CAIP with SMEs has been effective so far, and that participants have received promotions and/or raises since completing the program. TRIEC staff expressed that they would like to measure longer-term outcomes of the program, e.g., where participants have reached five years after taking part. In TRIEC's Learning and Reflection report, they noted that one year follow up findings for CAIP 2.0 were very positive, including that newcomer team members and managers were still using knowledge from the program one year afterwards. The report also noted that newcomer team members found CAIP 2.0 to be helpful for career advancement one year after the program. These longer term findings for CAIP 2.0 seem promising when anticipating the results of CAIP with SMEs.

After each CAIP with SMEs session, newcomer team members and managers were asked to reflect on their knowledge, before and after the session, of career advancement in Canada, unconscious biases, and social capital. The specific aspects of career advancement differed by session depending on the session curriculum.[10] Newcomer participants were asked about their own career advancement while managers were asked about their interactions with others.

All of the knowledge questions were assessed on the same five-point scale ranging from "new to me" to "a deep understanding". We present the number of managers and newcomer team

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[10]    They also sometimes differed by employer.

members whose self-reported knowledge was higher for the "after" question compared to the "before" question across all end-of-session surveys. These results are reported in Table 8.

**Table 8      Newcomer Team Member and Manager Knowledge Gain Self-assessment**

|  | Number with Knowledge Gain | Number of Responses |
|---|---|---|
| Number of newcomer team members | 23 | 39 |
| Number of managers | 13 | 19 |
| Overall | 36 | 58 |

Overall, 62 per cent of end-of-session ratings reported a knowledge gain (36/58), with the remainder showing that either their perceived knowledge was unchanged or decreased. Twenty-three of 39 newcomer team members - and 13/19 managers - reported improved knowledge at the end of the session compared to the beginning. Combining newcomer team members and managers, we find 15/26 respondents reported a knowledge gain in session 1, 11/17 in session 2, and 10/15 in session 3. In isolation, perceived knowledge decreases may seem counter-intuitive, however, multiple interview participants mentioned the concept of 'you don't know what you don't know' to demonstrate how CAIP with SMEs highlighted important nuances for career development in Canada that they otherwise would not have been aware of. Thus, the apparent knowledge decreases may reflect participants recognizing that their ratings before the program may have been inflated. Realizing gaps in knowledge and understanding is an important aspect of the CAIP with SMEs training program.

At the end of the program, newcomer participants were also asked whether they thought their knowledge of advancement in their organization had increased since joining CAIP with SMEs. Sixteen of the 17 respondents answered "Yes" either a little (4 participants) or a lot (12 participants). In the same survey, they were also asked whether they believed their ability to advance within their organization had improved after participating in CAIP with SMEs. The number remained high at 14 of 17 respondents agreeing that their ability to advance had improved (7 - a little and 7 - a lot).

At the end of the program, newcomer participants were also asked the extent to which their knowledge of nine career advancement actions had changed as a result of participating in CAIP with SMEs. Figure 1 presents the frequencies of their responses. For all nine actions, no participant reported no knowledge change and the majority of responses were "somewhat" or "a lot", demonstrating a strong stated belief among respondents of increased knowledge. The most

commonly reported items that improved as a result of participating in the training were "understanding formal career advancement processes" and "what your employer expects from employees who are looking to advance in their career".

**Figure 1        Newcomer Team Member Self-Reported Career Advancement Knowledge Changes**
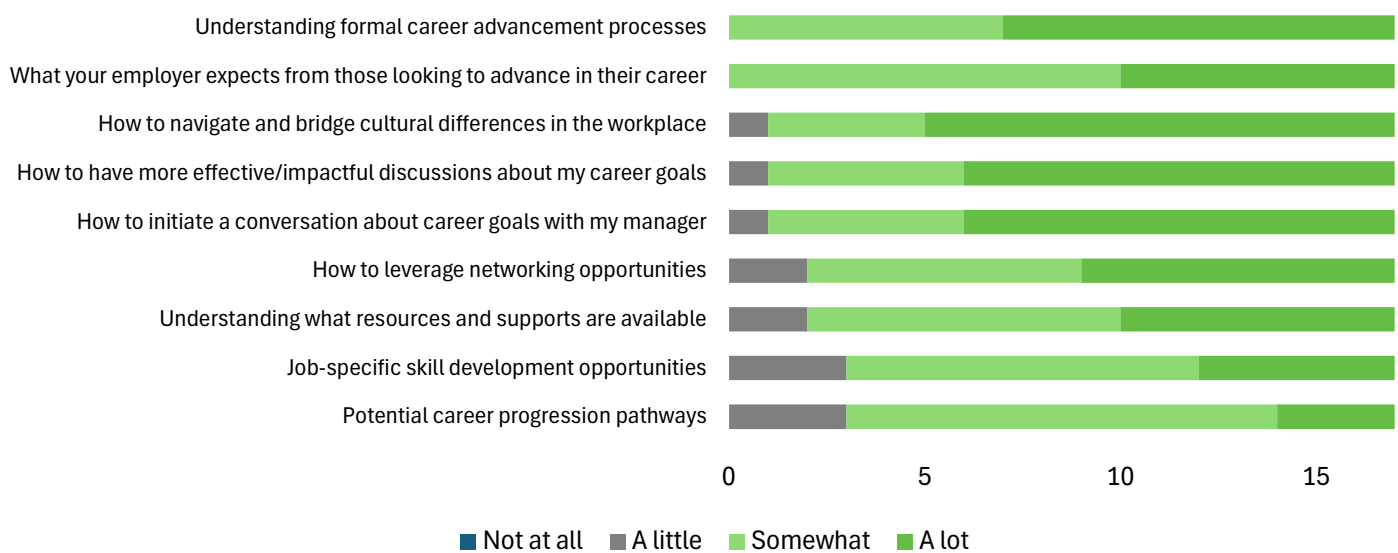


