



**International
& Community
Matchmaker**

**Intermédiaire
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Connecting the Dots: Lessons from the International & Community Matchmaker Northwest Pilot

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NPI would like to acknowledge the First Peoples on whose traditional territories we live and work. NPI is grateful for the opportunity to have our offices located on these lands and thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land.

Our main offices:

- Thunder Bay on Robinson-Superior Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg and Fort William First Nation.
- Sudbury is on the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnaabeg as well as Wahnapiatae First Nation.
- Both are home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

We recognize and appreciate the historic connection that Indigenous people have to these territories. We recognize the contributions that they have made in shaping and strengthening these communities, the province and the country as a whole.

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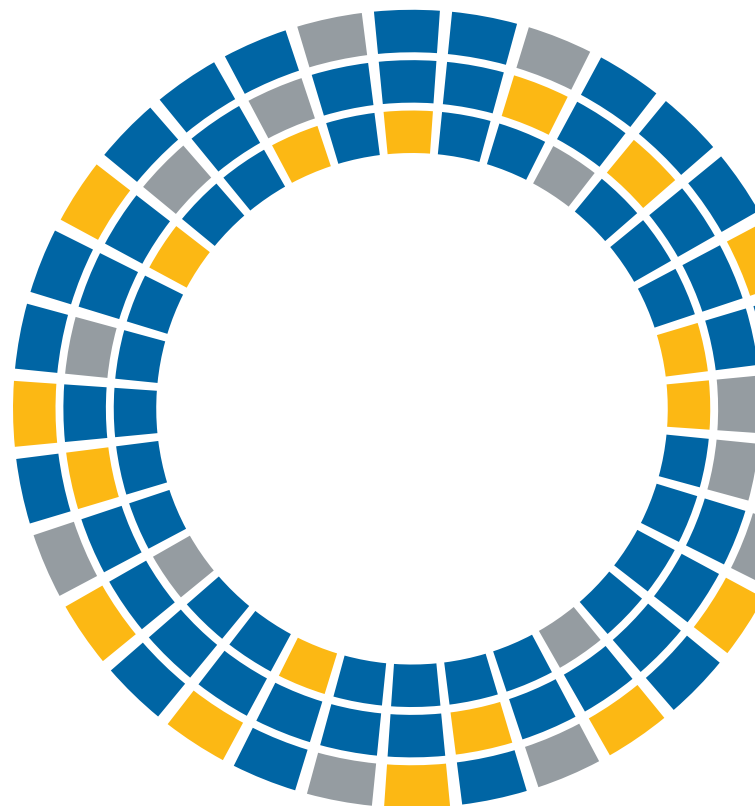
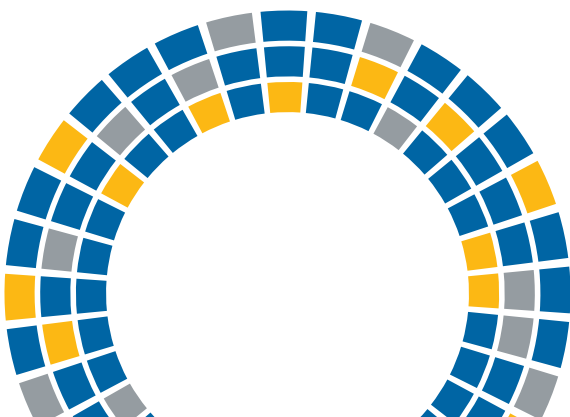
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This paper was completed prior to Anthony joining the public service. Any views expressed in the paper are his own and are not reflective of his current employer.



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The **North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB)** is one of twenty-six Workforce Planning zones across Ontario, mandated through the Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development to identify, assess and prioritize the skills and knowledge needs of community, employers and individual participants/learners in the local labour market through a collaborative, local labour market planning process.

The **Société Économique de l'Ontario (SÉO)**, established in 2001, is a provincial network with a professional team that takes an innovative approach to economic development, entrepreneurship, employability and immigration. SÉO engages all of the Francophone and bilingual community's stakeholders in fostering the prosperity of Ontario and Canada.

The **Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce** is a voluntary, member-driven organization of individuals and businesses working together to advance the commercial, financial, and civic interests of the Thunder Bay community. They pool resources to offer member learning opportunities, address policy issues, facilitate connections between members, and aim to bring businesses together to work towards common goals.

The **Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC)** is responsible for business development, business retention and expansion, entrepreneurial support, opportunity promotion, and collection and assessment of key business data. They can help with community information and statistics, networking and referrals, assistance in site selection, and labour market data.

FedNor is the Government of Canada's economic development organization for Northern Ontario. Through its programs and services, and through its financial support of projects that lead to job creation and economic growth, FedNor works with businesses and community partners to build a stronger Northern Ontario.

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Executive Summary

With the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot up and running, increased immigration levels over the next several years, and an extended Atlantic Immigration Pilot, it is clear that newcomers are valuable to the growth of Canada. Unfortunately, international students, temporary visa holders, francophones, rural communities, and those residing outside of Canada are a huge pool of potential new residents but are underserved by existing programs.

The project was launched following a Canadian Chamber of Commerce initiative focused on identifying key local issues and how to address them. The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce hosted a roundtable of community leaders that highlighted perceived gaps in the attraction, settlement, and retention of migrants to the region. The ICM project was launched as an applied research project for two years to confirm not only whether this perception was reality, but how do we fill it?

The project confirmed that there was indeed significant unmet demand. The Matchmakers met a wave of interest for assistance in navigating existing services and getting around service and information gaps. In fact, over 40 jobseekers landed positions with the help of the Matchmakers. Furthermore, the project identified not only was there a significant Francophone demand from both jobseekers and employers, but that there was a communication gap that they could help fill between jobseekers and employers.

Based on the successes, and obstacles, the Matchmakers faced, the paper outlines several lessons that impact community service providers, decision-makers and other agencies that connect in with migration:

- Be flexible. Pilots are meant to be testing grounds and as things develop, so should you.
- Continue focusing on employer engagement.
- Market successes.
- Work with partners that fill organizational gaps on your end. If your organization is not strong on the research front, work with those who are.

Overall, based on the findings of the NW ICM project, there is some serious work that needs to be done – namely filling the service gap of those that have traditionally been underserved. However, it takes more than a Matchmaker or two. It involves government, local decision makers, community organizations, employers, and more in order to help grow our communities.



1. Introduction

Attracting newcomers is a crucial component of the effort to keep Ontario's Northern regions sustainable and vibrant. The total population of Northern Ontario is projected to experience a slight increase between 2019 and 2046 of 1.8 per cent (Ontario Ministry of Finance 2020). Specifically, we see that six out of the 11 districts are projected to experience population growth between zero and 15 per cent (ibid 2020). Additionally, the region's population is expected to be older. Indeed, the share of seniors will increase across all districts, however by 2046, the percentage of seniors in the districts of Algoma, Sudbury, Manitoulin, and Parry Sound will see the share be up by over 30 per cent (ibid 2020). This information, coupled with a decline in the growth of youth (0-14) in 9 of the 11 northern districts, means that our ratio of dependents (youth and seniors) to the working age population will increase. Ensuring a sustainable DDR is key for community health. Further, projections based on 2016 census data show that the North doesn't just need newcomers to help fill labour market gaps, we also need to ensure the domestic population such as Indigenous peoples are also engaged in the labour force (Cirtwill 2018). Clearly, Northern Ontario needs more people, specifically, people who are of working age and who are able to contribute to the economy by filling jobs that are in demand locally. Northern communities cannot look only to themselves and each other to solve this problem; they also need to look outward to build their labour force.

The International and Community Matchmaker (ICM) program was designed to do that. It is an applied research project that offers employability and entrepreneurship services for potential newcomers and for employers seeking workers. ICM is designed to assist northern communities in building a labour force tailored to their needs by helping qualified newcomers secure job offers with companies that require their skills. This project is a response to both the labour force skills gaps and the

service provision gaps that local decision makers and informed observers identified as plaguing virtually all of Ontario's diverse northern regions. To deliver the program in the Northwest, Northern Policy Institute (NPI) partnered with La Société Économique de l'Ontario (SÉO), the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce (TBCoC), Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (TBCEDC), the North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB), and FedNor.

