

Attracting Immigrants and Newcomers: A Guide for Communities

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
The provincial government's role in immigration	
Objectives of the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch	
Preparing to attract newcomers and immigrants	4
Planning and promotion are the keys to success	
Getting help from the Immigration and Multiculturalism Division	
Taking charge of the immigration planning process	5
Should you use a community or regional approach?	
Developing a community immigration plan	6
Identify what your community has, and needs	
Are you a "welcoming community?"	
Compiling a "community inventory"	
Preparing to promote your community	9
How can immigrants find information about your community?	
Taking charge your promotional campaign	
Creating promotional tools	10
Website	
CD-ROM or DVD	
Print materials	
Display Booth	
Promoting your community at overseas events	12
Speaking directly with prospective immigrants	
Co-operating with the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch	
How to prepare for a promotional and recruitment mission	
What results to expect from an overseas promotion	
Sharing your findings with your community	
Community exploratory visits	15
What is a community exploratory visit?	
How to prepare for your visitors	
Following up on exploratory visits	
Assessing your promotional and recruitment efforts	17
Questions to consider	
Summary	18

This guide was facilitated and written by Prairie Global Management.

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to help you consider the benefits of immigration and attracting newcomers as part of a balanced economic development plan for your community.

Topics include how to create an plan to attract immigrants and welcome newcomers based on a strategy to assess, promote, and connect immigrants and newcomers with, the economic opportunities your community has to offer.

The guide also explains how you can take advantage of the programs and services offered by Manitoba's Immigration and Multiculturalism Division.

The provincial government's role in immigration

The Province of Manitoba is able to select and expedite the immigration process for skilled workers and entrepreneurs who will contribute to our economy and society through the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program.

More than 60 per cent of the people who immigrate to Manitoba are recruited through the Provincial Nominee Program (rather than through a federal stream). That percentage is expected to continue to increase.

The purpose of the program is to select skilled workers and entrepreneurs who will help us achieve our economic priorities, to encourage balanced population growth in all regions and to assist in growing our minority francophone communities.

After the program selects candidates for immigration they are "nominated" to receive permanent resident status from the federal government. The Government of Canada conducts security, criminal record and medical checks and issues the required permanent resident visa.

The Provincial Nominee Program is administered by the Immigration and Multiculturalism Division of Manitoba Labour and Immigration through the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch. Applications by immigrant entrepreneurs to the Manitoba Provincial Nominee for Business are assessed through the Department of Competitiveness, Training and Trade. The Immigration and Multiculturalism Division has three other branches that provide programs and services to immigrants, newcomers and our ethnocultural communities: Settlement and Labour Market Services, Adult Language Training and the Multiculturalism Secretariat.

The Province of Manitoba continues to attract and to support the successful settlement throughout the province of newcomers from all immigration streams including refugees and family-sponsored immigrants.

Objectives of the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch

The objectives of the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch are to:

- strategically increase prospective immigrants' awareness of Manitoba as a desirable place to live, work and raise a family by communicating Manitoba's unique benefits through targeted recruitment activities
- increase immigration to meet the labour market and business needs of Manitoba through strategic initiatives of the Provincial Nominee Program
- strengthen partnerships with Manitoba communities, businesses, government jurisdictions, and educational, professional and other organizations to attract skilled immigrants and entrepreneurs in co-ordination with labour market initiatives ¹
- help newcomers build job, family and community ties that will encourage them to settle and stay in their chosen Manitoba communities

Preparing to attract newcomers and immigrants

Planning and promotion are the keys to success

Manitoba has been successful in growing through immigration because of our strong and diverse economic opportunities and the readiness of communities to welcome and support the settlement of newcomers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The Provincial Nominee Program promotes Manitoba as a destination for skilled workers and entrepreneurs. Immigrants choose where to settle in Manitoba based on the economic opportunities that match their skills or business interests, and the welcome they receive from our communities. The key to having newcomers settle and stay in your community is through promoting the economic opportunities available to immigrants and welcoming the newcomers who arrive.

