



**WORLD SKILLS**  
EMPLOYMENT CENTRE D'EMPLOI  
COMPÉTENCES MONDIALES

CONNECTING IMMIGRANTS TO EMPLOYMENT



# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2024 - 2025

# Letter from the President and the Executive Director

The 2024–2025 year was one of steady progress and important transition for World Skills. More than 3,500 clients accessed our programs and services, and over 500 employer partners worked with us to hire job-ready talent across Ottawa. Since 1997, with the support of funders, employers, and community partners, we have served more than 45,000 newcomers.

This year also brought significant funding changes that required careful planning and adaptation. A 24% reduction from IRCC resulted in the conclusion of two long-standing programs, the Federal Internship for Newcomers (FIN) program and the Ottawa Newcomer Entrepreneur Hub (ONE Hub) on March 31, 2025. Both programs leave meaningful legacies, including new self-guided online resources on entrepreneurship and careers in the public service. Changes to the Workplace Language Training program have also taken effect and the program will continue to shift its focus over the next two years, including the phase-out of higher-level language courses.

At the same time, we saw growth in key areas. New and additional funding supported projects such as Expanding Refugee Claimants' Access to Employment Services, increased Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA) capacity, the expansion of the Health Employment Network led by CCI, and additional support through IBM. We also successfully completed the final year of the Inclusive and Equitable Workplace for Newcomers (IEWN) program, which was funded by Canadian Heritage. IEWN provided valuable insights into how employers can better support newcomer talent. The project concluded with tools and recommendations that will help organizations build more equitable workplaces and improve newcomer retention and success.

This was our first full year at our new location, which has allowed us to expand in-person programming and host more events with clients, employers, volunteers, and partners. The space has strengthened collaboration and created opportunities for more direct engagement.

Partnerships continue to be central to our work. We maintained strong relationships with RBC, TD, and Accenture, and saw continued positive outcomes through our corporate mentorship programs. Accenture also supported us through a pro-bono project to modernize our job board with AI-supported features, an important step as we explore how technology can enhance program design, staff development, and client outcomes.

## Letter from the President and the Executive Director (cont'd)

Staff learning and professional development remained priorities. This year World Skills proudly coordinated *Career Development Practice: Building a New Era*, a training delivered in partnership with the Canadian Career Development Foundation. Our team and colleagues from partner organizations participated in this training that helped strengthen sector expertise and reinforce our commitment to continuous learning.

Looking ahead, we have begun a strategic planning process that takes into account economic conditions, funding realities, and labour market trends. We are working to diversify funding sources, respond to Calls for Proposals, and explore fundraising opportunities. Throughout these changes, we have focused on minimizing the impact on staff and supporting internal mobility where possible.

We are grateful to our board of directors for their guidance, to our funders and program sponsors for their support, and to our employer and community partners for their collaboration. We extend our appreciation to our volunteers for their contributions and to our clients for their trust in us. They remind us daily of the talent and experience newcomers bring to our city.

To our staff, thank you for your commitment to our mission and for the work you do every day to support newcomers in building their careers in Canada. World Skills has grown for 28 years because of the people and organizations who believe in this mission and work together to advance it.

Thank you for your continued support.



**Mercy Lawluvi**

President of the Board



**Mengistab Tsegaye**  
Executive Director

# Président et du Directeur Général

L'année 2024–2025 a été marquée par une progression constante et une transition importante pour World Skills. Plus de 3 500 clients ont accédé à nos programmes et services, et plus de 500 employeurs partenaires ont collaboré avec nous pour recruter des talents prêts à l'emploi à travers Ottawa. Depuis 1997, grâce au soutien de nos bailleurs de fonds, employeurs et partenaires communautaires, nous avons accompagné plus de 45 000 nouveaux arrivants.

Cette année a également été marquée par d'importants changements de financement qui ont exigé une planification rigoureuse et une adaptation soutenue. Une réduction de 24 % du financement d'IRCC a entraîné la conclusion de deux programmes phares, soit le Programme de stages pour les nouveaux arrivants (FIN) et le Carrefour entrepreneurial des nouveaux arrivants d'Ottawa (ONE Hub), le 31 mars 2025. Ces programmes laissent un héritage significatif, notamment de nouvelles ressources en ligne en libre accès portant sur l'entrepreneuriat et les carrières dans la fonction publique. Des changements au programme de formation linguistique en milieu de travail ont également été mis en œuvre et celui-ci continuera d'adapter son orientation au cours des deux prochaines années, notamment par la suppression graduelle des cours de niveau avancé.