Two community Matchmakers were hired to service Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario. One was to focus on international talent pools, with particular attention paid to Francophones, and the other was to direct their efforts toward international students already located in the region and to Anglophones more generally. These groups represent a wealth of talent for northern communities but have few services available to them. The Matchmakers were to be housed in NPI's Thunder Bay office and would operate throughout the Thunder Bay, Rainy River, and Kenora districts. The first Matchmaker began operating on April 3, 2018 and the second on August 1, 2018.

Due to the perceived value of ICM, it was expanded in December 2018 to include Northeastern Ontario. After the initial year, SÉO chose not to renew its partnership for the Northwest, but NPI continued delivering the program. Other communities and partners have seen the value of ICM and have discussed expanding the program to more locations.



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There were two additional entities that worked with the Matchmakers. The first was a volunteer “operations coordinator” supplied by a community partner in Thunder Bay. This support was added based on an identified need in early autumn 2018. The second, which is still in place, was a research team supplied by NPI.

With the completion of the ICM program in the Northwest, the data and analysis presented here show that it had some notable successes and encountered several obstacles that must be overcome to maximize its efficacy. As of the beginning of November 2019, the Matchmakers achieved (or were close to achieving) a wide range of targets, and some were exceeded by significant margins. Approved job placements, ultimately the most important target, was among the targets that were not met. Still, ICM secured approved placements for more than 42 job seekers, and many of those newcomers brought families with them when they relocated. The data below will show that, despite a slow beginning, these placements have begun to accelerate.

This summative evaluation analyzes the ICM Northwest project in order to identify ways to enhance service delivery and ensure that it is meeting its objectives of matching qualified workers with local employers. This will be extremely helpful in informing decisions on whether to continue or expand the project and could be used by other communities or service delivery agents that wish to replicate the ICM.

The remainder of the report is broken into six sections. The section following this introduction outlines the methodology used to evaluate ICM. Section three presents the data generated. Section four is a qualitative analysis of the data. Section five discusses some of the lessons learned and offers some suggestions to enhance the program. Section six discusses the results of community engagement and future plans. Section seven concludes the report and lists some recommendations.



2. Methodology

This summative evaluation relies on an analysis of the data generated in the Northwest, complemented by feedback received from the Matchmakers themselves, as well as some informed observers and other interested parties. It is an interactive and iterative assessment of ICM's operations in the Northwest that relies on an informal 'project diary' approach, in which researchers and the Matchmakers noted important events and ideas that were then compiled to undertake this evaluation.



2.1 Targets:

The target metrics were set via discussion with partners and supporters prior to the project's launch, and the Matchmakers recorded their results throughout the process. Unfortunately, the metrics were not operationalized prior to the launch, thus the two Northwestern Matchmakers spent much of year one recording their interpretations of how activities should be understood, as opposed to assessing them based on established guidelines. The issue was corrected for the second year but the data below may have some discrepancies in certain cases based on each Matchmaker's interpretation.

The operationalized target definitions were developed by the research team through discussion with the Matchmakers. They were designed to be as close as possible to the activities that were undertaken in year one but it was not feasible for the Matchmakers to go back and assess alignment between completed activities and the newly established metrics. Thus, year one's targets reflect the Matchmakers' interpretations. Internal discussions suggest that the operationalized definitions of some targets are broader in scope than the Matchmakers' interpretations, indicating that year two's numbers will improve simply by counting more activities under the scope of the definition. As such, the data for year one likely understates the number of targets that the Matchmakers reached.

With the operational target definitions in place, it is worth outlining what the targets are and briefly describing them. The fully operationalized definitions are attached in Appendix A. The Matchmakers recorded each instance of an activity as a single count toward the target total, with some safeguards in place to avoid double counting.



Table 1: Simplified definitions of Matchmaker targets

Target name	Definition	Annual Target Per Matchmaker
Job Seeker Information Request Dealt With	Provide general introductory information to job seekers	600
Number of Information Packages Distributed	Provide three or more information sources tailored to the needs of the job seeker or employer	120
Employer Information Requests Dealt With	Provide general, introductory information to employers	120
Job Seeker Clients Provided Service Beyond Simple Query Response	Provide specific, tailored advice or information to a job seeker	120
Employer Clients Provided Service Beyond Simple Query Response	Provide specific, tailored advice or information to an employer	48
Job Seeker Client Arrived in Region	Clients who are physically in Northern Ontario during the time of the research project	60
Employer Clients with Job Offers and Approved Placements	Number of employers that filled a position with help from the Matchmaker	24
Job Seeker Clients with Job Offers and Approved Placements	Number of job seekers that took a position with help from the Matchmaker	24
Information Sessions Held in English*	Provide information in English to two or more individuals at the same time in a formal or informal setting	2

* The initial target was simply 'information sessions held.' NPI refined this internally to avoid overlap with the target 'Information sessions held in French for French-speaking employers and job seekers.'



Table 1: Continued

Target name	Definition	Annual Target Per Matchmaker
Information Packages Distributed in French to French-Speaking Clients	Provide three French information sources tailored to the needs of the French-speaking job seeker or employer	24
French-Speaking Client Intake	Clients who self-identify intermediate proficiency in French	24
Number of Employers Expressing an Appreciation for the Value of French Language Skills in Their Workplace	Hearing from an employer that they value the French language in their workplace	10
Number of Employers Helped to Access French Immigration Tools	Guide** an employer to immigration resources that can assist them in locating a qualified Francophone candidate	10
Information Sessions Held in French for French-Speaking Employers and Job Seekers	Provide information in French to two or more individuals at the same time in a formal or informal setting	1
Candidates Made Aware of French Language Education Being Available	Inform a job seeker of public and/or private French language education opportunities	24
Number of Clients Signed up for Orientation Sessions in French to Introduce Them to the Community and the Services in the Community	Direct a job seeker to an orientation session held in French designed to welcome newcomers	10

**** As the Matchmakers are not certified immigration consultants, they are not allowed to directly tell a client what they should put on a form, what immigration program/stream they need to apply to, and other related activities. Thus, the Matchmaker guided clients to available resources and information.**



2.2 Refined Targets:

As the program evolved, it became clear that there was a need for additional targets, since the original list did not cover all the activities that the Matchmakers were carrying out. Information sessions were particularly troublesome, as there were cases of both Matchmakers sharing a session, sometimes offering different material in different languages. Recording it only once under one Matchmaker would deflate the target totals of the other involved. But recording it for each Matchmaker risked double counting. As a result, a new target for shared information sessions was developed to accurately track each individual's targets without inflating the total values.

Additionally, the research team identified value in tracking the type of services that were being delivered by the Matchmakers. The category of 'information requests' was not specific enough to track the services that received the greatest demand. There was no target for tracking how often the Matchmakers were providing job search help or how often they were making clients aware of immigration services. As a result, a new subcategory of service targets was created for the services that were most in demand. These were supplemental targets and did not replace or modify any of the existing metrics.

These targets provide the empirical foundation of this summative evaluation and will be used to continue measuring ICM's effectiveness going forward. They should not be seen as exhaustive, since there may be more activities worth tracking that have not yet been identified by the research team. Finally, it is worth noting that such additions speak to the nature of a pilot—capturing activities and trends resulting from the unfolding of a program that were not initially anticipated or considered. As a result, flexibility is key.



3. Data

The data generated over the course of the ICM Northwest project period sheds light on where ICM has and has not met expectations. Tables 2 and 3 compare the number of times the Matchmakers provided each service from their respective start dates to when they finished their term.¹ As noted earlier, the first Matchmaker started in April 2018 and their position finished up mid-August 2019 (a total of 16.5 months). The second Matchmaker began in August 2018 and finished at the beginning of November 2019 (a total of 15 months). The targets in column three reflect the monthly targets during the time the Matchmaker was with ICM. For example, since Matchmaker One was working with ICM for 16.5 months, their monthly target for the number of information packages distributed would be 10; therefore, the adjusted target would be 165.

The last column displays the percentage of each target that the Matchmakers accomplished. One important note: some of these targets rely on clients self-reporting to the Matchmakers, a system that has yielded less than perfect results. The Matchmakers have noted occasions when they were unaware that a client secured a placement until they followed-up. Also, the targets do not fully capture scenarios in which a client declined a job offer for some reason. As such, these numbers should be interpreted as minimums rather than precise counts.