In terms of changes in behaviour, we do not observe many changes in the short time period of CAIP with SMEs, which is not unexpected. Figure 2 presents these results and although some newcomer team members did not make any behavioural changes related to their career advancement immediately after participating in CAIP with SMEs, the majority did; either a little, somewhat or a lot. This includes accessing new professional development opportunities, expanding their networks, and enrolling in training.

## Figure 2    Newcomer Team Member Self-Reported Behavioural Changes



b. **Does the condensed version of CAIP maintain similar participant satisfaction levels as the CAIP 2.0 program?**

As reported earlier, in answering the first evaluation question, CAIP for SMEs had a 100 per cent participant satisfaction rate among survey respondents, identical to that of CAIP 2.0 (as reported in TRIEC's project proposal), for both newcomer team members and managers. Manager and newcomer interview participants expressed highly positive feedback for CAIP with SMEs. Some manager participants highlighted that it was important for all managers to participate in the CAIP with SMEs program in order to better understand unconscious bias. Manager interview participants also expressed that the CAIP with SMEs program was particularly helpful in improving communication between managers and team members in order to clearly communicate expectations and needs.

Newcomer interview participants found the CAIP with SMEs program to be helpful in providing an orientation to the employment culture in Canada. In particular, multiple participants mentioned that they were not aware of the expectations around being active participants in the promotion process (i.e., expressing to their manager the desire for a promotion), as this was not the etiquette in their home countries. Some newcomer participants mentioned that this better understanding of Canadian employment culture improved their confidence and reduced their fear of being rejected. Participants also valued the opportunity to have discussions with other newcomers about their experiences to better appreciate the diversity of perspectives in their organization.

TRIEC staff interviewees noted that CAIP with SMEs would likely not work as well with an organization where participants didn't know each other at all, or at an organization where there was very low trust. This finding was also reported by TRIEC in their Learning and Reflection report. Because CAIP with SMEs was offered within organizations where participants knew each other to some extent, people could be a little more open and vulnerable in sessions (especially in

sessions where managers and employees were separated). Therefore, a condensed version of the program was effective because time did not need to be spent on building rapport and trust, which is necessary for productive group discussions.

3. **How can approaches that effectively address SME barriers to investing in training and adopting better HR management practices be scaled up to become sustainable or self-sustaining?**

   a. **Is this condensed version of CAIP of interest to the larger SME sector in the GTA? If so, to SMEs with what characteristics?**

Both the CAIP with SMEs facilitator and TRIEC staff interviewed felt that CAIP with SMEs would be of interest to the larger SME sector in the GTA. TRIEC staff mentioned that they had already delivered CAIP 2.0 and the original CAIP program to employers involved in the technology, finance, and marketing sectors and were able to easily adapt the program to meet these industry needs.

TRIEC already had some SME traits in mind when recruiting employers for the program. These traits also seem promising for scaling up the program to the larger SME sector in the GTA. During staff interviews, TRIEC noted that it was easier to recruit SMEs to CAIP with SMEs than it was to recruit large employers to CAIP 2.0. They attributed this to it being more complicated to get the appropriate approvals to move forward in large organizations as they often had to talk to multiple departments when recruiting (e.g., human resources, communications, learning and development, etc.). In contrast, recruiting SMEs was less complicated.

TRIEC also outlined the above finding in their Learning and Reflection report, highlighting a key finding of project implementation being simpler and quicker recruitment of and implementation with SMEs compared to larger enterprises. In SMEs, decision making was quicker, recruitment processes were more targeted, and organizations seemed more engaged in the goal of newcomer inclusion. The Learning and Reflection report also noted that attendance and completion rates were higher at SMEs compared to larger organizations. Based on their experience with previous versions of CAIP, TRIEC staff suggested to both organizations that they tell participants to prioritize the training, not to cancel their attendance for other work commitments, and not to multi-task during the sessions (for example, also checking emails during the training). They informed both organizations that this would be critical to the program's success.

In recruiting employers for CAIP with SMEs, TRIEC looked for organizations that already seemed to value equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), employee engagement, and were trying to incorporate inclusive practices in their workplaces, having made public efforts in the past. This made them more likely to be engaged and receptive to CAIP when approached.

*"I think TRIEC was really in a good position, because, you know, we are working in this sector over 20 years. And we have already established some strong relationships with employers. We have credibility."*

*TRIEC staff member*

Furthermore, TRIEC also reached out to organizations that were not in regulated professions. It was initially thought that organizations without clearly defined career pathways (which seems more likely in unregulated professions) would be more in need of CAIP with SMEs to better support employees in their career development. However, the facilitator interviewee mentioned that even in professions with clearly defined pathways based on credentials or union rules, there can still be miscommunication related to career advancement.