Parallèlement, nous avons connu une croissance dans des secteurs clés. De nouveaux investissements ont appuyé des projets tels qu'Accroître l'accès des demandeurs d'asile aux services d'emploi, le renforcement de la capacité du programme *SOPA* (Préadaptation en ligne pour les nouveaux arrivants), l'expansion du Réseau pour l'emploi en santé dirigé par le CCI, ainsi qu'un soutien accru d'IBM.

Nous avons également terminé avec succès la dernière année du programme *Milieus de travail inclusifs et équitables pour les nouveaux arrivants (IEWN)*, financé par Patrimoine canadien. Cette initiative a fourni des renseignements importants sur les façons dont les employeurs peuvent mieux soutenir les talents issus de l'immigration. Le projet s'est conclu par des outils et des recommandations qui aideront les organisations à créer des milieux de travail plus équitables et à améliorer la rétention et la réussite des nouveaux arrivants.

Il s'agissait aussi de notre première année complète dans nos nouveaux locaux, ce qui nous a permis d'élargir nos activités en personne et d'organiser davantage d'événements avec les clients, employeurs, bénévoles et partenaires. Cet espace a renforcé la collaboration et créé de nouvelles occasions d'engagement direct.



## Lettre du

# Président et du Directeur Général (suite)

Les partenariats demeurent au cœur de notre travail. Nous avons maintenu des relations solides avec RBC, TD et Accenture, et nous avons observé des résultats positifs continus grâce à nos programmes de mentorat en milieu corporatif. Accenture nous a également appuyés par un projet gratuit visant à moderniser notre tableau d’affichage d’emplois, désormais doté de fonctionnalités appuyées par l’IA — une étape importante alors que nous explorons les façons dont la technologie peut améliorer la conception des programmes, le développement du personnel et les résultats pour les clients.

L’apprentissage et le développement professionnel du personnel sont demeurés des priorités. Cette année, World Skills a coordonné avec fierté la formation *Pratique du développement de carrière : Bâtir une nouvelle ère*, offerte en partenariat avec la Fondation canadienne pour le développement de carrière. Notre équipe ainsi que des collègues d’organisations partenaires y ont participé, renforçant les compétences du secteur et notre engagement envers l’apprentissage continu.

En vue de l’avenir, nous avons amorcé un processus de planification stratégique qui tient compte des conditions économiques, des réalités de financement et des tendances du marché du travail. Nous travaillons à diversifier nos sources de financement, à répondre aux appels de propositions et à explorer des occasions de collecte de fonds. Tout au long de ces changements, nous avons veillé à réduire les répercussions sur le personnel et à favoriser la mobilité interne lorsque possible.

Nous remercions notre conseil d’administration pour son orientation, nos bailleurs de fonds et commanditaires de programmes pour leur appui, ainsi que nos employeurs et partenaires communautaires pour leur collaboration. Nous exprimons également notre gratitude à nos bénévoles pour leurs contributions et à nos clients pour leur confiance. Ils nous rappellent chaque jour les compétences et l’expérience que les nouveaux arrivants apportent à notre ville.

À notre personnel, merci pour votre engagement envers notre mission et pour votre travail quotidien au service des nouveaux arrivants qui bâtissent leur carrière au Canada. Depuis 28 ans, World Skills poursuit sa croissance grâce aux personnes et aux organisations qui croient en cette mission et qui travaillent ensemble pour la faire progresser.

Merci de votre soutien continu.



**Mercy Lawluvi**

Président



**Mengistab Tsegaye**

Directeur Général

# World Skills' Mission

To support the integration of newcomers into the Canadian labour market through:

Partnership  
Pre-employment Services  
Employer Engagement

## World Skills' Vision

An inclusive Canada that values the skills and talents of new Canadians





**WORLD SKILLS**  
EMPLOYMENT CENTRE D'EMPLOI  
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Connecting Immigrants to Employment

# OUR CORE VALUES



## **PARTNERSHIP**

Our national, regional and local partnerships frame our work and identity.



## **EMPOWERMENT**

We go beyond helping clients; we embrace capacity-building and continuous learning.



## **SERVICE EXCELLENCE**

We are committed to providing a high standard of service to our clients, employers, funders and community partners.



## **RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY**

We value the unique backgrounds, viewpoints, skills and talents of our clients, volunteers, staff and stakeholders.



## **ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY**

We believe everyone must take ownership of their actions and responsibilities.

# Partnership

## Creating Impact Together

### World Skills -RBC Newcomer Mentorship Program for Future Leaders

In its first year, the **Newcomer Mentorship for Future Leaders**, a partnership between **World Skills** and **RBC**, supported **newcomer professionals in banking and finance** in integrating into Canada's workforce. The program pairs mentees with RBC mentors, offering guidance on career pathways, workplace culture, networking, and professional development.

Participants strengthened resumes, interview skills, and professional profiles, while mentors helped align international experience with Canadian expectations. Several mentees secured roles, others advanced toward certifications, gaining confidence and clarity. Mentors describe the experience as deeply rewarding, connecting closely with mentees and contributing personally to their professional growth.