¹ To note, in previous reporting, the analysis of actuals to targets was conducted based on the targets for a single year (i.e., comparing the progress of Matchmaker Two's total actuals for 15 months against targets for 12 months). This has been corrected for the two tables below.

Table 2: Progress report of Matchmaker One activity for ICM Northwest

Target	April 3, 2018 – August 2, 2019	To date/Target	% achieved against Target
Job seeker information request dealt with	846	825	103%
Information package distributed	758	165	459%
Employer information request dealt with	111	165	67%
Job seeker clients provided service beyond simple query response	534	165	324%
Employer clients provided service beyond simple query response	80	66	121%
Job seeker clients arrived in region	17	82.5	21%
Employer clients with job offers and approved placements	16	33	48%
Job seeker clients with job offers and approved placements	16	33	48%
Information sessions held (in English)	95	2.75	3455%
Information packages distributed in French to French-speaking clients	440	33	1333%
French-speaking client intake	125	33	379%
Employers expressing an appreciation for the value of French language skills in their workplace	66	13.75	480%
Number of employers helped to access French immigration tools	47	13.75	342%
Candidates made aware of French language education being available	274	33	830%
Number of clients signed up for orientation sessions in French to introduce them to the community and the services in the community	4	13.74	29%
Information sessions held in French for French-speaking employers and job seekers	20	1.375	1455%

When assessing Matchmaker One's progress against targets, several items stand out:

- Of the 16 targets, 11 were exceeded, some by large margins;
- Matchmaker One has done a great deal of work providing information about the program, resources available, and more. Nearly every target related to informing job seekers, employers, partners, or the public about the project has been surpassed. This is particularly evident in the number of information sessions held. As well, in comparing the percentage achieved for replying to general inquiries against that for more specific responses to queries, it is clear that more targeted services are in demand by both job seekers and employers;
- There is a clear, demonstrated interest in Francophone services and information from job seekers and employers alike. Seven targets are related to Francophones and/or the French language, and six of those were surpassed. Moreover, many employers stated the value of the French language in their workplace. ICM clearly uncovered a need for more services directed at Francophones in the labour force; and
- Clients with job offers and approved placements were low. In these instances, turning communication outreach efforts into placements is key.

Table 3: Progress report of Matchmaker Two activity for ICM Northwest

Target	August 1, 2018 – November 7, 2019	To date/Target	% achieved against Target
Job seeker information request dealt with	130	750	17%
Information package distributed	148	150	99%
Employer information request dealt with	52	150	35%
Job seeker clients provided service beyond simple query response	92	150	61%
Employer clients provided service beyond simple query response	27	60	45%
Job seeker clients arrived in region	88	75	117%
Employer clients with job offers and approved placements	6	30	20%
Job seeker clients with job offers and approved placements	26	30	87%
Information sessions held (in English)	13	2.5	520%
Information packages distributed in French to French-speaking clients	1	30	3%
French-speaking client intake	14	30	47%
Employers expressing an appreciation for the value of French language skills in their workplace	4	12.5	32%
Number of employers helped to access French immigration tools	3	12.5	24%
Candidates made aware of French language education being available	3	30	10%
Number of clients signed up for orientation sessions in French to introduce them to the community and the services in the community	0	12.5	0%
Information sessions held in French for French-speaking employers and job seekers	0	1.25	0%

For Matchmaker Two, key observations include:

- Although the communication-related targets were not as high as Matchmaker One, there were two key successes that occurred. The first success was the number of job seeker clients that arrived in the region. Ensuring that these individuals stay is critical in mitigating the aging population and rising dependency ratio. The second is that Matchmaker Two was close to achieving the target of 'job seeker clients with job offers and approved placements.' In fact, there is a large difference between job seeker placements versus employer placements;
- The actuals for Matchmaker Two, while lower comparatively, did experience increases over time. Also, some targets were close to being achieved; and
- The Francophone-specific targets were low because these were not the main priority of Matchmaker Two. Its focus was Anglophones and international students.

3.1 Target Analysis:

Much of year one was, understandably, devoted to building relationships, explaining ICM, establishing a client base, and getting the project off the ground. Table 4 demonstrates this by illustrating the work that Matchmaker One did in the first half of that year. These numbers do not include the targets of Matchmaker Two, which had been operational for two months by this date. Those numbers are outlined below.

Table 4: Matchmaker activities in the first six months of ICM

Target name	Services provided as of September 30, 2018	Target
Job seeker information request dealt with	120	300
Number of information packages distributed	116	60
Employer information requests dealt with	27	60
Job seeker clients provided service beyond simple query response	89	60
Employer clients provided service beyond simple query response	12	24
Job seeker clients arrived in region	2	30
Employer clients with job offers and approved placements	2	12
Job Seeker Clients with Job Offers and Approved Placements	2	12
Information Sessions Held in English*	88	1
Information packages distributed in French to French-speaking clients	42	12
French-speaking client intake	38	12
Number of employers expressing an appreciation for the value of French language skills in their workplace	21	5
Number of employers helped to access French immigration tools	4	5
Information sessions held in French for French-speaking employers and job seekers	0	1
Candidates made aware of French language education being available	0	12
Number of clients signed up for orientation sessions in French to introduce them to the community and services in the community	0	5

Although Matchmaker One surpassed expectations for the number of information packages distributed (both English and French), job seeker clients provided service beyond simple query, information sessions held, French client intake, and employers expressing an appreciation for the value of French in the workplace, only a handful of job connections were made. Matchmaker Two secured an additional three positions for job seekers for a total of five by ICM's six-month mark. In other words, 16 of the 21 total job seeker placements for year one (76 per cent) occurred in the second half. That equates to 2.67 placements per month, compared to 0.33 per month in the initial six months. The Matchmakers secured nine positions between October and December 2018, and seven more from January to March 2019.

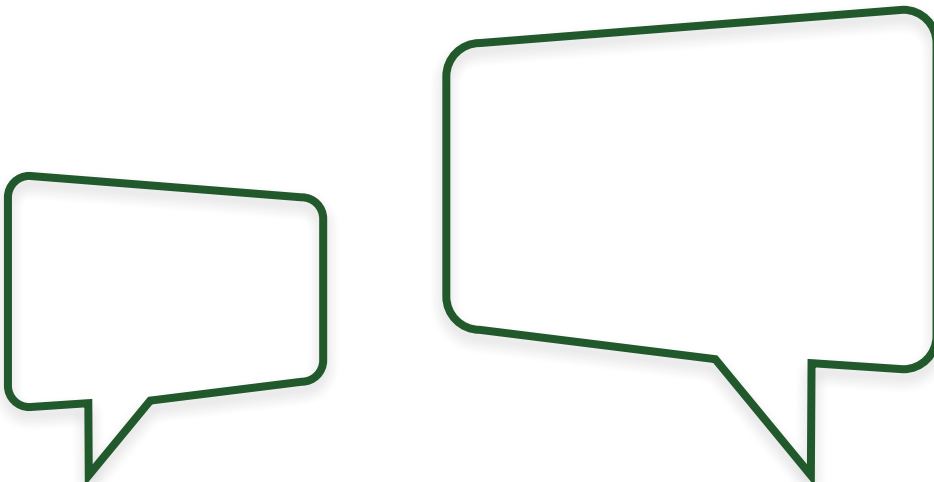
Table 5 shows the targets that the two Matchmakers reached in the Northwest during the first three months of 2019. Nearly every target is surpassed and, although the number was below the target, the Matchmakers managed to secure positions for seven job seekers. The surge in numbers is largely due to a Matchmaker attending Destination Canada events in Paris and Brussels in November 2018, which resulted in more than 600 inquiries from international Francophones interested in relocating to Northwestern Ontario. Much of the follow-up with those clients occurred in the following year. Of note, French-speaking client intake declined from December 2018 to March 2019. This is due to several clients from Destination Canada that became unresponsive, thus the Matchmaker stopped counting them as clients. Another peculiarity was that the number of employer clients with approved placements increased by nearly twice as much as job seeker clients (13 versus seven). This was due to the fact that several employers became clients only after they had filled a position with one of the Matchmakers' job seeker clients. According to the Matchmakers, the increase is not due to more positions being filled; it is simply that employers who had previously benefitted indirectly from ICM chose to become clients.