TRIEC also noted that CAIP with SMEs was offered to employers for free, which may have impacted their participation in the program. TRIEC mentioned that they did not yet have market research indicating how much employers might be willing to pay for the program in the future.

TRIEC also mentioned that CAIP would likely need to be further adapted to accommodate unionized employers, who tend to have a stricter process for offering such programs. TRIEC originally had a third employer recruited for CAIP with SMEs, but they had to withdraw since, as a unionized employer, they worked on a longer timeline which did not line up with the project's funding period. TRIEC found that unionized organizations tend to need more time to move forward with programming. Furthermore, TRIEC noted that while the unionized organization they contacted saw the value of CAIP, their legal team felt that the program might be seen by some employees as giving one group of employees an unfair advantage over another, which could result in a grievance being filed. Had there been more time, the program could have been repositioned to increase its acceptability to a unionized organization.

The employer stakeholder interview participant had very positive feedback on working with TRIEC to implement CAIP with SMEs at their organization. They said that TRIEC was very responsive to any questions they had. Their only point of critical feedback was that sometimes emails and meetings were repetitive, i.e., the same information was communicated in both emails and meetings. The employer stakeholder suggested assuming all participants have read the PowerPoint slides shared beforehand. However, this participant did say that they felt it was better to over communicate than under communicate.

# RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

## Achievement of Project Objectives

As highlighted in TRIEC's project proposal, CAIP with SMEs had the following objectives. Below is a summary of how the project met each of these objectives based on SRDC's evaluation:

> **Scale CAIP to more employers including SMEs and make long-term sustainable change. This includes:**
>
> > a. **Identify challenges and supports required by two SMEs to adapt CAIP for those employers.**

**TRIEC was successful in meeting this objective.** TRIEC delivered CAIP with SMEs to two employers and collected data on how the program was received. Administrative data shows high program completion rates. Semi-structured interviews with program participants and facilitators highlighted highly positive feedback for the program from all involved. TRIEC's Learning and Reflection report also identified the nuances of offering this program to SMEs as opposed to large enterprises.

> > b. **Develop and test a more condensed version of CAIP that will provide a less intensive but still impactful immigrant inclusion initiative.**

**TRIEC was successful in meeting this objective.** Survey and interview data suggest that participants had very positive feedback on CAIP with SMEs. Interview participants highlighted specific impacts such as improving understanding and communication of newcomer barriers and facilitators to career development. Interviews with project facilitators highlighted the main reason for success in implementing the condensed version of CAIP was the nature of the SMEs. In particular, the fact that program participants already knew each other helped them in jumping right into program discussions, as opposed to spending initial time building rapport.

> > c. **Continue the long-term evaluation of the CAIP program and knowledge mobilization for continuous improvement and to increase adoption of new practices[11].**

SRDC did not evaluate this objective as it is outside the scope of this evaluation.

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[11] This objective is outside the scope of SRDC's evaluation.

## Promising Practices and Considerations/Recommendations

For each of the evaluation questions below, we highlight both promising practices (i.e., what worked well) as well as additional recommendations and considerations.

---

1. How can we incentivize and support more employers to change their HR practices to recognize newcomer skills and support their growth? How might we reduce the time and cost needed to meaningfully engage employers?

    a. Is the program relevant to the intended audience?

    b. Does the design of the program enable effective delivery?

    c. How do employers take action or commit to taking action around making their organizations more inclusive around immigrant career advancement?

---

*What worked well*

- Condensing the program worked for SMEs where all attendees were from the same organization and knew each other. The condensed program would likely not be as effective if delivered to a larger organization where participants may not have previous relationships.

- Program delivery (session length, group size, structure, facilitator, etc.) was very positively received by participants.

- There was very positive feedback about the interactive nature of the program (i.e., being discussion-based instead of lecture-based), as participants valued the opportunity to learn from each other and share perspectives. This helped to highlight the nuances of different experiences and, in particular, communication barriers.

- Actively including employees at all levels within the organization in the program (e.g., leaders at the organization, middle managers, more junior employees, etc.) was important in facilitating cross-cutting dialogue about career development. Employees responded positively to their managers, and senior leaders, being included in the program alongside them.

- Participating in CAIP with SMEs had immediate impacts on manager behaviour. Immediate actions reported by managers after CAIP with SMEs included asking team members more questions to learn about their skills, expertise, credentials, and their understanding/assumptions around career progression, as well as discussing career progression goals with newcomer team members.

*Recommendations*

- The employer stakeholder highlighted the growth coach program and how they had used CAIP with SMEs to inform it. Other organizations could follow suit by bolstering existing career development/mentorship programs with content from CAIP with SMEs.

- Being more mindful of communication is a key takeaway. Organizations/managers should not make as many assumptions about what employees (specifically newcomer team members) already know.

    o e.g., In the home countries of some participants, promotions are offered based on work/tenure, whereas in Canada there is generally a need to signal that you want a promotion.