#### RBC Mentor Testimonial: Adham Mokhtar

"Five years ago, I was a newcomer to Canada—full of hope, ambition, and uncertainty. That experience is still fresh in my mind, and it fuels my passion for mentoring others walking a similar path. Restarting a career in a new country came with countless rejections, self-doubt, and questions about the future. At a time when I wished I had someone to guide me, I now strive to be that person for others.

Through the World Skills–RBC Newcomer Mentorship Program for Future Leaders, I had the privilege of working with incredible mentees with strong overseas experience and education. Our shared backgrounds created an instant connection and understanding of the unique challenges newcomers face. Together, we built tailored plans, refined resumes, practiced interview techniques, strengthened LinkedIn profiles, and explored certifications aligned with their goals. We also focused on what Canadian employers truly value.





**(cont'd)**

I'm proud to share that both of my mentees have now secured employment—and I might have been more excited than they were when I received the news! This journey has been deeply rewarding, reinforcing the value of giving back.

I look forward to continuing to support newcomers through RBC's partnership with World Skills and watching my mentees grow, thrive, and contribute to Canada's prosperity."

**Adham Mokhtar, Mentor**  
**RBC Newcomer Mentorship for Future Leaders**

## Accenture - World Skills Corporate Mentorship

"As the executive sponsor of the Accenture-World Skills partnership, I am immensely proud of the transformative impact we've achieved together over the past nine years. This collaboration has elevated our Corporate Mentorship program to unprecedented levels of influence and reach, creating meaningful opportunities for newcomers to thrive in the Canadian job market.

To date, we have supported more than 500 new Canadians through this program, equipping them with the skills, guidance, and confidence to secure meaningful employment. What's even more inspiring is the growing enthusiasm among Accenture employees to participate as mentors. Each year, we see increasing interest, and in our most recent cohort, we proudly engaged 50 mentors from across the country. This collective effort demonstrates the power of mentorship to foster inclusion and unlock potential on a national scale.

This past year, we further amplified our impact by conducting a pro bono project to build World Skills a new job board. This innovative platform will become a vital tool, connecting job seekers with opportunities and employers with diverse, skilled talent. It's a shining example of how technology and collaboration can drive systemic change.

This partnership reflects both Accenture and World Skills' unwavering commitment to innovation, inclusion, and making a difference in the communities we serve. Together with World Skills, we are not just transforming lives, we are setting a new benchmark for what corporate mentorship programs can achieve. I am excited to see how we will continue to grow and expand our impact in the years ahead."

**Mark Carmosino**  
**Executive Sponsor for Accenture-World Skills Partnership**



# Partnership

## Expanding Refugee Claimants' Access to Employment Services: A Collaborative Model

With the generous support of the Collective Impact Initiative for Refugee Claimants (CIIRC), World Skills Employment Centre, in partnership with Matthew House Ottawa, launched a pilot project aimed at supporting refugee claimants with employment services soon after their arrival in Canada. This project reimagines what access, dignity, and inclusion can look like for newcomers rebuilding their lives in Canada.

Instead of waiting for clients to come to us, we went to them, delivering the services directly to residents living in emergency and transitional housing. From the very beginning, the project was shaped by the voices of refugee claimants themselves. Through focus groups and open dialogue, residents shared their hopes, barriers, and dreams for the future. Their insights guided the creation of customized employment readiness workshops, offered in both English and French, that inspired confidence, connection, and the belief in a brighter future.

Beyond workshops, the partnership focused on building lasting capacity. World Skills trained Matthew House staff to provide one-on-one employment support, empowering them to continue guiding residents long after the project sessions ended. A new mapping of Ottawa's employment services now helps staff navigate the complex system and connect claimants to the right opportunities at the right time.

As the initiative expands to additional housing partners across Ottawa in its second year, it stands as a model of what true partnership can achieve: organizations coming together to remove barriers, restore hope, and walk alongside refugee claimants on their journey toward successful integration, stability, and belonging.



