



Prince Edward Island Faces a Paradox

Participants identified three key areas for improvement:

1. Expand Credential Recognition Pathways
Advance bridging and micro-credentials, develop a partnership leadership program to improve internationally trained professionals
2. Strengthen Fair, Transparent Hiring Practices
Support public sector leadership, develop tools, and expand mentorship and social capital employment moves in small jurisdictions
3. Strengthen Collaboration, Communication, and Navigation
Establish a Cross-Sector Navigation Hub and explore digital enhancements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Partners

BIPOC Business & Professional Network, PEI Workforce Development Alliance, Provincial Immigrant, Refugee & Settlement Services Association (IRSNA), PEI and PEI Community

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Government of Prince Edward Island's Gender Equity (GEDI) Fund; Foundation for Black Communities; and Relations Foundation



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Needs Assessment Highlights

The 2025 BIPOC Economic Integration Needs Assessment identified barriers affecting the economic integration of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) in Prince Edward Island. Key themes include:

System-level Barriers

- Persistent challenges including financial barriers, unexpected expenses, and non-linear pathways to employment
- Limited transparency and consistency in hiring processes
- Underemployment of internationally trained professionals
- Fragmented service navigation and referral pathways

Ecosystem Gaps

- Communication gaps among community organizations and individuals seeking services
- Service duplication in some areas and service gaps in others
- Limited employer awareness of BIPOC workforce and individual barriers

At the same time, the assessment identified notable strengths:

- Committed community organizations
- Engaged employers and sector associations
- Post-secondary institutions with bridging capacity
- Growing policy interest in workforce development

These findings informed the project's three interconnected focus areas. The assessment highlighted the need for stronger collaboration across existing efforts.

Workshop Participation Overview

IPOC PN convened a multi-stakeholder workshop to translate Needs Assessment findings into coordinated action. Participants included representatives from government, community organizations, economic and career development organizations, and IPOC community members.

Workshop focused on validating the initial Needs Assessment findings, prioritizing recommendations, and assessing system readiness. Workshop translated those priorities into action items, defined roles and responsibilities.

Participants affirmed that economic organizations are advancing important work, stronger coordination and collaboration is needed to strengthen collective impact.

Coordinated Approach to Economic Inclusion

The priorities identified were cross-cutting and interconnected, requiring a coordinated approach across relevant institutional, employment, and policy domains. No single organization has the authority or capacity to address all of these independently.

Partners are already advancing important initiatives. PNBO can create a shared mechanism to integrate efforts, reduce duplication, identify opportunities for collaboration.

Given its mandate and cross-community focus, PNBO is well-positioned to convene conversations that center on the People's Economic Council of India and its economic inclusion initiatives. PNBO's role is to coordinate and facilitate on specific communities or sectors. IPOC will provide a platform for these perspectives and evaluate economic integration priorities.

The principles of Collective Impact include shared direction, mutually reinforcing actions, and ongoing communication. However, not all are equally critical. BIP is a volunteer-led organization with a fully resourced backbone organization.

In the short term, coordination may take approach, including:

- Board-level stewardship of priority areas
- Periodic cross-sector convenings
- Shared progress check-ins
- Targeted working groups aligned with specific priorities

As the work evolves, we may explore the use of dedicated resources to support a coordination function. Any expansion of efforts will be based on need and partner commitment.

Year 1 (Mobilization & Alignment)

focuses on strengthening foundations and establishing shared foundations.

Year 2 (Implementation)

focuses on launching targeted pilot efforts aligned with the priority areas.

Year 3 (Strengthening & Expansion)

focuses on forming successful initiatives, strengthening and expanding aligned efforts where capacity allows.

36 MONTH ACTION

PRIORITY FOCUS 1:

Expand Credential Recognition

Scope

This priority focuses primarily on internationally trained newcomers navigating credential recognition as this is cutting workforce barriers and increasing workforce

36 - Month Outcome

By 2029, PEI will have cleared and more coordinated pathways for internationally trained professionals to enter the workforce, expanded opportunities for bridging and retraining

Year 1: Mobilize & Align (Months 1–12)