Your first steps are to have community stakeholders co-operate in identifying how immigration would fit in to your community's overall population growth and economic development strategies, and then develop a clear and comprehensive immigration plan.

Being able to articulate your plan is essential to forming an effective partnership with the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch to promote your community's employment and investment opportunities and other features and advantages.

Getting help from the Immigration and Multiculturalism Division

The Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch, as well as other branches in Manitoba Labour and Immigration, work closely with local governments, organizations and employers and encourage them to co-ordinate their efforts to attract people from other parts of Manitoba, Canada and overseas. Department staff are available to assist you with the information you need to create a plan that meets

¹ Annual Report 2005 – 2006 Labour and Immigration. Published by the Authority of the Legislative Assembly, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Page 52

the specific needs of your community. For contact information visit our website at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/immigrate/contact.html>.

As well as direct consultation, the division offers regular information sessions and workshops. It may also partner directly with employers and communities in special initiatives. Finally, the division publishes other guides that address the key factors a newcomer may consider, including *A Guide to Developing Settlement Services in Communities* and *English as an Additional Language: A Guide for Communities*.

All guides are available online at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/immigrate/partners/community/index.html>.

Taking charge of the planning process

The needs of local business are a key driving force behind a community's immigration plan, but who leads the planning process depends on community dynamics.

It may be best when there is political leadership from the mayor or reeve and council. But some communities have had success by having their chamber of commerce or local economic development agency lead the efforts.

Leadership aside, planning is a matter for a committee that considers all interests within your community and can come up with a balanced and effective approach.

Issues to consider include:

- whether you have an economic or community development officer
- your community's key stakeholders (eg. chamber of commerce, faith-based organizations, etc.)
- your population and economic growth strategies
- the size of your community
- the number of local businesses seeking employees
- business opportunities within your community
- whether your community will be part of a larger, regional promotion

Should you use a community or regional approach?

Whether you undertake planning and promotion from a community or a regional approach, the process of taking inventory and launching a campaign is the same.

You should consider:

- the size of your community

- the degree of co-operation between community and region
- which can offer more incentive to a potential immigrant
- resources – people, time and money

Developing a community immigration plan

Identify what your community has, and needs

Before you begin the process of creating and implementing a promotional plan you must be clear about your objectives for immigration and the timeframe for achieving them.

First develop a community immigration plan that identifies and details:

- economic and social strengths that make your community an attractive destination and will help retain both newcomers and current residents
- the proportion of community growth you expect to come from keeping existing residents, from attracting newcomers from within the province and from within Canada, and from attracting immigrants from other countries
- a strategy for sustainable growth, including annual target numbers for immigration from various sources, and the timeline for newcomer arrivals
- types of initiatives and partnerships your community will participate in to attract newcomers from all sources
- resources, such as people and finances, that are necessary to implement and sustain your community's plan
- a contact person in the community for newcomers and for the Immigration and Multiculturalism Division

Are you a “welcoming community?”

People usually like to think that they and their community are friendly and welcoming. But the notion of a hospitable community reaches beyond services the community provides into the fabric of your community and the way it functions.

Use the following questions to determine the extent to which you have a “welcoming community.”

Welcoming Community Checklist

- √ Has your community ever been seen as closed to people “from away?”
- √ Do you have a community welcome wagon program? If so, how well is it resourced?
- √ Is a package of information about your community available for immigrants and newcomers?
- √ How do you know when there is someone new in your community?

- √ Whose job is it to welcome immigrants and newcomers?
- √ How does your community officially recognize immigrants and newcomers?
- √ What social or other activities would your community hold to welcome newcomers and foster understanding of cultural differences?
- √ Where would newcomers turn for information, advice or helpful tips?
- √ What would happen if an immigrant doesn't speak the community's common language?
- √ How accessible is language instruction?
- √ How will your schools deal with new students, particularly ones who may be culturally different and speak another language?
- √ How might you support immigrants who lack family or ethnic ties?
- √ Where would newcomers go to for employment information, and for recognition of foreign employment or professional credentials?
- √ Is housing advice available? Are there rental vacancies in a range of prices?
- √ If racial or other discrimination were to happen to an immigrant, how would your community respond?
- √ Would immigrants have quick and easy access to medical assistance?
- √ What pre-arrival information can you provide, such as maps and information on your community's businesses and services?