## We Served

**3559**

Newcomers



That's **14** clients every day!\*

**Bachelor**  
**34%**

**Master**  
**45%**

**Diploma**  
**8%**

**High School**  
**4%**

**PhD**  
**5%**

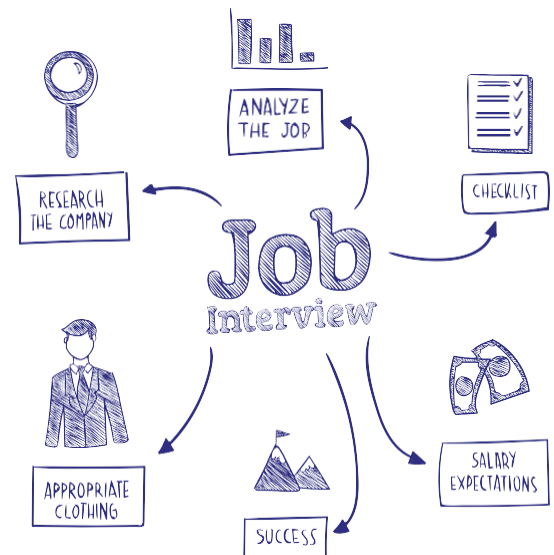
**Other**  
**4%**

## We Provided



**2988**

Employment counselling and coaching sessions



**16083**

Participants in

**1240**

workshops, events,  
and training sessions

## Our Volunteers

**3800**

Volunteer hours donated by

**140**

Professional coaches  
and volunteers



Clients served from

**114**

different countries



## Our Success

**1004**

Clients employed

**597**

Employers engaged in  
coaching, networking  
and hiring newcomer  
talent

Jobs





# Empowerment

## Vahid Jafarzadehdarzi's Story

### Turning Insight into Action

My journey in Canada began in 2011, when I arrived as an international student to pursue graduate studies in philosophy. Those years immersed in academia, exploring ideas, people, and the human condition, shaped how I see the world and the role we all play within it. After many years in Newfoundland, I moved to Ottawa and, in 2022, proudly became a permanent resident of Canada.



With that milestone came a new sense of purpose. I wanted to apply my knowledge in a more practical and people-focused way, so I returned to school at Algonquin College to study Human Resources Management. Earning my Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation was a major accomplishment, but finding meaningful employment in my new field proved challenging.

In July 2024, I connected with World Skills Employment Centre, and that experience changed everything. Through personalized workshops, resume support, and interview preparation, I learned how to translate my academic and international background into professional value. More importantly, World Skills helped me rebuild my confidence. Their encouragement and guidance reminded me that perseverance is part of growth, that I already had what it takes to succeed.

With this renewed confidence, I refined my approach, expanded my network, and in April of 2025 secured a role as an HR and Safety Administrator, a position I truly love.

World Skills helped turn my professional goals into reality, and I'm deeply grateful for their support.

# Empowerment

## Svitlana Haidaichuk's Story



Everything changed when we connected with World Skills Employment Centre. Their team became a steady source of guidance, encouragement, and practical support at every step of our integration journey. Through Workplace Language Training, Project Management, Business Analysis, and ultimately the ONE Hub Entrepreneurship program, World Skills helped us rebuild our confidence and understand how to transfer our skills into the Canadian context.

### **A Journey of Faith, Hard Work, and New Beginnings**

When my family and I arrived in Canada at the end of 2022, we were grateful to have found safety, but the reality of starting over was overwhelming. Despite our many years of professional experience, we suddenly found ourselves navigating a new language, a new culture, and a labour market we didn't yet understand. It felt as though we were beginning again from zero.





## Svitlana Haidaichuk's Story (cont'd)

The entrepreneurship training, in particular, gave us the tools to imagine a different future, and the knowledge to make it real. With World Skills' support, we learned how to register a business, develop a sustainable plan, understand local regulations, and communicate effectively with partners and investors.

Today, just a short time after arriving, we are proud co-owners of two growing businesses: [Svita Solutions](#), offering design-focused home preparation services, and [Fusion Greens](#), a modern hydroponic farm supplying fresh produce to local grocery stores with a production capacity of more than 5,000 units per month.



Our journey has been challenging, but World Skills empowered us to move forward with purpose, determination, and hope. Their belief in our potential helped us build not only successful businesses, but a new life in Canada. We are forever grateful to the World Skills team for the care, professionalism, and belief in us. They don't just help newcomers find jobs or opportunities, you help people rediscover themselves, rebuild hope, and create a new life.

# Empowerment

## Alejandro Santis's Story

World Skills has helped me see this new market through different lenses, to be open to new possibilities, to listen, and to observe more before acting. By attending the Career Access for Newcomers (CAN) workshops, I learned how to approach informational interviews more effectively and how to use them to really understand where my skills fit best.

At first, I was focused on finding a job in consulting or finance, but through these conversations, I realized that those roles would require a CPA designation, which I couldn't get right away. Instead of feeling limited, I decided to focus on positions where my strengths could be valued now. I began preparing for each conversation with a clear "ask," and that shift in approach opened new doors, including a part-time job with an MBA classmate that's helping me build Canadian experience.

Through this journey, what changed most was my mindset. Finding "a job right away" stopped being the only goal. I started valuing the process of building relationships, leaving a positive impression, and learning from every interaction. I've used many of the services at World Skills, and I still feel there's more to learn, from resume and interview preparation to networking strategies.