Table 5: Targets for the Northwestern Matchmakers, January 1 - March 31, 2019

Target name	Services provided between January 1 – March 31, 2019
Job seeker information request dealt with	577
Number of information packages distributed	637
Employer information requests dealt with	101
Job seeker clients provided service beyond simple query response	367
Employer clients provided service beyond simple query response	65
Job seeker clients arrived in region	37
Employer clients with job offers and approved placements	13
Job Seeker Clients with Job Offers and Approved Placements	7
Information Sessions Held	29
Information packages distributed in French to French-speaking clients	227
French-speaking client intake	114*
Number of employers expressing an appreciation for the value of French language skills in their workplace	30
Number of employers helped to access French immigration tools	29
Information sessions held in French for French-speaking employers and job seekers	0
Candidates made aware of French language education being available	244
Number of clients signed up for orientation sessions in French to introduce them to the community and services in the community	0

*This number was down from 196 in December



From March 2019 onward, there were increases in all actuals except for “information sessions held,” which likely resulted from the operationalization of more defined targets such as “information sessions held in French” or “shared information sessions.” Nevertheless, hosting nearly 110 information sessions is above and beyond the combined target of four. Furthermore, of the five targets with the highest increases in actuals, most were related to communication of some kind (for example, 91 more information packages were distributed, followed by 73 more job seeker requests for information). Once again, these speak to one of the key activities of the program, as well as to the bigger picture of ensuring job seekers and employers are accessing the right information. As noted in section 3.2, most job seekers were either temporary or were outside of Canada. As a result, ensuring that information is accessible about topics such as the immigration process, the local labour market, and employability resources is a demonstrated need.

Based on the data provided above, there are several key observations that emerged. The first is that the beginning stages of ICM Northwest mainly were about outreach. But as it moved further into its tenure, ICM Northwest was converting its earlier groundwork into job placements. In short, logistics suggest that the first six months of the project are likely to lag the targets for approved job placements, which ultimately may lead to lower totals. Future assessments of this or other Matchmaker programs should be cognizant of this and consider adjusting their expectations accordingly.

Another trend that emerges is that job seeker-related targets are usually much further along than the corresponding targets for employers—sometimes two or three times more. In this regard, the data reflect the Matchmakers' overall sentiment that job seekers are engaging far more enthusiastically than employers.

Finally, once again, most of the Francophone-related targets were well ahead of the expected pace. Granted, the Destination Canada event played a large role on the job seeker side, but employers continued to express appreciation for the French language in their workplace and many engaged the Matchmakers for help in accessing French immigration tools.



3.2 Client Base:

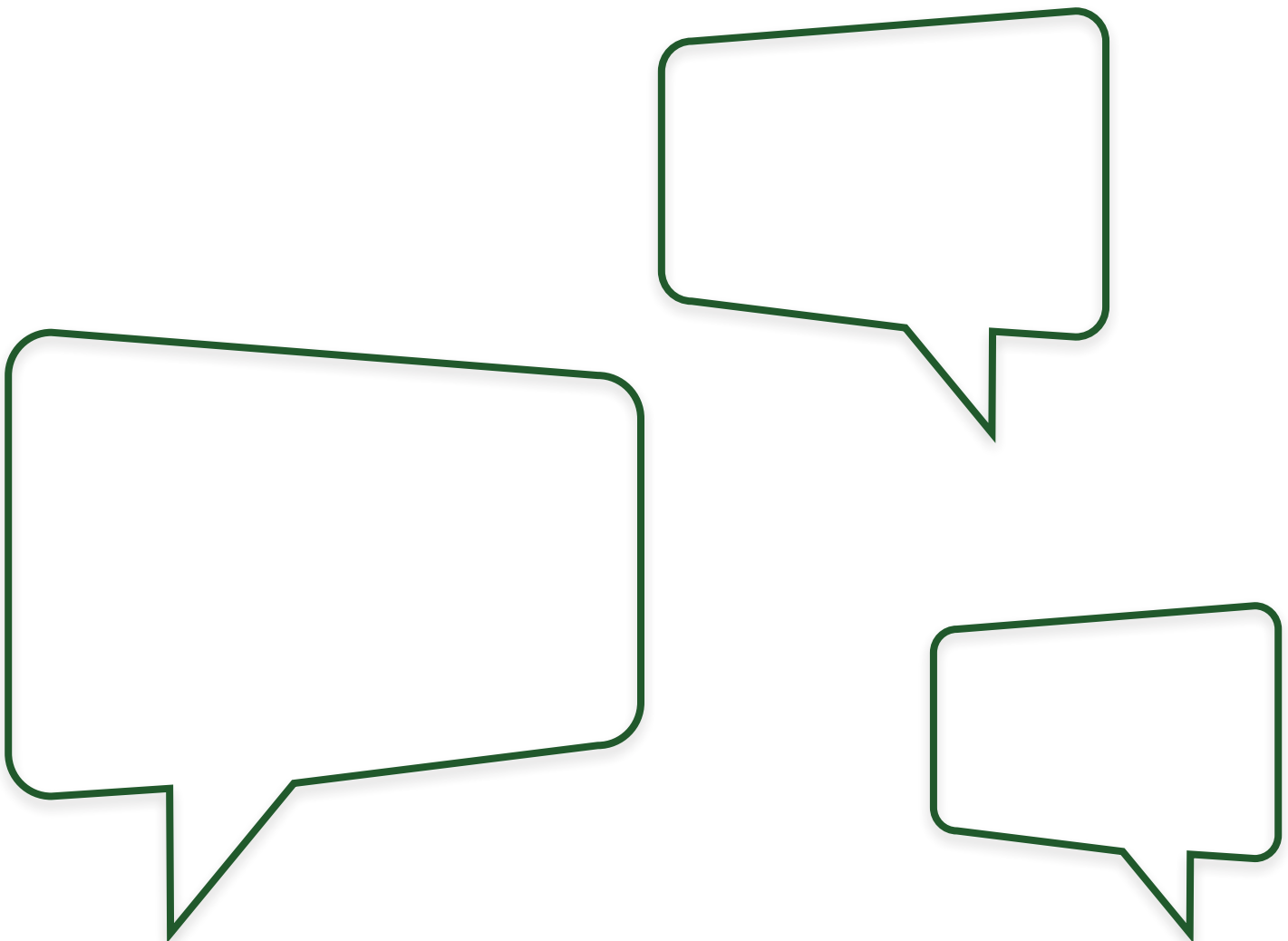
The composition of the job seeker client base sheds some light on who ICM is servicing. Most job seeker clients are either temporary residents or people with no status (i.e., those outside Canada). This demonstrates that ICM is providing services to the individuals that it was meant to—the ones that are not covered under the mandates of other settlement agencies or programs.

As for reasons why ICM Northwest had so many clients, they include the various linkages it developed in the community and abroad. These include referrals by a community agency or partner such as a postsecondary institution or settlement agency, media and internet, domestic and international events, and word of mouth.

Note that this does not include the many instances when a Matchmaker 'hot-desked' or made use of an agency's office space to meet with clients. ICM, in turn, has referred clients to several different service providers when the clients' needs did not align with the Matchmakers' role.

3.3 Summary:

The targets in this section were the main data source that were tracked regularly and rigorously through ICM NW. The list of metrics has expanded, and going forward there will be more data on factors such as the number and type of services delivered, the National Occupation Classification (NOC) codes of job seekers, referrals to and from ICM, and some anonymous demographic data on job seekers and employers that are making use of ICM. This expanded dataset will help contextualize the target data to produce a more comprehensive picture of ICM.



4. Obstacles and Opportunities

The data outlined above tell a crucial portion of ICM's story but not the entirety of it. Qualitative feedback, primarily from the Matchmakers themselves, helps to fill in the gaps and cast some perspective on the program. Although the data outlines what did and did not happen, the qualitative assessment helps explain why it did or did not happen and identifies barriers and opportunities for improvement. Conversations with the Matchmakers, and with a small number of people involved with the project, revealed a surprising difficulty in getting employers to engage with ICM. There were also issues in clarifying ICM's position in a crowded field of service providers that delivered high quality services within their mandates but left some job seekers underserved. Those same conversations, however, yielded a great deal of information on the strengths and successes of ICM, including breaking through with employers and bolstering Thunder Bay's and Northwestern Ontario's presences on the international stage.



