



**Future
Skills
Centre**

Centre des
**Compétences
futures**

Project Insights Report

Work in Manitoba



PARTNERS

Economic Development
Winnipeg



LOCATIONS

Manitoba



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CONTRIBUTORS

Magnet

Executive Summary

This project sought to address the challenges employers in the province were facing in connecting with the right talent and having to navigate multiple recruitment platforms with no guarantee that postings would reach qualified candidates.

Magnet and Economic Development Winnipeg (EDW) consulted a range of stakeholders to explore how technology could be deployed to foster easier connections between employers and job seekers, as well as greater uptake of wraparound services for job seekers. The Work in Manitoba portal was launched in 2022. The portal is powered by Magnet, an innovation centre focused on the future of work and housed at Toronto Metropolitan University.

Work in Manitoba has since served as a centralized platform that connects domestic and international trade mission job boards. As a result, employers could reach job seekers across multiple job centres with one posting. The portal also posted opportunities to multiple postsecondary job boards in Manitoba and across Canada.

The portal provided job seekers with access to a province-wide job board populated by employers, EDW and other stakeholders who may post on behalf of employers looking for talent based in Manitoba. Job seekers also had access to resources, updates and information on training programs from organizations across the province.

The Work in Manitoba portal was bolstered by EDW's efforts to recruit international talent. EDW led missions in several countries, encouraging job seekers with in-demand skills to create profiles on the portal and apply to relevant opportunities. EDW partnered with employers looking to hire in Manitoba to organize job fairs and interviews with international talent.

Finally, built-in analytics tools enabled the ongoing collection of key labour market information to inform future programs and policies.

The success of the Work in Manitoba portal underscores how technology, combined with strategic partnerships and engagement, can deliver better outcomes for job seekers and employers. Key lessons from the project include:

1. **The value of analytics:** Magnet’s analytics tools proved essential for optimizing outcomes. EDW used a community engagement app to track matches between job seekers and postings, providing follow-up support to encourage applications and ensure successful connections.
2. **Retention requires wraparound supports:** As Canada becomes more reliant on international talent, Work in Manitoba demonstrates the importance of partnerships between employers, economic development organizations and community service organizations. These partnerships are essential for local businesses to retain international talent, as they allow job seekers to establish a sense of community and navigate the settlement process.
3. **Technology must be supported by stakeholder engagement:** EDW has proactively promoted Manitoba as a premier destination for businesses and top talent. It has targeted job seekers with in-demand skills, allowing more matches and hiring to occur through the portal.

KEY INSIGHTS

- 1 As of November 30, 2024, a total of 48,218 job seekers and 1,573 employers had joined the portal.
- 2 Economic Development Winnipeg’s success in recruiting newcomer talent to Manitoba also demonstrates the importance of helping job seekers navigate the complex landscape of settlement services and ensuring they make community connections that help make Winnipeg feel like home.
- 3 The project provides unprecedented reach to job seekers across the province and to those in international markets thanks to EDW’s efforts to add qualified individuals to the portal via international missions.

The Issue

Many jobs in Manitoba are unfilled because of labour shortages, leaving Manitoba businesses without the talent and workforce they need to grow.

After conducting a comprehensive analysis of vacancies and employer demands, it was clear that Economic Development Winnipeg needed to prioritize talent recruitment both locally and internationally.

Employers faced an additional challenge of being overwhelmed by a large number of talent sources, including employment agencies, postsecondary institutions and community partners. Spreading recruitment efforts across these channels proved complicated and costly and offered no guarantee that job postings would reach the right talent.

To help overcome this barrier, the province launched the Work in Manitoba job portal on November 14, 2022, which represented a targeted action to grow the provincial economy and promote positive outcomes. The province designated EDW to be the administrator of the province-wide portal, which is EDW’s primary tool for facilitating connections between employers and job seekers on a global scale.



What We Investigated

Based on consultations between the Manitoba provincial government, employers, EDW staff, and representatives from the employment services sector, the Work in Manitoba portal was developed with the goal of providing employers and job seekers with a more efficient solution for connecting.

