



Colleges Integrating Immigrants to Employment (CIITE)

The CON*NECT Strategic Alliances' project, Colleges Integrating Immigrants to Employment (CIITE), is an Ontario colleges' initiative that aims to facilitate *speedier* access to equal employment for internationally trained immigrants (ITIs). An estimated 50,000 ITIs access the Ontario college system every year and integrating them into suitable employment is a key priority for the Ontario government and its colleges.

The CIITE project has been referred to as the *connective tissue* that creates opportunities for colleges to engage in this vital issue. Coordinating resources and expertise, conducting research, training staff and recommending enhancements to programs, services and processes, it allows the college system to work with ITIs to find relevant employment *faster*.

CIITE has already had tremendous *impact* on ITIs; for example over 3,000 have received support from highly skilled ITI Advisors across 15 colleges. A summary of all CIITE activities is listed on the reverse.

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CIITE ACTIVITIES

Advising

The core of the CIITE agenda, the advisory activity effectively saw the successful roll out of ITI-specific advising services at 15 colleges across the province. Thirty advisors *successfully guided* over 3,000 ITIs, referring them to relevant programs and services both inside and outside the college system, and easing their transition into employment.

Competency Assessment

This activity developed process models and tools to assess the skills and knowledge of ITIs against college program learning outcomes. Models and tools were developed for both regulated and unregulated professions and pilots are currently underway across 11 Ontario colleges. The result of this activity will be a *faster and more efficient process for recognizing* the previous learning of skilled immigrants.

Credential Recognition

Focused on streamlining the recognition of international credentials in the Ontario College system, this activity implemented *My Record* and the *Record of Education and Experience (REE)*. *My Record* is a data tool that consolidates validated and evaluated ITI academic credentials and other appropriate information. *My Record* is being piloted at four Ontario colleges and the project is assessing the tool's ability to *enhance ITI opportunities for advanced placement* at Ontario colleges. Work has also begun on using this tool to improve ITI employment prospects by engaging employer feedback on *My Record*.

Cultural Competency

To better serve the needs of skilled immigrants, colleges must become more accommodating to an increasingly diverse set of identity groups. To achieve this, the CIITE project and the colleges have collaborated to develop and deliver cultural competency training to college staff, as well as developing tools for the measurement of the actions being taken by the colleges to gain the *benefits of diversity and inclusion*. Between December 2008 and March 2009, 500 college staff will have participated in CIITE-initiated cultural competency training.

Data Collection

This activity focused on the creation of a uniquely customized and flexible customer relationship management advisement system that *captures an ITI's*

learning and employment experiences from pre-entry advising to post-college employment. Over 3,000 ITIs have been served and the data gathered enhances the planning, measurement and evaluation of ITI services across all CIITE activities.

Employment Support

This activity evaluated the provision of career, co-op, Job Connect and other relevant services to ITIs across 15 colleges through consultation with over 425 ITIs, 100 college staff and numerous external partners. Recommendations to *enhance service quality and service capacity* are being developed for college implementation so that ITIs can integrate into commensurate work more *quickly*.

Flexible/Modular Delivery

The activity embarked on a *proactive exercise*, scanning the landscape of flexible modular programs currently offered across the college system and evaluating their relevance to the rapidly growing ITI population and its needs. Findings revealed a wide range of creative and sustainable programs are indeed offered in many colleges.

Francophone Issues

Building *effective* French-language delivery and support capability for both Francophone colleges engaged in seven of 10 CIITE activities was the focus of this activity. Ongoing updates and bridging, translation of essential documents, and the creation of a French CIITE website ensured Francophone involvement and visibility. Over 500 Francophone ITIs received advisory services, thus enhancing their integration into Ontario's workforce and the province's Francophone community.

Language Benchmarking

This activity set out to *systemically assess* the language requirements of key college programs which attract a large number of ITI applicants. Strong recommendations were generated by testing two benchmarking models in nine participating colleges.

Organizational Culture and Change Management

This activity focused on evaluating *organizational engagement and readiness to serve ITIs* at 11 colleges, through the development and implementation of a self-audit tool. Participating colleges are creating three-year action plans to implement recommendations that would allow the institutions to better respond to ITI needs.