4.1 Operations:

There were several operational barriers in year one, and many of them may have stemmed from the simple fact that NPI is a research institute and not a service provider. Many of NPI's internal policies and processes are designed for people doing research, analysis, or communications work, and they do not always transfer comfortably to the Matchmakers, especially when it comes to facilitating and/or reporting activities.

It is possible that an organization with more experience and knowledge in this domain would have anticipated and avoided several of these issues entirely. Again, this reflects the importance of the role of the volunteer operations coordinator played in helping NPI balance areas of non-familiarity, such as facilitating connections in the community (with employers, for example). As such, partnerships with organizations that provide such expertise while NPI provides the research is an important consideration.

One of the biggest obstacles was internal communication difficulties. There were instances of unclear lines of communication, and there was uncertainty over who had certain approval authorities and the correct procedures to follow. For example, if a Matchmaker wanted some materials printed, they were, at times, unsure who to contact at NPI. The same was true for approval of travel requests. ICM, the research team, and NPI's communications and finance departments were all involved, and keeping each group informed of every decision proved difficult. At times, this resulted in tasks falling through the cracks and the team scrambling to meet tight deadlines or missing them altogether. Fortunately, these troubles have been contained to minor instances and represent more a frustration than a detraction from ICM's ability to operate. NPI has its related policies laid out in an orientation manual and the proper procedures were outlined on more than one occasion, yet difficulties remained. Developing a clear, ICM-specific policy should alleviate these disruptions and free up the Matchmakers to focus on more important issues.

As mentioned above, most of the Matchmakers' time early on was spent spreading the word about ICM. Their efforts included establishing networks, introducing themselves to important players, explaining ICM's purpose, and helping to develop ICM's brand. Very little branding was in place when the project launched and finalizing the marketing material took several months. A major contributor to this delay was an attempt to build consensus among the Matchmakers and NPI on what the branding should be. This process might have been more efficient had it been completed sooner, perhaps even prior to the project's launch.

Similarly, the fact that there were target definitions that were non-operationalized until late in the project's first year was problematic. This compromised the data quality, and the Matchmakers and the research team spent a significant amount of time on discussions that could have been better spent delivering services. This is another example where a less iterative process may have been beneficial. At the very least, the feedback phase could have been shortened. Similar to what happened with branding, there was a point when direct democracy had to end and NPI had to make a final decision on target criteria. Developing these definitions early is important, and not only from a research perspective. Funders and partners need to be on the same page as the service delivery organization, thus clearly laying out these definitions early on will help manage expectations.

Another common, if unsurprising, barrier that the Matchmakers highlighted was a lack of resources. Each suggested that the program would be much more effective if there were more people on staff. The optimal suggested numbers were five or six Matchmakers spread across the two economic regions, with an additional position for a dedicated operations coordinator. This arrangement was viewed as ideal for shouldering the large client load and extending the benefits of ICM to more communities, as well as keeping everyone on track and apprised of the other Matchmakers' activities. Of course, resources are finite, but the Matchmakers cautioned against operating on a minimal budget, stating that doing so would diminish the program's effectiveness and credibility.

The operations after the first year started to smooth out and the Matchmakers decided that, in addition to the general Matchmaker meeting that included the research team, there would be a more focused group meeting with just the Matchmakers. This ensured that big picture items such as planning for events (e.g., virtual job fairs) and marketing did not overshadow the day-to-day items the Matchmaker needed to discuss (e.g., sharing ideas for tackling a problem they may be encountering with a resume). As well, the general Matchmaker meetings moved from weekly to biweekly as the Matchmakers were more comfortable in their role and fewer big picture conversations needed to happen.

Finally, when the first Matchmaker finished their position, the second Matchmaker aided any remaining clients that still required the use of the ICM program. During this transition period, as well as when the second Matchmaker finished up, efforts were made to notify clients as to what was happening and promote resources that they could use to move forward in their job search and/or immigration process.

4.2 Employers and Service Providers:

One of the biggest and most recurring challenges of year one was getting local employers to buy into the value that ICM offered. This was a prominent discussion point up until the very end of 2018 and it caused no small amount of frustration among those involved in the project. There was a sense that employers would jump at the opportunity to utilize ICM, given repeated reports of employers needing employees with in-demand skills. This belief was driven largely by conversations that led to the project's birth, namely the pressing need for Northern Ontario to close the skills gap and stanch the population decline that virtually all non-Indigenous communities in the region face. It took several months, however, before the Matchmakers felt that employers were beginning to engage with ICM. There were some notable exceptions but, by-and-large, the sense was that employers were not interested. That perception has begun to shift for several reasons.

Despite the time required for groundwork, the Matchmakers pointed to some of their successes and exposure in the news media as drivers behind increased employer engagement. Equally important, if not more so, in the Matchmakers' eyes was the volunteer operations coordinator. Not only was the position invaluable for keeping things on track but also the individual in this position was viewed as a significant asset by the Matchmakers. The Matchmakers all stated that the coordinator's network, knowledge, and demeanor were instrumental to the successes they began to see with employers.

There are several organizations that provide job search help, immigration-related assistance, or both, so adding one more to the field was met with skepticism in some corners. Some groups were unsure of the value ICM could add, while others were concerned that the Matchmakers were infringing on their mandates. This sense of territoriality and an unwillingness to share appears to be a common thread, with service providers in other parts of the province remarking that they face similar circumstances.² Like employers' early reticence, this territoriality appeared to erode, with ICM referring clients to other service providers and, in turn, receiving referrals from these providers. Additionally, ICM has worked out of other service providers' offices at times, a further indication that cooperation and coordination increased. Concerns regarding overlapping mandates endure and likely will so long as ICM operates, which will require a continuous effort to ensure all partners are aware of each other's activities to avoid duplication or infringement. Likewise, strong interorganizational communication—and the knowledge sharing that comes with it—is likely to improve the efficacy and efficiency of all service providers.

4.3 Summary

ICM had a first year filled with obstacles and opportunities but, over time, the pilot program in the Northwest was able to smooth itself out as its foundation, processes, and identity were more fleshed out. Indeed, bringing a program to life from paper takes time, but the rhythm is often found. Furthermore, there were several successes to build upon, as well as several learning moments that will help guide the program going forward. New situations will arise that will present further opportunities to enhance the program.



² This point was raised at the annual North Western Ontario Immigration Forum in Thunder Bay in February 2019.

5. Lessons Learned

The most fundamental challenge facing ICM is figuring out how to convert its substantial outreach and networking activities into other important metrics, most notably job placements. There was absolutely no difficulty in attracting job seekers, especially as community partners and settlement agencies began referring more clients to ICM. Even with the difficulties engaging with employers, the Matchmakers did make progress in terms of providing services beyond responding to queries. However, these initial steps have not yet progressed into job placements at the expected rate. As a result, the objective of the program going forward in the Northeast should be to find ways to move clients along the process more effectively.



The first step is to identify why clients are not progressing toward job placements so that the Matchmakers can tailor their efforts to overcome these barriers. The client intake sheet has been helpful in this regard, in that it asks job seekers to name what they view as the primary impediment to finding a job. Reasons include language and communication, lack of local experience, networking, accessing employment programs, and credential recognition. For these reasons, working with other organizations and leveraging resources can further aid clients and employers in ensuring job connections are being made. An example for employers is providing information about credential recognition resources in an accessible format or providing a resource where they can access assistance.

Regarding networking, although this is already a key element of ICM, it may be worth investigating whether there are any adjustments that could make it more effective. For example, increased collaboration with the Connector Program in Thunder Bay and transplanting elements of that program to the Matchmaker's work outside of the city might be an option. The Connector Program matches newcomers and recent graduates with established members of the community in an informal setting so that they can get to know each other (Halifax Partnership 2019). The community member—the connector—passes the job seeker—the connectee—on to three people in their network, which helps expedite the newcomer or graduate's networking, and thereby their job search. Two-thousand six-hundred and ten connectees have joined the Halifax Connector program and 1,041 have found jobs (ibid).

Developing a similar program is beyond the scope of ICM, but the Matchmakers could potentially imitate the concept. If they developed a short list of community and business leaders that committed to passing along a client's information to three people in their network it could provide another avenue for job seekers. This undertaking could have the added benefit of helping job seekers overcome the experience barriers listed above. If the adage that 'it's not what you know, it's who you know' is true, an increased focus on networking could go a long way toward improving job placement numbers, and with relatively little time or effort from the Matchmakers. The main investment would be creating and vetting a list of initial connectors that clients could be passed on to. One possible downside is that tracking placements may become more difficult if the clients secure a job offer through this process.