Most importantly, I've gained confidence and clarity. I'm not in a long-term role yet, but I'm now on the radar of the right people, surrounded by mentors and peers who know what I can do. I understand the job market puzzle better, and solving it is getting easier every day.

Thank you, World Skills, and the incredible community around it, for helping me grow not just as a professional, but as a person.





# Service Excellence

At World Skills, Service Excellence comes to life through the dedication of volunteers who generously share their time, experience, and compassion to uplift newcomers. Their commitment strengthens every program, from résumé support and interview coaching to language practice and mentorship, helping clients build confidence, refine their skills, and take meaningful steps toward their career goals. These volunteers not only guide job seekers; they learn from them, grow with them, and celebrate their successes as their own. The stories that follow highlight the impact of this shared journey and the essential role volunteers play in empowering newcomers to thrive.



Volunteer Appreciation Event – July, 2025

## Testimonials from our Volunteers

“Volunteering with the World Skills Employment Center has been a truly rewarding experience. In my role, I support clients with résumé writing, interview preparation, job search strategies, and how to present themselves effectively on LinkedIn and in professional settings. Drawing on my background in Human Resources, including senior roles in HR and Talent Acquisition, I am able to adapt my knowledge and experience to guide newcomers and job seekers in their career journey. This opportunity has not only reinforced my sense of purpose but also allowed me to grow while contributing to an organization that empowers people to build brighter futures.” - Batoul Hamzi

# Service Excellence

"I met a young woman when she participated in World Skill's program Interview Roulette. I stayed in touch with her and agreed to help her improve her answers to interview questions, sometimes on the day of her interview. She was relentless in applying for positions. She succeeded in getting a temporary position and so our connection ended. A year later she wrote to me to say she had been made permanent and thanked me profusely for my help. What a gift! But the gift was to me!" - Carly Hunt

"Volunteering for the Interview Roulette program for more than eight years has been one of the most rewarding contributions I have been fortunate to provide since I retired from conventional work. Helping candidates to formulate and practice interviewing skills has given me the chance to use my legal background and experience in a constructive way to make a positive contribution." - Mel Massey

"I enjoy working with newcomers to increase their chances of finding work that they want. It gives me a chance to apply my skills and learn about different countries and their people. To date, over two years, my work with World Skills and English Conversation Groups at the Ottawa Public Library has allowed me to meet people from more than half of the world's countries -- 105!" - Robert Alvo



"I have had the privilege of volunteering with World Skills' Interview Roulette, a service that provides newcomers and job seekers in Canada with practical coaching to strengthen their resumes, improve their interview performance, and build confidence in the job market. Through this program, I have met and guided talented individuals from diverse backgrounds and professions, helping them showcase their skills and adapt to Canadian hiring expectations. The initiative is an incredible opportunity for job seekers to gain real interview practice, sharpen their skills, and connect with volunteer coaches who bring industry expertise and a passion for supporting others. As an HR and Employment Coach, I am proud to contribute to such a meaningful program that not only empowers clients but also builds stronger communities." - Samer Kassas

"I was so happy to help newcomers with their CVs. One moment that stands out is when I worked with someone on her resume, and just a week later, she shared the wonderful news that she got her first interview. It's moments like these that make volunteering so special." - Hichem Djafar Dit Djaker



# Respect for Diversity

## Claudia Reyes's Story

When I joined the **Empowering Racialized Newcomer Women (ERNW)** program, I didn't know what to expect. What I found was an unexpected gift: an experience that gave me practical employment tools and renewed my sense of purpose and belonging.

Each workshop felt like placing something meaningful into a suitcase, not just job search skills, but also strength, hope, and clarity. I didn't just learn how to write resumes or prepare for interviews; I learned to believe in myself again. The job search sessions were especially impactful, teaching me how to adapt my resume to Canadian standards, highlight transferable skills, approach interviews with confidence, and use networking and LinkedIn effectively. I also learned how to present my professional story in a clear, compelling way. These lessons gave me the courage to pursue opportunities that once seemed out of reach.

Many of us carried heavy stories, unspoken worries, and invisible grief. This program created a safe environment to reflect, heal, and grow, gently addressing mental health while offering space to breathe and connect. Being surrounded by other newcomer women made me feel understood and supported.

Together, we built more than skills; we built resilience, sisterhood, and a renewed sense of possibility. If I could ask for one thing, it would be for more women to access this opportunity. Programs like ERNW are not simply helpful; they are life-changing. Migration is more than movement, it is carrying our home, our culture, and our strength with us. This program honoured that while also giving me new tools and the courage to rise with confidence in a new country.