- CAIP with SMEs should be piloted and evaluated with more employers (and/or with more newcomer team member and manager participants at participating employers). In the short project timeframe, CAIP with SMEs was piloted with only two medium-sized employers. In order for evaluation findings to be robust and externally valid, it should be evaluated with more employers, including with small organizations.

- If possible, CAIP with SMEs should also be piloted with unionized employers. Modifications to the framing of the program may be needed for unions to be more receptive to it. For example, in interviews, TRIEC's CAIP team noted that the legal team of one unionized organization saw the potential for some employees to view the program as giving certain colleagues an unfair advantage and could lead to them filing a grievance. This should be addressed when recruiting unionized employers.

- Funding timelines may not align with union timelines as union approvals may increase the time it takes to recruit an employer to the program. The current short timelines already posed a challenge for the selected workplaces in recruiting participants that CAIP with SMEs was tailored for, such as newcomer team members who do not have career advancement experience.

- Funding should allow for longer-term follow up so that both short-term and long-term changes can be measured.

2. How can we more quickly enable newcomers to acquire or translate the transferable skill sets (e.g., soft skills) associated with successful integration and advancement in the Canadian workplace context? How can employers be enabled to better assess and recognize these skill sets in newcomers?

   a. How does the condensed version of the CAIP program contribute to the participant's knowledge and behaviour change after each session and after the program?

   b. Does the condensed version of CAIP maintain similar participant satisfaction levels as the CAIP 2.0 program?

## *What worked well*

- Overall there were high program satisfaction rates among both newcomer team members and managers.

- Having a discussion-based program as opposed to a lecture-based program was appreciated and seemed to work well for participant engagement.

- A skilled facilitator is important, especially one experienced in the subject matter.

- There was a focus on actionable, practical takeaways that participants could implement right away.

- Survey findings suggested that by the end of the program, newcomer team members had a better understanding of organizational processes and employer expectations related to career advancement. This may be partially related to the improved communication reported by managers (asking more questions and having more discussions about career advancement).

## *Recommendations*

- The condensed version of the CAIP program works well for SMEs. However, the original format should be kept for large employers as more time is needed for participants to get to know one another.

3. How can approaches that effectively address SME barriers to investing in training and adopting better HR management practices be scaled up to become sustainable or self-sustaining?

   a. Is this condensed version of CAIP of interest to the larger SME sector in the GTA? If so, to SMEs with what characteristics?

## *What worked well*

- Reaching out to SMEs that had already demonstrated being inclusive employers helped with recruitment and in ensuring the program was delivered smoothly in a short timeline. However, there is a potential trade-off in terms of producing substantive knowledge changes as managers and newcomer team members at such workplaces may have been relatively knowledgeable to begin with.

- During interviews, TRIEC staff explained that the train-the-trainer approach adopted in a previous version of CAIP helped the program become more self-sustaining within an organization. However, organizations would likely already need a fairly high level of EDI familiarity and facilitation skills to successfully implement this approach. Moreover, this approach may also be expensive for the organization. For most SMEs, TRIEC does not believe it to be a viable option.

- It was helpful to have program champions at an employer advocating for CAIP with SMEs within their organization. They were able to communicate the value of the program to employees who then expressed interest in learning more.

## *Recommendations*

- Continue market research to identify the willingness of SMEs to pay for CAIP with SMEs.

- Reach beyond employers that already see the value of hiring newcomers and who take steps to address engagement and inclusion to those earlier in their immigrant inclusion journey. This may be challenging but is necessary for broader labour market change.

- Further developing online asynchronous learning materials based on CAIP with SMEs to make it accessible to more organizations.