Regarding the challenges of language and communication, and access to employment programs, the latter is already covered by ICM's mandate to help temporary residents and newcomers without official status. The former is not directly in the Matchmakers' purview but it certainly appears that improving language skills could be worth exploring to increase the attractiveness of job seekers to employers. Discrimination was also noted as a barrier, although the reported number was low. However, the Matchmakers were convinced that more job seekers would have identified this as a barrier but for the fact they thought it would hurt their chances at finding work. Thus, discrimination appears to be a relatively uncommon, albeit underreported, barrier. Getting accurate numbers will be helpful in tailoring the Matchmakers' response.

There are a couple of tactics that ICM can use to erode these barriers, but increased employer engagement will be crucial if ICM is to build on its success. Diverting more attention to employers is not a novel suggestion; in fact, year one ended with a determination to engage more directly and proactively with employers. Unfortunately, employers do not fill out a client intake form like the job seekers do, so there is not much data on common barriers. There are, however, employer surveys that the research team developed to try and gain some insight on this topic, but only a handful of results trickled in. Ideally, the data from the surveys can be coupled with feedback from employers to identify their specific barriers and develop a response. Regardless of the challenges, the successes so far represent a potent marketing tool for the Matchmakers.

Rather than highlight the potential or theoretical value ICM has to offer, the Matchmakers can point to firm, tangible results to convince employers to use their services. Local and regional media outlets have highlighted some of ICM's successes in securing job opportunities for newcomers (CBC 2019; Aiken 2019; Radio-Canada 2019), which lend credibility to the project. Finding ways to leverage these triumphs could go a long way toward breeding further successes. In fact, the Matchmakers have indicated that this is already working, as a new employer client learned how ICM helped one of their competitors and found themselves in need of an identical service.

6. Community Engagement and Future Plans

As Zefi (2019) outlines in her work on the strengths and weaknesses in Northern Ontario, when it comes to attracting and retaining newcomers, we are stronger together. Indeed, it is partnerships and engaging with players involved in this process that helped programs like ICM have an impact. As noted earlier, there were several different partners involved in the ICM Northwest project alongside NPI. As well, there were various groups that the ICM Northwest program engaged with in terms of feedback, discussing the program, carrying out activities, and referrals, some of which include:

- North Superior Workforce Planning Board
- Greenstone Economic Development Corporation
- SÉO
- Lakehead University
- Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce
- Confederation College
- Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission
- YES Employment Services
- Northwestern Ontario Local Immigration Partnership
- Newcomer Centre of Peel
- Réseau du Nord
- Northwest Employment Works
- Coopérative ROFTB Inc.



In terms of engagement and feedback, community players have indicated that the ICM program helped to fill gaps in the community (e.g., pre-arrival); however, there are still gaps that remain now that the program is over, particularly involving services related to pre-arrival and temporary status individuals. As such, services need to continue to be provided in the region.

In that spirit, SÉO and l'Association des francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO) wish to set up Matchmaker and Matchmaker-like services. At this time, neither SÉO nor AFNOO has had confirmed funding to support temporary residents and other statuses. That is why AFNOO has submitted an application to FedNor. As well, the Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission has created a job developer position for the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot that has similarities to the Matchmaker duties previously carried out.

Finally, based on feedback from smaller communities to expand the program so that ICM can assist them, NPI is putting together a rural Matchmaker program. Community partners have already been identified to be the “host” for each Matchmaker—NPI will continue to provide supervision and control over the collection of data and other related research in order to assess the efficacy of the program in smaller centers. These partners are four Community Future Development Corporations across Northern Ontario:

- Lake of the Woods Business Incentive Corporation (**Kenora**)
- Superior East Community Futures Development Corporation (**Wawa**)
- Nord-Aski Regional Economic Development Corporation (**Hearst**)
- South Temiskaming Community Futures Development Corporation (**Temiskaming Shores**)



7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, ICM Northwest produced accomplishments and lessons. Each Matchmaker saw successes on various fronts but, most important, they were able to facilitate job connections. Not only is this important for filling labour gaps but also it has prompted other communities and service providers to enter discussions about expanding the program. These successes have garnered media attention and represent a potent marketing tool to help beget further success.

Of course, ICM Northwest was not without its challenges. Operationally, ICM faced troubles with communication, branding, and tracking and reporting activities. However, as noted earlier, these difficulties have since been resolved. Eliminating such disruptions can free the Matchmakers to focus on the more pressing matter of converting their outreach into achievements.

Year two of ICM began with a commitment to engage employers more directly and proactively. Data from the client intake forms can help guide future Matchmakers in responding to the main barrier identified by job seekers. On the research side, the continuation of the ICM project in the Northeast promises more data for a more robust assessment of the program. Data from client surveys and enhancements to tracking will enable deeper and more nuanced analysis, which will help measure whether ICM continues to meet its mandate, as well as offer new avenues to enhance the program's effectiveness.



7.1 Recommendations for the ICM program moving forward

- Improve internal communications, possibly by developing a policy manual with a roadmap of NPI contacts for Matchmakers based on specific queries. This will reduce frustrations and ensure smooth operations and timely completion of tasks;
- Continue focusing on employer engagement. Employers were less interested than expected in year one and getting them on board will be crucial to both ICM's success and Northern Ontario's future;
- Market successes. ICM's value is no longer theoretical; it is proven. The Matchmakers have helped some employers fill their skills gaps and can point to these triumphs when dealing with new clients;
- Target identified barriers. Job seekers identified a range of barriers including a lack of Canadian experience and networking difficulties. Focusing on these barriers offers the best potential for a breakthrough in job placements; and
- Enhance research and data collection and analysis. The client intake sheets and surveys offer a wealth of valuable information for identifying correlations or topics for further study, not to mention areas that the Matchmakers can focus on.

7.2 Recommendations for launching projects

- Choose an ideal delivery agent or partner to run the program. An organization with expertise in service provision will likely be better equipped on the operations side of the equation;
- Establish the brand early. This will facilitate marketing and free up capacity for matchmaking activities;
- Operationalize targets in advance. This is crucial for consistent data reporting, keeping partners on the same page, and managing expectations;
- Develop an efficient reporting and tracking system. Shared spreadsheets have considerably reduced reporting requirements and made data tracking much easier;
- Have an operations coordinator. Whether they are on staff, or need to be brought in, having a designated individual track and manage everyone's activities is important; and
- Be flexible. Even the best and most thoroughly conceived plans change when they encounter reality on the ground. Allow the project to adapt if/when new ways of doing things emerge. Encourage the Matchmakers to identify and propose improvements to any aspect of the day-to-day operations.

“[T]he process of attracting and retaining newcomers...is not the responsibility of a single entity, but rather multiple actors found in the community and in government”

Christina Zefi, the Northern Attraction Series: Identifying Northern Ontario's Strengths and Weaknesses in the Attraction and Retention of Newcomers (2019)