Focus: Clarify gaps, align existing resources, establish

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1–Q2	Confirm Provincial Immigration Panel (PIP) as the lead for this	PIP (lead), B... (participant), ... PEI, regulatory secondary inst... Immigrant Ser... Association of (ISANS)	Coordination s... confirmed
Q2–Q3	Conduct a jurisdictional scan of credential recognition, bridging, micro-credentialing	PIP, post-secondary institutions, contracted support (funded),	Scan summary co... viable occupational identified
Q3–Q4	Identify 1–2 occupational pathways for advancement (including potential health pathways)	PIP, regulatory Holland College, Île, MUN Faculty of Medicine - PEI leadership, I	Priority occupational identified
Q3–Q4	Develop a feasibility study for the selected occupational pathway (including awareness building with employers, bridging, micro-credentialing)	PIP, institutional ISANS	Concept brief... and shared

Year 2: Implement & Strengthen (Months 13–24)

Focus: Advance pilot, institutionalize on all day care, get earned trust

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestones
Q1–Q2	Secure commitment or expand self-employment occupation pathway	Government fund secondary institution regulators	Formal commitment funding pathway
Q2–Q4	Launch pilot or expansion of business micro-credential	Lead implementation institution	Pilot initiated formally approved

Year 3: Strengthen & Expand (Months 25–36)

Focus: Refine pilot initiative, and expand the established initiative

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1–Q3	Expand or refine occupation pathway on pilot lead	Lead institution PIP	Adjusted program expanded into
Ongoing	Engage academic institution level credential recognition dialogue (where applicable)	UPEI, Holland College, Faculty of Medicine, Campus, PIP, Co-Operative Government	Formal engagement pathway established
Ongoing	Share progress with cross-sector partners	PIP, BIPOC Business	Annual progress shared

Considerations

- Credential recognition pathways vary significantly across professions and regulatory bodies.
- Bridging programs, micro credentials, and competency-based assessments may offer alternative routes to workforce integration.
- Health professions, including opportunities linked to the new Maritime Faculty of Medicine in PEI Campus, present both complexity and strategic opportunity.
- Sustainable funding and regulatory alignment will be required to advance implementation.

What this builds on

- Provincial Immigration Partnership (PIP) coordination structure
- Existing nurse bridging programs and health sector efforts
- Post-secondary institutional capacity in PEI, including College of Applied Arts and Technology
- Regulatory engagement already underway
- Economic Integration Needs Assessment findings and prioritization work undertaken during the engagement workshops

Advancing credential recognition pathways will require coordination across immigration, workforce development, regulatory bodies, and post-secondary institutions, recognizing the distinct roles and mandates of each

Strengthen Fair, Transparent, and Relationship-based Hiring Pathways

6-month outcome

Partnerships in the private sector will be strengthened to increase the use of fair, transparent, and relationship-based hiring practices and opportunities for women and people with disabilities.

Year 1: Mobilize and align 1-12 months. Focus on establishing partnerships across the public sector and private businesses.

TREATMENT OF EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS			
Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
	Identify and coordinate with private sector organizations in the area.	Provincial government, Provincial Public Service, Provincial Public Employees' Association.	Establish or initiate coordination structure to coordinate.
	Conduct a pilot project to test the effectiveness of the proposed hiring process.	Provincial government, Provincial Public Service, Provincial Public Employees' Association.	Government of Ontario.
	Identify internal recruitment opportunities related to recruitment processes and promotion practices and initiatives.	Provincial government, Provincial Public Service, Provincial Public Employees' Association.	Recruitment and promotion initiatives.

	Identify a coordinator or co-leads for area	Government HR chamber of commerce organizations, associations, Doors PEI: Hire Success project	Lead organizational coordination confirmed
	Review existing Toolkit and pilot resources to identify specific to small business	Government HR Chambers, sector associations	Gap analysis completed
	Consult with small business owners to understand practical hiring needs	Chambers, small business association	Consultation session completed
	Develop simplified Small Business Hiring Guide (adapted from existing toolkit)	Employer advisors	Guide drafted, businesses identified

	Identify a coordinator or co-leads for area	Employer Orgs (BIPOC BPN, sector)	Lead organizational coordination confirmed
	Design mentors connection-based workforce integration linking employers with BIPOC professionals	Employers, BIP sector partners	Pilot model developed
	Recruit employer champions and partners for the mentorship program	Employer network partners	Mentor-mentee identified

Business moves at the speed of thought, and that's why a Mentorship, sponsorship, and a small group of advisors are so important. While changing the way hiring is done is a core component of economic integration, short term is a core component of economic integration.

Year 2: Implement & Pilot (Months 13–24)

Focus: Pilot practical pathways and generate early learning.