# Accountability and Integrity

## Celebrating our Staff for their Years of Service

In 2025, World Skills proudly celebrates two dedicated team members marking five and fifteen years of service. These milestones reflect their exceptional commitment, talent, and passion for supporting newcomers on their employment journeys. Our staff are the driving force behind our mission, and their contributions strengthen our programs, our community, and the lives we touch every day. We honour their achievements with deep gratitude and appreciation for all they help make possible.



### **Ledianis Rivero Sosa – 15 Years**

Director of Client Service

“The year 2025 marks 15 years since I started working at World Skills. I first stepped as a volunteer in 2009, not knowing how profoundly this organization would shape my life in Canada. From a short-term contract to becoming Director of Client Service in 2020, every step has challenged me, supported me, and helped me grow.

As a newcomer without a family network in Canada, World Skills became a community that embraced me, believed in me, and allowed me to bring my whole self, my laughter, my sense of humour, my passion, to the work we do. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities, the trust, and the shared purpose. These 15 years have been an honour, and I hope my contributions reflect the immense impact World Skills has had on me.”

### **Matin Tamanna – 5 Years**

IT Specialist

“My journey with World Skills began as a client a year before I joined the team. From the start, I felt a deep connection to the organization’s mission and culture. When my employment counsellor sent me the job posting, I was instantly excited, it truly felt like the position was made for me.

What I enjoy most is the incredible work atmosphere, thanks to amazing colleagues and an extraordinary Manager who fosters collaboration, growth, and respect. The most challenging part came early, as I started one week before the COVID-19 quarantine and immediately supported staff in transitioning to hybrid work. I am proud to be part of an organization that helps newcomers build new lives and strengthens Ottawa’s workforce.”





# Accountability and Integrity

## Our Staff's Commitment to Professional Development and Growth

At World Skills, we strive for an environment where our team can pursue their personal and professional development goals. This year, five valued members of our staff received professional designations in Career Development and Project Management. Congratulations!



**Gemma Follini - CCDP**

Manager of Employer Engagement and Corporate Mentorships

"I recently earned the designation of **Certified Career Development Practitioner (CCDP)**, which has strengthened my commitment to ethical, client-centered practice and deepened my understanding of how to bridge aspirations with opportunity.

As the Manager of Employer Engagement and Corporate Mentorships at World Skills, I take pride in connecting talent with opportunities. I approach my work with curiosity, authenticity, and a deep respect for the diverse experiences newcomers bring to Canada. Whether supporting employers or mentoring clients, I aim to be a trusted connector who helps build inclusive workplaces where both people and organizations can thrive."

**David Northcott – CCDP**

Workshop Facilitator and Employment Specialist – CAN program

"I'm proud to support World Skills' mission by helping newcomers build confidence and succeed in their job search. Earning my **Certified Career Development Practitioner (CCDP)** designation and completing advanced Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training have strengthened my ability to create welcoming, inclusive spaces where every client feels valued.

I'm committed to integrity, reliability, and empowering clients with the knowledge and tools to achieve independence. Ongoing learning keeps me growing both personally and professionally, so I can continue contributing to our team's success and the meaningful impact we have on our community."





### Chris Song - PMP

Coordinator, Corporate Mentorships and ERNW Program

“Earning my **Project Management Professional (PMP®)** designation has been more than a professional milestone and it transformed how I support our clients. It taught me to see every project as a journey made up of small and purposeful steps, just like the paths our newcomer clients take as they rebuild their confidence and careers in Canada.

The tools and structure I gained through the PMP help me turn ideas into action and goals into results, but it's the determination behind each success that matters most. I often tell our clients: The you that knows you can is waiting for you at the finish line.”

### Fatima Saadeddine - PMP

Manager, Empowering Racialized Newcomer Women Program (ERNW)

“As Manager of the Empowering Racialized Newcomer Women (ERNW) program at World Skills, I am proud to lead an initiative that supports the holistic integration of racialized newcomer women into the Canadian workforce. Through personalized coaching, skill-building workshops, mentorship, peer networks, and direct employer engagement, the program addresses systemic barriers while building confidence, resilience, and career readiness.

Earning my **Project Management Professional (PMP®)** certification has strengthened my ability to lead complex projects with greater efficiency, accountability, and strategic focus. I am grateful to World Skills for supporting my professional growth and for the opportunity to drive equity, empowerment, and long-term success.”



### Wided El Fessi – PMP

Job Search Strategies Facilitator – SOPA Program

“In my role as a Pre-Arrival Employment Specialist, I am dedicated to empowering newcomers to arrive prepared and confident. Achieving my **Project Management Professional (PMP®)** certification in April 2024 has been instrumental in this mission. It has equipped me with robust frameworks to provide more structured and impactful guidance, helping clients make pivotal career decisions and develop personalized strategies for a seamless and successful transition.