## Conclusion

Overall, TRIEC was successful in achieving all of its objectives with the CAIP with SMEs project and the learnings from its evaluation contribute to our understanding of what works for newcomer labour market integration in Canada. The program was very positively received by participants, similar to that of CAIP 2.0. This was demonstrated in both survey responses and semi-structured interviews with newcomer and manager participants. Both program content and delivery were highly praised by interview participants. Newcomer participants mentioned having a better understanding of organizational expectations as a result of the program, while manager participants reported feeling more capable of supporting newcomer employees with their career development. This knowledge gain also translated into behavioural changes reported by CAIP with SMEs participants. Additionally, one employer gave an example of how they had already leveraged insights from CAIP to improve other programs within the organization. CAIP with SMEs program features and outcomes are presented in Figure 3.
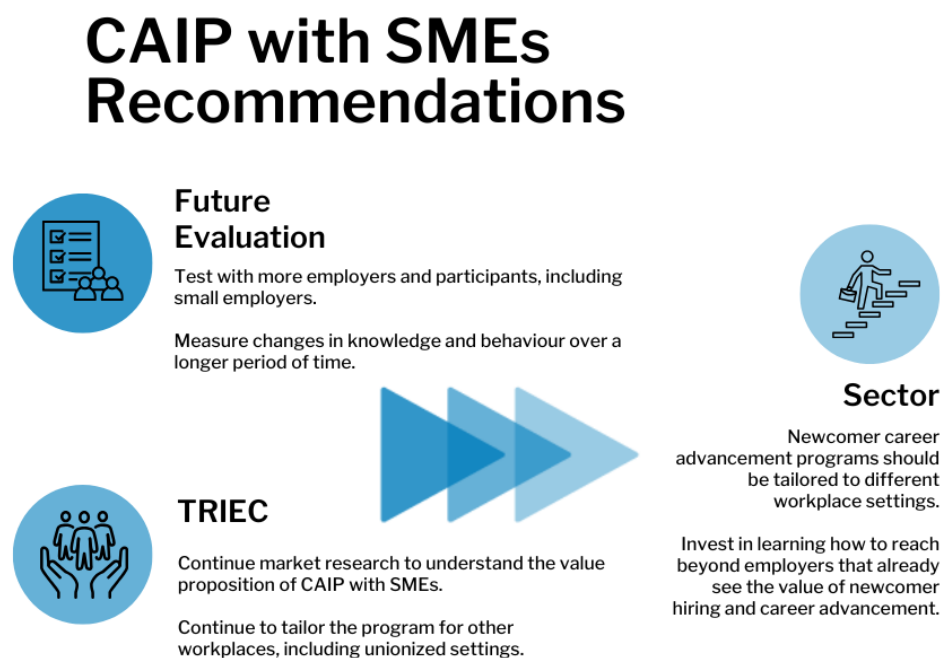
**Figure 3      Summary of Program Features and Outcomes**
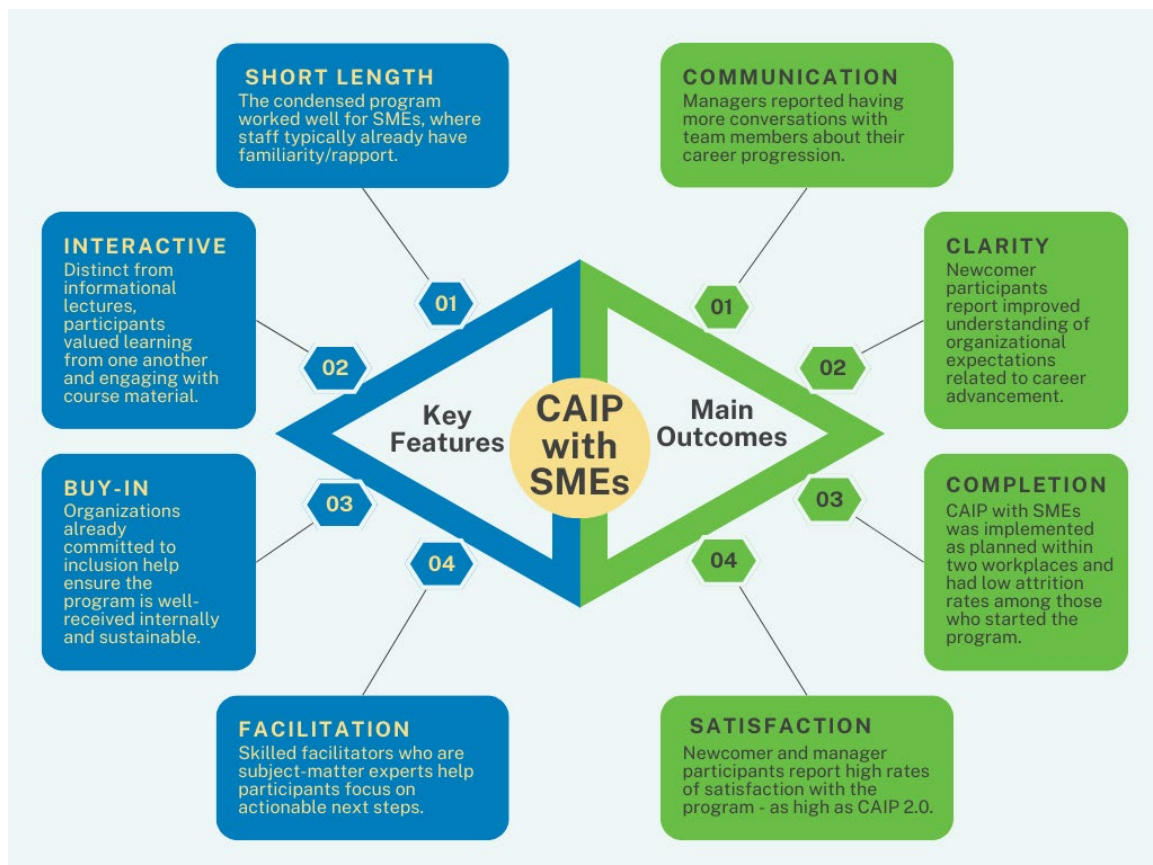
Based on the positive outcomes and the likelihood that CAIP would be of interest to other SMEs in the GTA, it should be implemented with additional employers, including small employers, to further its reach and better understand its impacts. Moreover, an increase in the number of participants with the addition of more employers participating in CAIP with SMEs would allow for a disaggregated analysis and, for example, enable a better understanding of whether CAIP with SMEs is more effective for some participants.

Recommendations stemming from this evaluation of CAIP with SMEs that are aimed at different audiences are summarized in Figure 4. The audiences are related to evaluation, TRIEC, and the broader labour market.

**Figure 4        Recommendations from CAIP with SMEs**



## CAIP with SMEs Recommendations

**Future Evaluation**

Test with more employers and participants, including small employers.