STREAM 1: PUBLIC SECTOR LEADERSHIP

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1 - Q4	Advance one or more internal review initiatives, participating departments	PSC, government	Pilot reform of review process

STREAM 2: SMALL BUSINESS PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1 - Q4	Identify a coordinator or co-leads for area	Government HR Chamber, sector association	Lead organization's coordination confirmed

STREAM 3: RELATIONSHIP & SOCIAL CAPITAL

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1 - Q4	Share learning broader adopt successful practices departments	PSC, government	Government-wide summary shared

Year 3: Strengthen & Expand (Months 25 - 26)
 Focus: Refine successful pilot work and expand dayesquidabbIPO communities across sectors.

STREAM 1: PUBLIC SECTOR LEADERSHIP

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1 - Q4	Share learning broader adopt successful prac departments	PSC, government	Government-wide summary share

STREAM 2: SMALL BUSINESS PRACTICAL SUP

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1 - Q4	Refine and exp hiring guide an supports based learning	Chamber, sec association	Expanded employ

STREAM 3: RELATIONSHIP & SOCIAL CAPITAL

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1 - Q4	Expand mentors relationship-workforce initi on pilot lea	Employer Orgs (BIPOC BPN, sect	Expanded parti

Important Context Considerations

- The provincial government has a significant province-wide influence.
- Many PEI businesses are small and family-owned.
- Hiring practices in small businesses can be more flexible.
- Indigenous workforce participation is a priority for many employers.
- Immigrant workforce integration is a key challenge, particularly with professional licensing barriers.

What This Builds On

- Existing PEI HR Toolkit
- Public Service Commission policy frameworks
- Employer networks and Chambers of Commerce
- Lived experience insights from BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities

PRIORITY FOCUS 3:

Strengthen Coordination, Communication & System Navigation

36-Month Outcome

By 2029, PEI will have a more coordinated ecosystem. This is supported by improved communication and an enhanced digital accessibility platform.

Year 1: Mobilize & Align (Months 1–12)

Focus: Establish coordination as needed to clarify roles, responsibilities and partner organizations.

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestones
Q1–Q2	Explore collaboration opportunities via informal and formal Cross-Sector Networks, including the lead organization	BIPOC BPN (convener), PEI (United Way), community partners	Quarterly coordination meetings established
Q2–Q3	Conduct service mapping and identify duplication and referral gaps	Navigation Partners	Shared service mapping completed
Q3–Q4	Develop shared protocol and waitlist management guidelines	Navigation Table	Referral framework developed
Q3–Q4	Assess the feasibility of digital enhancement aligned with existing platform (not a new system)	211 PEI, tech partners	Feasibility brief developed

Year 2: Implement & Pilot (Months 13–24)

Focus: Pilot integration and structured improvement

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestone
Q1–Q2	Pilot coordination protocol across organizations	Navigation Table	Pilot initiated
Q1–Q3	Implement agreed digital enhancement partnership with feasible and effective	211 PEI, partner	Digital enhancement launched or in progress
Q2–Q4	Develop shared coordination, sharing and referral practices (light touch)	Navigation Table	Quarterly coordination summaries produced

Year 3: Strengthen & Expand (Months 25 - 36)

Focus: Strengthen referral and navigation practices across partner organizations and share with the broader community.

Timeline	Action	Key Partners	Milestones
Q1-Q3	Expand coordination practices across partner organizations	Navigation Table	Expanded partner participation
Q2-Q4	Host a public community learning session on navigation improvement	BIPOC BPN, partner organizations	Community information session held

Important Context Considerations

- 21PEI, administered by United Way, provides board training services.
- The goal is not to create a separate health system but to enhance existing services.
- Service duplication and community information gaps were identified in the Economic Integration Needs Assessment.
- Digital tools must be feasible, usable, and effective.

What This Builds On

- 21PEI infrastructure and United Way administration
- Existing navigation networks (e.g., RSA, community navigation)
- Workshop ecosystem mapping
- Collective Impact communication commitments

COORDINATING THE ACTION PLAN

The principles of the framework guide this strategy framework designed to support coordinated action across complex social archa lelceonrgoensic

In practical terms, Collective Impact mea

- Agreeing on shared priorities
- Aligning existing effortorkather than duplicati
- Tracking progress in simple, transparent ways
- Meeting regularly to learn and adjust
- Identifying a coordinating body to steward the

In the context of PEI, tohcial arpeparloiatcile neu ss in z reufdlieng of the ecosystem, existing and tohg ersi zanti onre at workspaci

This Action Plan appliesbrebeyear principles aveowal to mobilize partners, teshgthentapproachesheshand demonstrate early success.