This list is only a starting point. Here are some characteristics that create a hospitable community:

- respect for diversity
- accessible public services
- schools and proximity to post-secondary and continuing education facilities
- health and wellness
- opportunities for work and advancement
- public safety

Compiling a “community inventory”

A key building block for community promotion is an inventory that lists what you have to offer immigrants and newcomers. Your inventory should address the questions in the Welcoming Community Checklist.

One of the easiest ways to take inventory is to think of what would make you consider moving your family to a new community. Consider both your community's advantages and disadvantages.

Before you begin the process identify people and organizations that can provide information.

Compiling your inventory can also a way to engage community organizations, businesses and politicians in your community's immigration and promotional plans.

Information can be gathered by:

- searching community websites
- meeting with municipal government
- speaking with the chamber of commerce
- meeting with local businesses
- speaking with employment agencies and social services
- interviewing representatives of the health sector
- researching Statistics Canada data
- touring your community as if you were a tourist or prospective immigrant
- examining current marketing and promotional material and strategies

It will take a few weeks to compile the information. It is important to share your findings with your working group to get a different perspective and see what you may have overlooked.

If you have time engage the community by having the local media run a contest that asks residents to name their Top 10 reasons why your community is a great place to live. The media could explain the purpose of the request so it's also a way to inform the community about immigration.

As well as facts and figures, collect photos that can add depth to your eventual promotional campaign.

Information collected about your community should be catalogued to make it easier to retrieve and update. The catalogue should focus on the services most important to immigrants – employment, housing, health and education, etc.

Community Inventory Checklist

Businesses

- number of employers
- employers' industries
- job opportunities
- skill requirements
- prevailing and competitive wages and benefits
- investment opportunities

Housing

- type
- availability
- cost
- location

Shopping

- food
- clothing

- home furnishings

Health

- hospital and clinics
- family doctors
- optometrists
- dentists
- psychologists, etc.

Education

- public schools
- private schools
- post-secondary
- adult education

Other Services

- banks
- entertainment
- clubs and associations
- faith-based organizations
- child day care
- restaurants
- museums
- ethnocultural groups
- sports and recreational facilities

Preparing to promote your community

How can immigrants find information about your community?

International Profile: Manitoba communities that have been successful in attracting immigrants and newcomers have developed an attractive international profile through effective websites, promotional materials, word of mouth and participation in international events showcasing their lifestyle advantages and economic opportunities.

Website: An eye-catching website with current and pertinent information about your community is an excellent way for prospective immigrants and newcomers to learn about your community. An effective website will help to connect potential newcomers directly with the employers, economic and investment opportunities in your community or region.

Manitoba government websites may also feature information about your community. Try to have your sites such as [Travel Manitoba](#), [immigratemanitoba.com](#) and [Manitoba Community Profiles](#) provide a link to your site.

Promotional materials: This can include an interactive CD-ROM, print materials and displays for promotional events such as employment, trade, and tourism fairs.

Word of mouth: As many Manitoba communities have discovered, successful immigration encourages continued interest from potential newcomers. The Manitoba Provincial Nominee Programs encourages applications from eligible skilled workers and entrepreneurs supported by family members or friends who have already settled in your community or region.

International Events: When you have developed your community's immigration plan, contact the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch to find out how your community representatives, employers and business leaders can support or participate in upcoming international job fairs, recruitment initiatives and other promotional activities.

These and other promotional efforts are discussed in detail later in this guide.

Taking charge of your promotional campaign

Your methods for promoting your community will depend on your immigration plan and its objectives, your business needs and human and financial resources. You can go it alone, partner with the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch or participate in its initiatives.

Partner: Provide the branch with your community's promotional materials, which the branch can distribute on your behalf when it is at overseas events. This is the least expensive promotional method. You must have up-to-date materials, contact information and a website for people to visit for more information.