The portal was also configured to allow job seekers to explore resources from across Manitoba's employment assistance services, harmonizing efforts of multiple organizations. Over time, more partners could be added to the network to offer users access to more resources.

When it launched in 2022, the Work in Manitoba portal established a network between employers and service providers, all of whom could add job opportunities and resources that could reach job seekers across Manitoba's network of employment assistance services, Canadian postsecondary institutions, and the globe. Job seekers could access the Work in Manitoba portal through a variety of entry points, all of which allowed them to view opportunities from the more than 1,600 employers currently using the portal to post opportunities.

The Work in Manitoba portal included:

- designated communities for Manitoba employers, local job seekers and international job seekers;
- reports on labour supply and demand trends through Magnet's Community Insights Dashboards;
- labour market information to keep sector and community partners up to date on emerging trends;
- a job feed for frontline service providers in Manitoba employment assistance services;
- targeted communication tools that allow EDW to promote new opportunities to job seekers and employers.

✔ What We're Learning

Analytics tools support ideal outcomes

EDW has noted that Magnet's analytics tools ensure optimal outcomes for job seekers and employers on the portal. Staff highlighted the value of the Community Engagement Tool, which allows administrators to see when job seekers on the portal have been matched to jobs, and whether or not they've applied. Using this information, EDW provides follow-up support through Magnet's communications tools, encouraging job seekers to apply when they've been matched to an opportunity.

Streamlining job searching tools and wraparound supports for job seekers is critical to retention

EDW's success in recruiting newcomer talent to Manitoba also demonstrates the importance of helping job seekers navigate the complex landscape of settlement services and ensuring they make community connections that help make Winnipeg feel like home. Staff arrange a meeting between the business and immigration officers to get the advice they need to help a candidate immigrate to and settle in Canada. EDW also builds relationships with organizations that focus on welcoming individuals to the community, from meeting them at the airport to advising on registering their kids in school.

Stakeholder engagement drives uptake and effectiveness of technology

Recruiting talent is among the biggest challenges for businesses, especially in growing sectors such as aerospace, advanced manufacturing, agribusiness, and information and communications technology. In addition to the challenge of having to post opportunities across different platforms to reach job seekers, employers also have no guarantee that postings will reach qualified talent. This project has shown that technology needs to be supported by proactive efforts to expand the available pool of talent to include international candidates and those who have the skills needed for in-demand sectors. To this end, EDW has attended conferences in Hong Kong, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Morocco and more. These missions provided opportunities to promote Manitoba as a place to work and to encourage qualified candidates to create profiles on the platform. According to EDW, which also conducted interviews with candidates abroad, these missions result in real job offers for international candidates.

★ Why It Matters

In a rapidly shifting labour market, government, industry associations and economic development bodies also need to respond with evidence-based programs and policies. By centralizing job postings and applications across Manitoba, the Work in Manitoba portal provides a wide range of valuable labour market information to inform future strategies for skills training and recruitment.



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Recruitment and Upskilling for
Skilled Trades**

From the perspective of local employers, the project provides unprecedented reach to job seekers across the province and to those in international markets thanks to EDW's efforts to add qualified individuals to the portal via international missions. Employers testified to the added value of Work in Manitoba, with some saying it had transformed their talent search, including international recruitment, and that the ease of use is one of the portal's primary benefits.

Canada needs to address long standing shortages of skilled tradespeople to advance policy priorities around decarbonization, affordable housing and transforming industry to add more value to what we produce.

[Read Thematic Report](#)

► What's Next

In April 2024, the Work in Manitoba portal merged with the Winnipeg Newcomer Employment Hub, the latter of which is also powered by Magnet. Both portals now operate under the [Work in Manitoba](#) name. The merger further consolidates different tools and provides a single platform for Manitoba employers to connect with local, national and international job seekers.

Magnet and EDW will also hold discovery sessions to improve overall employer experience and explore partnerships with local educational institutions and leading industry associations to embed learning opportunities within the Work in Manitoba portal.

Have questions about our work? Do you need access to a report in English or French? Please contact communications@fsc-ccf.ca.

How to Cite This Report

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