Measure changes in knowledge and behaviour over a longer period of time.

**TRIEC**

Continue market research to understand the value proposition of CAIP with SMEs.

Continue to tailor the program for other workplaces, including unionized settings.

**Sector**

Newcomer career advancement programs should be tailored to different workplace settings.

Invest in learning how to reach beyond employers that already see the value of newcomer hiring and career advancement.

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# APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

## NEWCOMER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Introduction**

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) is working with the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) to understand the outcomes of their Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) for SMEs program, which was funded by the Future Skills Centre (FSC). As part of this study, SRDC is carrying out interviews with program participants.

Your experience and perspectives are very important to the project's learning and will help us answer key questions regarding its outcomes.

We're interested in your honest opinion. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, and we can skip or come back to any that you would like more time to think about.

**Details of the interview:** The interview will take about 60 minutes and will be conducted in English over Zoom. Please let me know if you require any adjustments or accommodations to ensure your full participation in this process.

**Recording:** I would like to record and generate a transcript of our interview to help me summarize my notes afterwards. The recording and transcript will only be used by myself and my colleagues at SRDC who are working on this project. If at any time you would like me to stop recording and/or not include your comments, please let me know. The recording and the transcript will be destroyed at the end of the project in November 2024.

**Confidentiality:** Some quotes may be used in reports we write for use by FSC, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and TRIEC. While SRDC will not attribute comments to any particular individual or Employer And will remove identifying contextual information, due to the small number of participants and unique nature of the project, TRIEC staff, FSC staff, or SRDC researchers reading our report may be able to identify a particular person as a source of information.

If at any time during our conversation you would like me to stop the recording and not include your comments, please let me know. Also, you have the right to end this interview at any time and this will in no way affect your involvement with the project. If you would like to see the report before we share it with FSC, we can send you a copy.

**Honoraria:** All interview participants will receive a $100 honorarium, which will be sent via e-transfer. Please allow three weeks to receive the honorarium. If you have not received it by this time, please email me.

**Is the email we used to contact you the best place for the honorarium to be sent? YES/NO**

*If no, confirm new email:_____*

**Verbal consent:** Before I ask for your permission to begin recording, do you have any questions for me?

**Would you like us to send you a copy of the report? YES/NO**
**Do I have your permission to begin the interview and the recording? YES/NO**

## CAIP with SMEs Newcomer Participant

### Introduction

1.  Can you tell us a bit about your current role at [ORGANIZATION] and what type of work you do?
    *   *PROBE*: Has your employment or role changed since completing the program? E.g., new roles, new projects?

### Engagement

2.  Why did you decide to join CAIP?
    *PROBE*: When you joined CAIP, what were you hoping to gain from the program? Did you find the program met your needs?
3.  Considering your professional background and experiences, did you find the program to be relevant to you?
    *   *PROBE:* Do you have any feedback on program content? Could it be made more relevant for your career advancement and career development?
4.  How did you feel about the program design and delivery? For example, its length, the number of participants, the topics, the facilitators, etc.
    *   *PROBE:* Do you have any thoughts on the organization of the program?
    *   *PROBE:* Did you find the program to be accessible (for example, easy to understand, technology was easy to use, pace of learning was reasonable, etc.)?
5.  Can you tell me about what you feel are your most important insights or takeaways from the CAIP program?

### Work experience and soft skills

6.  What aspects of the program have you found most helpful for navigating career advancement and development in Canada (at [ORGANIZATION])?
    *   *PROBE:* Internal hiring, preparing/positioning yourself for advancement, social capital
7.  Beyond CAIP, what do you feel would be most helpful for you in navigating career advancement and development?
8.  Have you already used what you learned from CAIP or do you plan to use it? If so, what, and how did you or do you plan to use it?

- *PROBE:* Have you noticed that you have done anything differently or do you plan on doing anything differently as a result of the CAIP program?

9. Have you noticed any changes from your manager and/or your organization since participating in CAIP? If so, what?

**Closing**

10. Based on what you learned in the CAIP program, what advice would you give to other newcomers regarding career advancement?
11. Do you have any other suggestions on how the program could be improved?
12. Is there anything we missed that you would like to talk about?
13. Of all the things we talked about today, what is the most important to you?

If that's everything, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your comments and insights will be very helpful to us in understanding the key findings from this project.

# MANAGER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Introduction**

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) is working with the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) to understand the outcomes of their Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) program, which was funded by the Future Skills Centre (FSC). As part of this study, SRDC is carrying out interviews with program participants (managers).

Your experience and perspectives are very important to the project's learning and will help us answer key questions regarding its outcomes.

We're interested in your honest opinion. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, and we can skip or come back to any that you would like more time to think about.

**Details of the interview:** The interview will take about 60 minutes and will be conducted in English over Zoom. Please let me know if you require any adjustments or accommodations to ensure your full participation in this process.

**Recording:** I would like to record and generate a transcript of our interview to help me summarize my notes afterwards. The recording and transcript will only be used by myself and my colleagues at SRDC who are working on this project. If at any time you would like me to stop recording and/or not include your comments, please let me know. The recording and the transcript will be destroyed at the end of the project in November 2024.