Participate: Have community representatives, employers and business leaders participate by accompanying the branch on its overseas trips. This method requires money and time but it can be effective if planned to encourage a direct connection between potential immigrants and the specific economic opportunities your community or region has to offer.

Creating promotional tools

Website

A website is the most effective way for people from around the world to get information on your community. For example, the Provincial Nominee Program provides application information to prospective immigrants 10 times more from its web portal, immigratemanitoba.com, than by mail.

With today's technology the development of a website is relatively easy and inexpensive. The website can be developed by a local person with technical expertise – even as a high school project – or you can hire an advertising or web design firm.

Before developing your website it is important to decide:

- the overall message you want to relay
- your budget for development and hosting
- who will monitor and update the site
- what you hope to accomplish, ie. simply to profile your community, to have surfers request more information, or to invite phone calls and visits

- how the website will mesh with your other promotional materials and activities
- specifically what information to provide and its sources, such as your Community Inventory

Here are some factors to consider in website development:

- organize information so it's easy to find
- write with a non-native English speaker in mind
- list a contact to respond to inquiries
- link directly to the websites of employers who are hiring in your region
- encourage potential newcomers to come to your community on an exploratory visit
- consider links to and from other sites
- list businesses and services or have a database for users to search
- include pictures, video or interactive presentations

A good example of a community immigration website is Dauphin's, at http://www.dauphin.ca/liv_immi.php.

CD-ROM or DVD

A CD-ROM or DVD can be an excellent way to showcase your community using pictures, video, text and other interactive elements.

The content and production of your CD should consider the factors discussed in website development.

You will need a plan to distribute the CD, including by online requests, at promotional events and as an insert in mail to individuals and groups.

Print materials

Print materials, from simple brochures and pamphlets to glossy magazines, have been used successfully by communities in their promotional campaigns.

Considerations in production and content are the same as for websites and CDs.

However, you should note that print materials are costly to produce, need to be updated regularly, require storage and a means of distribution.

You may already have marketing materials to repurpose or modify.

Print materials are useful in mail campaigns, at recruitment events and to help answer walk-in inquiries.

Some communities have covered their print costs by selling advertising. This is a natural link because the publications are intended to promote your community and its businesses. However, ads take time and money – from selling to design to billing.

Perhaps your local newspaper will work with you to produce print materials.

Display Booth

A booth that features your promotional materials can be set up at events both locally and overseas. It can be self-standing or staffed with a community representative or employer. Such displays can also be used to educate residents about their community and promote civic pride. A word of advice for international use: keep your displays light and portable to make shipping and transport simple and cost-effective and for use in spaces that are usually small and shared with multiple partners.

Promoting your community at overseas events

Speaking directly with prospective immigrants

Beyond creating promotional materials, some communities have taken their campaign directly to prospective immigrants by participating in overseas job and emigration fairs.

The cost for participating in such opportunities ranges from \$5,000 to \$15,000 depending on the type of event and number of destinations. Costs include travel and shipping, hotel and living expenses, advertising and event fees such as booth rental.

Consider partnering with other communities and sharing the space to help reduce the cost, or accompanying the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch on its missions.

Assuming that your community's promotional plan is developed and your community inventory is complete, planning and preparing for an overseas promotion can take several months or more, particularly if you involve employers or other partners.

Remember, immigrants choose their destinations based on the existence of available economic opportunities as well as the encouragement of family members already in Manitoba. Whoever you decide to include in your community promotions should be prepared to directly connect a potential immigrant with specific employment or business opportunities that will help them settle successfully.

Be sure to document the planning process as this information can help you in future activities. And be prepared to do a post-event review.

Co-operating with the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch

At the beginning of each fiscal year, the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch develops an annual international promotion and recruitment plan. This plan includes a range of potential international job fairs and recruitment initiatives (which may change throughout the year depending on available resources and opportunities). If you have developed your community immigration plan and are

ready to promote the economic opportunities available in your region, you may want to consider participating in one of these initiatives. You would be responsible for planning, bookings, community partnerships and travel arrangements

In 2006-07, for example, employers and community representatives from five different Manitoba regions participated in job fairs and other promotional events in Germany, the Netherlands, France and the United Kingdom.