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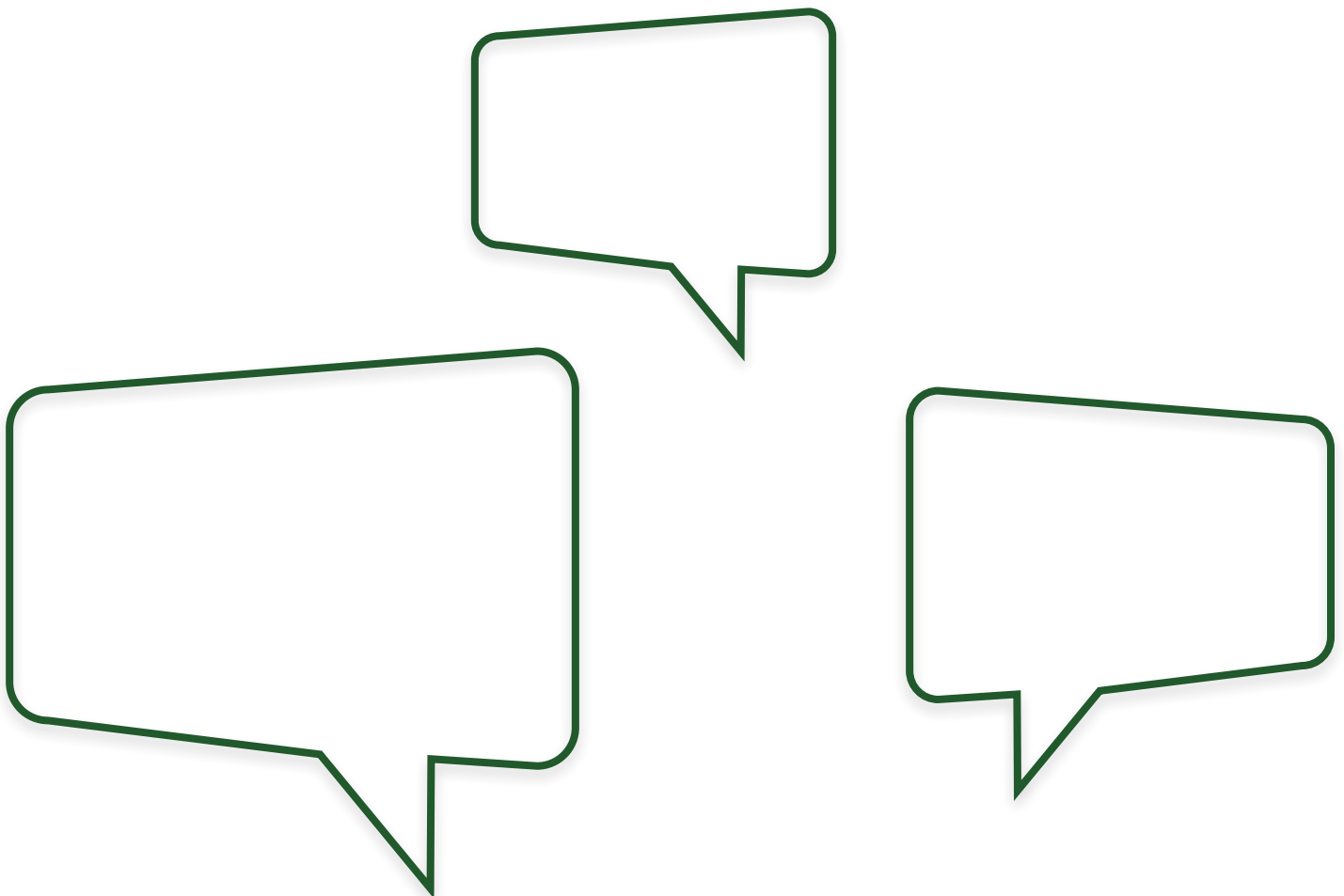
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Appendix A: Target Definitions

Primary Targets

Job Seeker Information Request Dealt With:

Any emails, phone calls, in-person meetings, presentations, or booth/presentation inquiries in which the Matchmaker provides **general** information to a job seeker regarding the Matchmaker project, the local labour market, immigration³, or the communities/region they serve. When the Matchmaker is providing a presentation or is at a booth, attendees should be counted, with each individual counted as one for tracking purposes (i.e., 39 attendees = 39 requests dealt with). Furthermore, to avoid double counting, a client⁴ counts as one for tracking purposes even if there are multiple interactions (i.e., multiple emails to one client count as one request dealt with).

Number of Information Packages Distributed:

A physical or electronic copy of the English version of the package distributed by the Matchmaker to a job seeker that includes three or more resources/links/documents that are **tailored** to a job seeker or employer's individual needs (e.g., resume/cover letter template/IRCC website, NOC codes, etc.). The number assigned to any client should not be more than one, unless the Matchmaker provides multiples to be passed along to the job seeker's friends, family, colleagues, etc. Each package counts as one for tracking purposes.

Employer Information Requests Dealt With:

Any emails, phone calls, in-person meetings, presentations, or booth/presentation inquiries in which the Matchmaker provides **general** information to an employer regarding the Matchmaker project, the local labour market, immigration⁵, or the communities/region they serve. When the Matchmaker is providing a presentation or is at a booth, attendees should be counted, with each individual counted as one for tracking purposes (i.e., 39 attendees = 39 requests dealt with). Furthermore, to avoid double counting, a client counts as one for tracking purposes even if there are multiple interactions (i.e., multiple emails to one employer count as one request dealt with).

Job Seeker Clients Provided Service Beyond Simple Query Response:

Any emails, phone calls, or in-person meetings in which the Matchmaker provides specific employment, immigration⁶, or other project-related assistance tailored to the individual. Presentation attendees who ask the Matchmakers a specific question about their situation fall under this target. The difference between this indicator and the information package is that this indicator is tracking a single question about services, whereas an information package involves multiple resources (e.g., specific questions about Canadian resume templates versus a package that includes employer expectations for resumes, where to find information on express entry, and housing resources in Thunder Bay). Furthermore, to avoid double counting, a client counts as one for tracking purposes even if there are multiple interactions (i.e., multiple emails to one client count as one response). Each service will be tracked internally under the single tracking.

Employer Clients⁷ Provided Service Beyond Simple Query Response:

Any emails, phone calls, or in-person meetings in which the Matchmaker provides specific assistance regarding employment, immigration, or other project-related topics tailored to the employer. Presentation attendees who ask the Matchmakers a specific question fall under this target. The difference between this indicator and the information package is that this indicator is tracking a single question about services, whereas an information package involves multiple resources (e.g., specific questions on express entry program versus a package that includes information on NOC codes, how to navigate the IRCC website, and the location of settlement providers in town). To avoid double counting, an employer counts as one for tracking purposes even if there are multiple interactions (i.e., multiple emails to one employer count as one response). Each service will be tracked internally under the single tracking.

³ Matchmakers are not certified immigration consultants and **do not** provide immigration advice or assistance. They merely provide guidance on where to find information regarding the immigration process.

⁴ A jobseeker client is someone who fills out the client intake form.

⁵ Same as footnote 1.

⁶ Matchmakers are not certified immigration consultants and **do not** provide immigration advice or assistance. They merely provide guidance on where to find information regarding the immigration process.

⁷ An employer becomes a client when they are provided a service beyond a simple query response.

Job Seeker Clients Arrived in Region:

Job seekers physically living or working in Northern Ontario during the time of the research project. They may have come to the region prior to the project's beginning and do not need to be here for the entirety of the project. Each client counts as one for tracking purposes. The job seeker **must** be a client to be counted. If a Matchmaker connects an employer client with a job seeker that is not a Matchmaker client, it **does not** count for tracking purposes. The survey will be used to track outcomes (i.e., how many stayed, how many left, etc.).

Instances in which a client has family members that accompanied them to the region will also be tracked. The number of individuals is not required; a voluntary 'yes' or 'no' indication is sufficient.

Employer Clients with Job Offers and Approved Placements:

Employers who have filled a job vacancy with the assistance of a Matchmaker. The employer **must** be a client to be counted. If a Matchmaker connects a job seeker client with an employer that is not a Matchmaker client, it **does not** count for tracking purposes. Assistance can include, but is not limited to, connecting an employer with a specific candidate; providing an employer access to a pool of candidates that results in a successful applicant; and/or providing guidance on how to navigate immigration services that leads to a successful candidate. Positions filled based on the Matchmaker connecting the employer to a candidate shall be counted, even if the Matchmaker was not directly responsible for the position being filled. Each employer client counts as one for this target regardless of the number of positions filled.

Job Seeker Clients with Job Offers and Approved Placements:

Job seeker clients who have received a job offer and placement with the assistance of a Matchmaker. The job seeker **must** be a client to be counted. If a Matchmaker connects an employer client with a job seeker that is not a Matchmaker client, it **does not** count for tracking purposes. Assistance can include, but is not limited to, connecting a candidate directly with an employer that is hiring; advising on resumes, cover letters, job searches, interviews, or other job seeker activities; identifying immigration tools that a candidate may make use of; and/or connecting a candidate to an employer indirectly, as in anonymous resume advertisements, career fairs, recruitment agencies, newsletters, or other avenues. Positions filled based on the Matchmaker connecting the client to an employer shall be counted even if the Matchmaker was not directly responsible for the position being filled.