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If at any time during our conversation you would like me to stop the recording and not include your comments, please let me know. Also, you have the right to end this interview at any time and this will in no way affect your involvement with the project. If you would like to see the report before we share it with FSC, we can send you a copy.

**Honoraria:** All interview participants will receive a $100 honorarium, which will be sent via e-transfer. Please allow three weeks to receive the honorarium. If you have not received it by this time, please email me.

**Is the email we used to contact you the best place for the honorarium to be sent? YES/NO**

*If no, confirm new email:_____*

**Verbal consent:** Before I ask for your permission to begin recording, do you have any questions for me?

**Would you like us to send you a copy of the report? YES/NO**

**Do I have your permission to begin the interview and the recording? YES/NO**

## CAIP with SMEs Manager Participant

**Introduction**

1. Can you tell us a bit about your current role at [ORGANIZATION] and what type of work you do?
    - *PROBE*: How many employees do you manage (directly and indirectly, separately)?
    - *PROBE*: Do you know how many of the employees on your team are newcomers – including those who have lived in Canada for more than 5 years (and less than 10 years, directly and indirectly, separately)? If so, how many?
    - *PROBE*: Has your employment or role changed since completing the program? e.g., new roles, new projects, new staff you are supervising?

**Engagement**

2. Why did you decide to join CAIP?
    - *PROBE*: When you joined CAIP, what were you hoping to gain from the program? Did you find the program met your needs?
3. Considering your professional background and experiences, did you find the program to be relevant to you?
    - *PROBE:* Do you have any feedback on program content? Could it be made more relevant for your support of newcomer team members and their career advancement?
4. How did you feel about the program design and delivery? For example, its length, the number of participants, the topics, the facilitators, etc.
    - *PROBE:* Do you have any thoughts on the organization of the program?
    - *PROBE:* Did you find the program to be accessible (for example, easy to understand, technology was easy to use, pace of learning was reasonable, etc.)?
5. Can you tell me about what you feel are your most important insights or takeaways from the CAIP program?

**Work experience and soft skills**

6. What aspects of the program have you found most helpful as a manager in supporting the career advancement and development of newcomers at [ORGANIZATION])?

- *PROBE:* In assessing and recognizing newcomer team members' skillsets in a culturally appropriate way.
- *PROBE:* In supporting newcomer team members in navigating their career advancement and professional development at [ORGANIZATION]

7.  Beyond CAIP, what do you feel would be most helpful for you in recognizing and supporting newcomer team members' career advancement and development?

8.  Have you already used what you learned from CAIP or do you plan to use it? If so, what, and how did you or do you plan to use it?
    - *PROBE:* Have you noticed that you have done anything differently or do you plan on doing anything differently as a result of the CAIP program? If so, can you say more about this.

9.  Have you noticed any changes from your newcomer team members (who participated in CAIP) and/or your organization since participating in CAIP? If so, what?

**Closing**

10. Based on what you learned in the CAIP program, what advice would you give to other managers regarding supporting newcomer career advancement?
11. Do you have any other suggestions on how the program could be improved?
12. Is there anything we missed that you would like to talk about?
13. Of all the things we talked about today, what is the most important to you?

If that's everything, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your comments and insights will be very helpful to us in understanding the key findings from this project.

# STAFF/FACILITATOR INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Introduction**

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) is working with the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) to understand the outcomes of their Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) program, which was funded by the Future Skills Centre (FSC). As part of this study, SRDC is carrying out interviews with CAIP staff and facilitators.

Your experience and perspectives are very important to the project's learning and will help us answer key questions regarding its outcomes.

We're interested in your honest opinion. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, and we can skip or come back to any that you would like more time to think about.

**Details of the interview:** The interview will take about 60 minutes and will be conducted in English over Zoom. Please let me know if you require any adjustments or accommodations to ensure your full participation in this process.

**Recording:** I would like to record and generate a transcript of our interview to help me summarize my notes afterwards. The recording and transcript will only be used by myself and my colleagues at SRDC who are working on this project. If at any time you would like me to stop recording and/or not include your comments, please let me know. The recording and the transcript will be destroyed at the end of the project in November 2024.

**Confidentiality:** Some quotes may be used in reports we write for use by FSC, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and TRIEC. While SRDC will not attribute comments to any particular individual or employer and will remove identifying contextual information, due to the small number of participants and unique nature of the project, TRIEC staff, FSC staff, or SRDC researchers reading our report may be able to identify a particular person as a source of information.

If at any time during our conversation you would like me to stop the recording and not include your comments, please let me know. Also, you have the right to end this interview at any time and this will in no way affect your involvement with the project. (*Facilitators only:* If you would like to see the report before we share it with FSC, we can send you a copy).

**Verbal consent:** Before I ask for your permission to begin recording, do you have any questions for me?

**Would you like us to send you a copy of the report? YES/NO**

**Do I have your permission to begin the interview and the recording? YES/NO**

# CAIP with SMEs Staff Member / Facilitator

**Introduction**

1. Can you tell us a bit about your role and the type of work you do/did for CAIP with SMEs?
   - *PROBE*: Were you involved with CAIP, CAIP 2.0, or both? If so, what role did you have?