Skilled workers attracted through one of these recruitment initiatives may come to Manitoba within several weeks on a Temporary Work Permit if an employer provides them with a guaranteed job offer. If they choose to stay in Manitoba, they can apply for permanent immigration through the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program after they have worked in our province for at least six months. Contact the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch for more details.

Other skilled workers and entrepreneurs may qualify to apply through one of the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program's application streams if they meet the specific eligibility criteria for that stream. Contact the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch for more details.

In general, it is advisable to encourage potential immigrants who have not been recruited by a specific employer to make an exploratory visit to your community or region before applying to immigrate. This will provide your community with an opportunity to directly showcase your economic opportunities and lifestyle advantages to a potential newcomer.

If your promotional campaign doesn't allow for a community representative to take a trip you can ask the branch to distribute your promotional materials at an event.

Overseas Promotion 'Questions to Consider' Checklist

- √ What preparations are needed?
- √ Has a budget been prepared?
- √ Do we know the target market at the promotional event? Have we researched characteristics such as the local language, culture, unemployment rates, cost of living and other "push factors?"
- √ What message do we want to convey about our community?
- √ How will we encourage our community's employers to support and participate in the event?
- √ Who should represent the community and what is her or her role?
- √ What skills are needed to manage the event and what are the physical requirements?
- √ What and how many promotional items are needed (pins, pens and other novelties, brochures, CDs, display booth, etc.)?
- √ What information do we want to collect from booth visitors? How do we collect it and use it?
- √ How do we decide how much time, support and materials to give prospective immigrants?
- √ How will we manage the interest our presence may generate?
- √ How will we encourage exploratory visits by potential immigrants and manage those visits when they occur?
- √ Have we asked our businesses what jobs they may have available, the skill requirements, dates and job benefits?
- √ Have we asked employment agencies what is available?

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ Have we reviewed our community's opportunities for housing or starting a new business? √ How will we communicate with our community about our efforts? √ Do we need to track our success? √ What follow-up activities are required? |
|--|

How to prepare for a promotional and recruitment mission

Once you have decided to participate in an international recruitment initiative you will need to assemble a team to help in preparing for an overseas trip.

Among the items you may need are: booth, banners, print and other promotional materials; computer for your CD/DVD or other presentations; video and still camera; voltage adaptors; expense reports, and possibly someone to provide translation.

Here's a practical list of things you should co-ordinate directly with the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch:

- booking of booth space, table, chairs, draping, etc. at venue if required
- set itinerary (allow a day to adjust to jet lag and climate)
- book airfare and accommodations
- arrange travel from hotel to fair site if required
- determine how to ship materials (costs, destination, lead times)
- purchase insurance

What results to expect from an overseas promotion

Upon returning from an overseas promotional event be prepared to dedicate a few weeks responding to inquiries made at the event and those that come in later.

Post-event Review Checklist

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> √ What are the next steps? √ Plan to follow up with contacts √ Conduct an assessment √ What did we learn? √ What should we do differently? √ What were we missing? √ Cost vs. benefit? |
|--|

Sharing your findings with your community

After an overseas promotion it is important to communicate with the business community, your immigration committee and the community at large about the experience, its value to the community and what they may expect as a result of the initiative.

Request to be put on the agenda of meetings of various groups to present your findings and experience. You can arrange interviews with local media and provide them with photographs, video and information on what you discovered.

People will be interested in learning:

- how many people were contacted
- what were their interests
- why they are considering emigrating
- what other provinces and countries were represented (This identifies your competition.)
- why you attended (Refer to your community immigration plan and your promotional and recruitment plan and their objectives.)
- what are the next steps

Community exploratory visits

What is a community exploratory visit?

Before a newcomer decides to move to a new country and community they may undertake an exploratory visit. The visit allows them to gain firsthand knowledge and information, view the community's amenities and develop a sense of the "feel" and culture of a community.

Exploratory visits follow the adage "You only have one chance to make a good first impression." Consequently, it is important to be prepared for exploratory visits and encourage them through your promotional material, particularly on your website.