Information Sessions Held in English:

A formal or informal session **held by one Matchmaker**, with at least two non-Matchmaker attendees, during which the Matchmaker distributes information **in English** about the program, Northern Ontario and/or the communities therein, or the labour market to multiple people and/or organizations. If the Matchmaker uses both official languages, they will use their judgment as to which was the primary language **they used** to communicate. If two or more Matchmakers attend the same session, it is to be tracked as a shared session. Formal sessions include those at which a Matchmaker is physically or electronically present, such as a workshop, seminar, conference, lecture, summit, fair, or other public or private event where multiple organizations are in attendance, with the express purpose of distributing the information listed above. Each formal event counts as one for tracking purposes.

Informal information sessions include meetings with clients or employers (direct or through tele- or videoconferencing) during which the Matchmaker provides information on the items listed above. Each informal session counts as one for tracking purposes.

Tracking for these informal or formal events does not eliminate tracking for information requests dealt with or services beyond a simple query response. Those should also be tracked (e.g., one information session held with 39 attendees. A Matchmaker will record that one information session was held and that 39 information requests were dealt with).

Information packages distributed in French to French-speaking clients:

A physical or electronic copy of the French version of the package that includes three or more resources/links/documents that are **tailored** to a Francophone job seeker's individual needs (e.g., resume/cover letter template/IRCC website, NOC codes, etc.). The number should not be more than one per client, unless the Matchmaker provides multiples to be passed along to a job seeker's friends, family, colleagues, etc. Each package counts as one for tracking purposes.

French-speaking client intake:

The number of job seeker clients who self-identify at least intermediate proficiency in French on their client intake form. French does not need to be the client's first language.

Number of employers expressing an appreciation for the value of French language skills in their workplace:

Each employer shall count as one for tracking purposes, regardless of the number of times they express their appreciation (electronically or in person). Appreciation can include instances when an employer says that they enjoy having a French-speaking employee, when they have expressed that the French language is an asset in completing job requirements, and so on.

Number of employers helped to access French immigration tools:

Each employer shall count as one for tracking purposes, regardless of the number of French immigration tools the Matchmaker assists them in accessing. The specific tools will be tracked internally.

Candidates made aware of French language education being available:

The number of job seekers who are informed directly by the Matchmaker that French language education (public or private) is available in their jurisdiction. Distributing information packages that contain this information counts toward this target as well.

Number of clients signed up for orientation sessions in French to introduce them to the community and the services in the community:

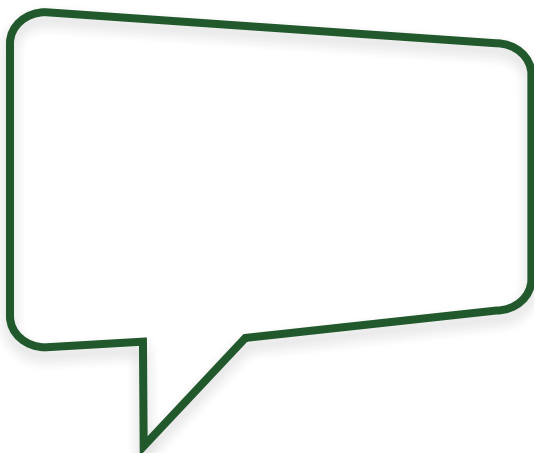
Job seekers who, based on a Matchmaker connection, sign up for orientation sessions in French that have the goal of introducing the job seeker to the community. These sessions include those held by the Matchmakers or by another group. If held by another group, the Matchmaker must connect the job seeker to the session, either by directly signing them up or putting them in contact with the group hosting the event.

Information sessions held in French for French-speaking employers and job seekers:

A formal or informal session **held by one Matchmaker**, with at least two non-Matchmaker attendees, during which the Matchmaker distributes information **in French** on the program, Northern Ontario and/or the communities therein, or the labour market to multiple people and/or organizations. If the Matchmaker uses both official languages, they will use their judgment as to which one was the primary language **they used** to communicate. If two or more Matchmakers attend the same session, it is to be tracked as a shared session. Formal sessions include those at which a Matchmaker is physically or electronically present, such as a workshop, seminar, conference, lecture, summit, fair, or other public or private event where multiple organizations are in attendance, with the express purpose of distributing the information listed above. Each formal event counts as one for tracking purposes.

Informal information sessions include meetings with clients or employers (direct or through tele- or videoconferencing) during which the Matchmaker provides information on the items listed above. Each informal session counts as one for tracking purposes.

Tracking for these informal or formal events does not eliminate tracking for information requests dealt with or services provided beyond a simple query response. Those should still be tracked (e.g., one information session held with 39 attendees. A Matchmaker will record that one information session was held and that 39 information requests were dealt with).



Additional Targets

Shared Information Sessions:

A formal or informal session **held by two or more Matchmakers**, with at **least two non-Matchmaker attendees**, during which the Matchmakers distribute information on the program, Northern Ontario and/or the communities therein, or the labour market to multiple people and/or organizations. All shared sessions shall be counted as one, regardless of whether the Matchmakers are providing information in different languages or giving out different information. Formal sessions include those at which the Matchmakers are physically or electronically present, such as a workshop, seminar, conference, lecture, summit, fair, or other public or private event where multiple organizations are in attendance, with the express purpose of distributing the information listed above. Each formal event counts as one for tracking purposes.

Informal information sessions include meetings with clients or employers (direct or through tele- or videoconferencing) during which the Matchmakers provide information on the items listed above. Each informal session counts as one for tracking purposes.

Tracking for these informal or formal events does not eliminate tracking for information requests dealt with or services provided beyond a simple query response. Those should still be tracked (e.g., one information session held with 39 attendees. A Matchmaker will record that one information session was held and that 39 information requests were dealt with).

Service Targets

Number of Times Provided Guidance to Immigration Tools for Job Seekers:

The total number of times a Matchmaker provided guidance to job seekers for immigration tools (e.g., entry streams, visa requirements, NOC codes, etc.). An individual job seeker could have multiple services under this target if the Matchmaker provided service on different immigration topics.

Number of Times Provided Job Search Help to Job Seekers:

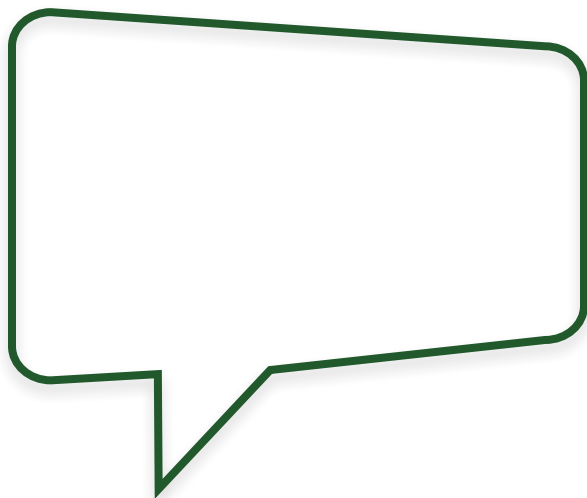
The total number of times a Matchmaker provided job seekers with assistance in landing a job offer. This could include resume/cover letter help, interview practice, job search tools, or any other activities the Matchmaker decides fall under this category. An individual job seeker could have multiple services under this target if the Matchmaker provided service on different job search help topics.

Number of Times Provided Guidance to Immigration Tools for Employers:

The total number of times a Matchmaker provided guidance to employers on immigration tools (e.g., entry streams, visa requirements, NOC codes, etc.). An individual employer could have multiple services under this target if the Matchmaker provided service on different immigration topics.

Number of Times Provided Employment-Related Help to Employers:

The total number of times a Matchmaker provided employers with assistance connecting to a candidate. This could include the Matchmaker responding to a job posting with a qualified client, answering employer inquiries about job needs, providing information on the labour market, or any other activities that the Matchmaker decides fall under this category. An individual employer could have multiple services under this target if the Matchmaker provided service on different employment-related help topics.



About Northern Policy Institute

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect evidence, and disseminate ideas. We seek to identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern Ontario communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay and Sudbury. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

Related Research

Come North Conference Report

Charles Cirtwill
Rachel Rizzuto
Hilary Hagar

Building a Home: Strengthening the Pathways for Newcomer Economic Integration

Rachel Rizzuto

Northern Attraction Series

Christina Zefi

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