I am deeply grateful to World Skills for fostering an environment where we can grow professionally to better serve our community, truly embodying our values of Accountability and Integrity.”



# Investing in our People: A Landmark Career Development Training



In November 2024, World Skills proudly coordinated *Career Development Practice: Building a New Era*, a transformative, 25-hour, four-day in-person training offered free through the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF). Designed to deepen understanding of the field and celebrate the meaningful impact of Career Development Practitioners (CDPs) and employment service professionals, the program introduced participants to reflective practice, human-centred approaches, trauma-informed and anti-oppressive principles, and the reimagined career development process.

Twenty-four employment service professionals participated, 18 from World Skills and 6 from three partner organizations, OCISO, CCI, and PQCHC, reflecting our ongoing commitment to collaboration, shared learning, and sector-wide capacity building.

The training was facilitated by two extraordinary leaders in the field of Career Development: Dave Redekopp, an award-winning expert with more than 30 years of experience advancing the career development practice across Canada, and Elayne Greeley, an innovative community educator and partnership broker known for integrating creativity, social justice, and system transformation into her work. Their passion, depth of knowledge, and engaging delivery style left a profound impact on participants.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Staff shared how the training reshaped their understanding of career development and reinvigorated their sense of purpose. The final demonstrations of learning, ranging from poems and collages to 3-D models, reflected both creativity and deep personal insight.

As one message of gratitude expressed, this experience highlighted “the potential of career development to do good in the world.” This milestone affirms World Skills’ dedication to learning, growth, and building a stronger ecosystem of support for newcomers.

# Audited Statement of Financial Position as at March 31, 2025

	2025	2024
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and equivalents (Note 2a)	\$ 531,982	\$ 576,358
Accounts receivable	9,793	18,031
HST recoverable	48,270	47,899
Project receivables	481,845	257,123
Prepaid expenses	<u>43,384</u>	<u>43,092</u>
	1,115,274	942,503
 <b>PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT (Notes 2b and 3)</b>	 <u>44,742</u>	 <u>41,887</u>
 <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	 <b><u>\$ 1,160,016</u></b>	 <b><u>\$ 984,390</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 226,013	\$ 131,027
Deferred revenue (Note 4)	<u>213,974</u>	<u>145,578</u>
	439,987	276,605
 <b>LONG-TERM LIABILITIES</b>		
Deferred capital contributions (Note 5)	<u>44,742</u>	<u>41,887</u>
 <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	 <u>484,729</u>	 <u>318,492</u>
 <b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Internally-restricted for infrastructure	52,500	52,500
Internally-restricted for program development	19,500	19,500
Invested in property and equipment	0	0
Unrestricted	<u>603,287</u>	<u>593,898</u>
	675,287	665,898
 <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	 <b><u>\$ 1,160,016</u></b>	 <b><u>\$ 984,390</u></b>

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

Director 

Director 



# Audited Statement of Revenue and Expenditures for the year ended March 31, 2025

	2025	2024
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada (Job Search Workshop, English Language, Training, Labour Market, FIN, ENRICH)	\$ 4,612,817	\$ 4,841,398
Ottawa Community Loan Fund (OCLF)	299,054	262,740
ISANS/CCI (Settlement On-Line Pre-Arrival & Health Care Language Program)	464,077	371,190
United Way Projects	68,796	101,116
Catholic Immigration Centre (Career Transition for Internationally Trained Doctors)	159,941	150,851
Canadian Heritage (IEWN)	217,736	28,617
Donations	17,730	25,018
Fundraising	0	45,162
Other grants	70,241	42,101
Fees for service	0	5,334
Other revenue	23,254	23,469
Amortization of deferred revenue related to property and equipment	26,472	32,526
	<u>5,960,118</u>	<u>5,929,522</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada (Job Search Workshop, English Language, Training, Labour Market, FIN and ENRICH)	4,612,817	4,841,398
Ottawa Community Loan Fund (OCLF)	299,054	262,740
ISANS/CCI (Settlement On-Line Pre-Arrival & Health Care Language Program)	464,077	371,190
United Way Projects	68,796	101,116
Catholic Immigration Centre (Career Transition for Internationally Trained Doctors)	159,941	150,851
Canadian Heritage (IEWN)	217,736	28,617
Other expenses	101,836	131,351
Amortization	26,472	32,837
	<u>5,950,729</u>	<u>5,920,100</u>
<b>NET REVENUE FOR THE YEAR</b>	<u>\$ 9,389</u>	<u>\$ 9,422</u>

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## Board of Directors

Mercy Lawluvi, President  
Carl Nicholson, Treasurer  
Sarah Caspi, Secretary  
Queenie Huynh, Vice President  
Mary Roman, Vice President  
Myriam Mekni, Vice President  
Fred Awada, Vice President  
Abdirazak Karod, Vice President  
Kenny Leon, Vice President