Exploratory visits generally take place during the summer months and in most cases occur without warning. On occasion an individual may contact you. This will give you time to send information and make arrangements.

It's crucial to recognize that a newcomer on an exploratory visit will have more and different interests than a tourist.

If the exploratory visit is likely to result in an immigration application to the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program you should contact the Immigration Promotion and Recruitment Branch in advance. For the exploratory visit to be given positive consideration on an immigration application the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program will expect that certain requirements be met. One is that the potential immigrant making the visit has been successful in finding appropriate economic opportunities that will assist them to settle successfully in Manitoba.

How to prepare for your visitors

- To ensure your community is always prepared, have hotels, Bed & Breakfasts and the like keep on hand tourism, immigration and other community information.

You could provide establishments with a “welcome package” to give to people on an exploratory visit.

You may want to add a label to your material indicating “If you are considering settling in our community please call ...”

- Have people designated as contacts prepared to answer visitors’ questions about employment, housing and other areas of concern, and to arrange meetings and tours.

Prepare your contact people by explaining their role, the purpose of exploratory visits and their importance to the community. Ensure they are recognized for their assistance and contribution.

- If you know beforehand that a potential immigrant or newcomer is coming to visit you can send them information, make arrangements to make their stay productive and enjoyable, or offer to host them.

When considering places visitors may stay, Bed & Breakfasts are ideal because they’re intimate settings where the owner can provide guests with a “sense” of the community and its highlights.

- You’ll be best prepared by thinking of what you’d want to find out if you were considering moving into the community.

The Exploratory Visitor Checklist notes the some of the things potential newcomers and immigrants may want to accomplish during a trip.

Exploratory Visitor Checklist

- √ Check employment opportunities
- √ Discuss career opportunities with someone in my field
- √ Speak with an employment agency
- √ Learn about community businesses
- √ Determine cost of living – housing, utilities, auto insurance, groceries, etc.
- √ Meet with a real estate agency
- √ Visit schools, hospitals, child day cares
- √ Learn about clubs, associations, arts and culture
- √ Speak with others about the community
- √ Discover recreational and cultural activities for my children and I
- √ Meet with banking representatives
- √ Connect with the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program for Business if interested in establishing or purchasing a business

Following up on exploratory visits

It's important to follow up with a visitor to see if they need more information or other assistance.

A follow-up also helps you determine how to improve the visitor experience and how to see your community's highlights and areas for improvement through the eyes of a visitor.

Assessing your promotional and recruitment efforts

Questions to consider

It's easy to become so invested in the development and execution of promotional activities that you're too exhausted to assess your plan.

Assessment is critical in identifying gaps that if not addressed will become a faulty base on which to build.

You will strengthen your promotional and recruitment plan by considering:

- what worked well
- what needs to be improved
- which information tools generated the greatest interest
- what has been the feedback from exploratory visitors
- whether your attendance at an overseas event brought inquiries (If so, how many and what type?)
- how many newcomers have settled, and how they learned of your community
- how can you better track results
- what the community feedback has been
- how to incorporate lessons learned into future promotional activities

Immigration and Promotion To Do Checklist

- √ Undertake a comprehensive inventory of community capacities to effectively promote the opportunities for employment and investment that will make your community attractive to newcomers from diverse regions, cultures and linguistic backgrounds
- √ Develop a balanced promotional and settlement plan to attract and retain newcomers. Consider attracting newcomers who are already in Manitoba as well as from other countries
- √ Co-operate with the Immigration and Multiculturalism Division to incorporate into your plan participation in its activities to promote Manitoba as a welcoming destination of choice for newcomers
- √ Help local employers, business people and community members become familiar with the application streams and promotion and recruitment opportunities available through the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program
- √ Encourage employers to contact directly Immigration Promotion and Recruitment staff for assistance in meeting their labour requirements through offshore recruitment
- √ Work in partnership with other communities in your region and throughout Manitoba to promote your community through a website and other promotional activities
- √ Participate in the strategic recruitment initiatives of the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program to promote Manitoba as a destination of choice for skilled workers and entrepreneurs