**Engagement**

2. How was CAIP adapted for SMEs? What was changed/modified from CAIP/CAIP 2.0, and did it work well?
   - *PROBE:* What aspects and components of CAIP with SMEs do you think made it effective?
   - *PROBE:* How can CAIP with SMEs be improved?
3. *[TRIEC staff only]* How did you go about recruiting SMEs for CAIP? Did you learn any best practices in this area?
   - *PROBE: What challenges did you encounter?*
4. How did you feel about the program design and delivery? For example, its length, the number of participants, the topics, the facilitators, etc.
   - *PROBE:* Do you have any thoughts on the organization of the program?
   - *PROBE:* Do you find the program to be accessible (for example, easy to understand, technology was easy to use, pace of learning was reasonable, etc.)?

**Work experience and soft skills**

5. What aspects of the program do you think are most helpful for newcomers in navigating career advancement and development in Canada?
6. What were you hoping employees (managers and newcomers) would gain from participating in the CAIP program?
   - *PROBE*: In your opinion, how long do you think it would take to see changes as a result of the program?

**SME adaptability**

7. How do you think CAIP with SMEs can be scaled up to become sustainable or self-sustaining?

8. Do you think  this version of the CAIP program is of interest to the larger SME sector in the GTA?
      - *PROBE*: What characteristics are of interest?
      - *PROBE*: What type of SME specifically? (industry, size, unionized, etc.)
      - *PROBE*: What do you think SMEs would be wiling to pay for such training? If so, approximately how much?

**Closing**

9. What advice would you give to other similar programs that aim to support newcomer career advancement?
10. Do you have any other suggestions on how the program could be improved?
11. Is there anything we missed that you would like to talk about?
12. Of all the things we talked about today, what is the most important to you?

If that's everything, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your comments and insights will be very helpful to us in understanding the key findings from this project.

# EMPLOYER STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Introduction**

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) is working with the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) to understand the outcomes of their Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) program, which was funded by the Future Skills Centre (FSC). As part of this study, SRDC is carrying out interviews with program stakeholders, such as employer representatives like yourself.

Your experience and perspectives are very important to the project's learning and will help us answer key questions regarding its outcomes.

We're interested in your honest opinion. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, and we can skip or come back to any that you would like more time to think about.

**Details of the interview:** The interview will take about 60 minutes and will be conducted in English over Zoom. Please let me know if you require any adjustments or accommodations to ensure your full participation in this process.

**Recording:** I would like to record and generate a transcript of our interview to help me summarize my notes afterwards. The recording and transcript will only be used by myself and my colleagues at SRDC who are working on this project. If at any time you would like me to stop recording and/or not include your comments, please let me know. The recording and the transcript will be destroyed at the end of the project in December 2024.

**Confidentiality:** Some quotes may be used in reports we write for use by FSC, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and TRIEC. While SRDC will not attribute comments to any particular individual or employer and will remove identifying contextual information, due to the small number of participants and unique nature of the project, TRIEC staff, FSC staff, or SRDC researchers reading our report may be able to identify a particular person as a source of information.

If at any time during our conversation you would like me to stop the recording and not include your comments, please let me know. Also, you have the right to end this interview at any time and this will in no way affect your involvement with the project. If you would like to see the report before we share it with FSC, we can send you a copy. **Please note there is no honorarium for this interview.**

**Verbal consent:** Before I ask for your permission to begin recording, do you have any questions for me?

**Would you like us to send you a copy of the report? YES/NO**

**Do I have your permission to begin the interview and the recording? YES/NO**

# CAIP with SMEs Employer Stakeholder

**Introduction**

1. What was your role in bringing CAIP to your organization? Do you have previous experience working with TRIEC?

**Engagement**

2. Why did your organization choose to sign up for the CAIP program?
   - *PROBE*: What was your organization hoping to get out of the program?
3. What was it like communicating with TRIEC to implement the program? (easy, complicated, etc.)
   - *PROBE*: How long did program set up take?
   - *PROBE:* How did your organization feel about the program design and delivery? For example, its length, the number of participants, the topics, the facilitators, etc.
   - *PROBE:* Does your organization have any thoughts on the organization of the program?

4. How did you promote the CAIP program to your staff?
   - *PROBE*: How did you describe it to your staff?
   - *PROBE*: Did you strongly encourage staff to participate?
   - *PROBE*: What did you say the benefits of participating in CAIP would be?
   - *PROBE*: Were staff given paid time to participate?

**Work experience and soft skills**

5. What were you hoping employees at your organization would gain from participating in the CAIP program?
   - *PROBE*: What about newcomers? Managers?

**Closing**

6. Since participating in CAIP has your organization already made changes to make it more inclusive to newcomers?
   - *PROBE*: Actions regarding newcomer career advancement?
   - *PROBE:* What about actions your organization has thought about taking but have not yet implemented?

7. Do you think that the larger SME sector in the GTA would be interested in the CAIP program?
   - *PROBE*: What characteristics are of interest?
   - *PROBE*: SMEs with certain characteristics (certain industries, employer size, number of newcomer employees, etc.)?
8. Does your organization have any other suggestions on how the program could be improved?
9. Is there anything we missed that you would like to talk about?
10. Of all the things we talked about today, what is the most important to you?

If that's everything, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. Your comments and insights will be very helpful to us in understanding the key findings from this project.