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## Founding Members

- Catholic Centre for Immigrants (CCI)
- Immigrant Women Services Ottawa (IWSO)
- Jewish Family Services (JFS)
- Lebanese and Arab Social Services Agency (LASSA)
- Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre (OCCSC)
- Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO)
- Somali Centre for Family Services (SCFS)



## World Skills' Staff

Amir	Elazhary	Language Instructor
Andreea	Glavan	Program Manager
Andy	Rapoch	Employer Engagement Coordinator
Anupama	Potdar	Recruitment Specialist
Asma	Skalli	Intake, Assessment and Referral Counsellor
Barbara	Hogan	Program Manager
Btissam	Toubane	Skilled Trades Sector Specialist
Charity	Chavez	Finance Manager
Chris	Song	Mentorship Coordinator
Christian	Portilla	Learning and Engagement Specialist
Darine	Fakher Al Dine	Employment Specialist, Project Lead
Darshana	Tripathi	Sector Specific Employment Specialist
David	Northcott	Employment Specialist



## World Skills' Staff (cont'd)

Dragana	Mrdjenovic	Employment Specialist
Elmira	Alim	Employer Engagement Coordinator
Erin	Reitknecht	Recruitment Specialist
Fathy	Ibrahim	Recruitment Specialist
Fatima	Saadeddine	Manager, ERNW
Fouzia	Regoug	Employment Specialist
Gemma	Follini	Manager, Employer Engagement
Ilham	Douch	Program Support and Reporting Assistant
Ines Adriana	Rojas Rios	Program Support and Reporting Assistant
Jack	Dejong	Employment Specialist
Jeanne d'Arc	Mukangarambe	Intake, Assessment and Referral Counsellor
Jocelyn	Eissa	Bookkeeper
Keedean	Jermalili	Intake, Assessment and Referral Counsellor
Laurence	Mugabekazi	Bilingual Receptionist/Administrative Assistant
Ledianis	Rivero Sosa	Director, Client Service
Matin	Tamanna	IT Support Specialist
Mayrell	Marin Grandal	Program Support and Reporting Assistant
Mejdi	Alkhushi	Employment Readiness Facilitator
Melissa	McGuirk McNeil	Manager
Mengistab	Tsegaye	Executive Director
Micah Rachel	John	Manager, HR and Volunteer Services
Nadine	Kamhieh	Intake Counsellor/Facilitator
Nasreen	Nuradin	Employment Specialist
Niveditha	Balabommala	Recruitment Specialist
Olive	Tatio Sah	Program Support and Reporting Assistant
Pantea	Kabiri	Program and Client Support
Peggy	Kelly	Manager, WLT
Rachid	Nifa	Employment Specialist
Raghad	Al-Salim	Employment Specialist
Rana	Ghandour	Employment Specialist
Romarc	Souop Kengne	Intake, Assessment and Referral Counsellor
Rosa Maria	Taboada	Intake Counsellor/Facilitator
Sara	Tavasoli	Employment Specialist
Sarwat	Hammoud	Employment Specialist
Shyrose	Goodwin	Recruitment Specialist
Tanjeeba	Chowdhury	Employer Engagement and Recruitment Specialist
Theodros	Azbaha Haile	Employer Engagement Specialist
Tricia	Cleland Silva	Employment Specialist
Vanessa	Doan	Employment and Recruitment Specialist
Wided	El Fessi	Employment Specialist

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# Key Community Partners and Supporters

Accenture  
Assent  
Care Centre  
Carleton University  
Centretown Community Health Center  
CÉSOC  
Chartered Professional Accountants (CPA) of Ontario  
City of Ottawa  
Economic and Social Council of Ottawa - Carleton  
Hire Immigrants Ottawa (HIO)  
IBM Canada  
ICTC  
Invest Ottawa  
Keynote Group  
La Cité  
Matthew House  
Ontario College of Pharmacists  
Ontario College of Teachers

Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE)  
Ottawa Board of Trade  
Ottawa Carleton District School Board  
Ottawa Community Loan Fund  
Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership  
Ottawa Public Library  
Pinecrest Queensway Community Health Centre  
Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO)  
Recruiting in Motion  
Refugee 613  
Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)  
TD Bank  
The Ottawa Foodbank  
United Way East Ontario  
University of Ottawa  
YMCA/YWCA

**Thank you for your support and generosity.  
It makes a world of difference!**





Annual Job Fair – October 22, 2025



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## Funders



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada



Employment and  
Social Development Canada

Emploi et  
Développement social Canada



**Centraide  
United Way**

Est de l'Ontario  
East Ontario

## Project Sponsors



**RBC  
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**Thank you for enabling us to  
connect immigrants to employment.**



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