Collective Impact in Pra

1 Shared Direction

Partners align around three priority focus are

- Credential recognition (immigrant-focused)
- Hiring practices and relationship-based inte
- Navigation and coordination

Each priority includes phaaedraactleandsthaad ide supporting partners.

2 Shared Progress Tracking

Partners will identify a set of milestones for each priority area. These milestones such as:

- Working groups established
- Pilots launched
- Employer participation levels
- Referral coordination improvements
- Public sector engagement milestones

At the same time, this coalition will also coordinate for its own outcomes for Black, Indigenous

Where publicly available, the coalition will track over time, including:

- Employment and unemployment rates by attainment, and racial identity (Statistics Canada)
- Median employment income by immigrant status, attainment, and racial identity
- Overqualification rates among new immigrants
- Retention rates of new immigrant workers
- Representation within employment (where available)

These broader indicators serve to track the coalition's progress towards its goals. While the coalition is tracking these measures, it is also important to track whether progress is occurring at the population

In addition, qualitative feedback from participants, and employer interviews will inform the coalition's strategy.

3 Ongoing Communication

Structured communication is essential for alignment and trust-building. This may include:

- Quarterly partner check-ins
- Annual public progress updates
- Cross-sector learning sessions

Communication is intended to be a shared responsibility. It is strongly suggested that implementation sessions be held in a way that minimizes the additional reporting burden.

4 Backbone Coordination

BIPOC BPN is well-positioned to serve as the convenor strategy, given its cross-community and advocacy focus on economic inclusion for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous peoples in Prince Edward Island.

BIPOC BPN is a volunteer-led network that adds value in terms of time and funding to serve as a regional coordination hub. The objective of this Action Plan is to support the coordination and implementation of this volunteer structure.

In the near term, coordination may include:

- Board-level stewardship of priority areas
- Facilitating cross-sector convenings and conversations
- Maintaining shared documentation and data systems
- Supporting communication and coordination between partners

As the work evolves, partners may identify opportunities for shared coordination responsibilities, coordinate the use of organizational resources to strengthen collaboration, and clarify the implementation of the action plan. It is the responsibility of partner organizations to clarify their respective mandates, authority, and capacity.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND GAPS

This Action Plan is a starting point, developed in partnership with provincial Needs Assessment, and multi-stakeholder consultation. It is realistic. The following components are intended to interpret the direction of the strategy.

Evidence and Data Gaps

PEI's small population size represents unique data challenges.

- Quantitative data on Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities in PEI is limited.
- National datasets (e.g., Statistics Canada) may not provide timely provincial-level insights.

As a result, the strategy is based on data with insights from limited experience. Ongoing data refinement will be needed to strengthen the evidence base over time.

Participation and Commitment

This Action Plan reflects partnership with various stakeholders:

- Not all organizations have formally committed to the implementation at this stage.
- Several proposals require additional dialogue, and confirmation of resources.
- Some actions depend on future provincial processes.

The Action Plan is a ready-to-implement framework. Continued partner engagement will be required to implement and realize the strategy.

Structural and Capacity

Successful implementation will require:

- Dedicated coordination
- Sustainable funding for pilot initiatives
- Data-sharing agreements
- Institutional and regulatory cooperation

BIPOC PN represents a volunteer-led organization and does not have a dedicated backbone funding. Any expansion capacity will require additional resourcing.

Social Climate Considerations

Workshop discussions highlighted the need to address the social climate and experiences of racism within the province.

At the same time:

- Immigration is addressing PEI's labour market challenges.
- Health care, education, and other services face shortages.
- Internationally trained professionals can contribute, yet often face barriers to alignment.

This acknowledges that action cannot occur in a social vacuum. Addressing these issues will help to strengthen social cohesion and public understanding.

Enabling Conditions and

Despite the challenges identified, a few positive trends are visible:

- Cross-sector partnerships expanding the network of enablers
- Recognition that economic exclusion has real human and social impacts
- Existing infrastructure, including the PEI Toolkit, and the Provincial Immigration Partnership
- Public sector leadership
- Community organizations already advancing inclusion

There is momentum to act collaboratively.

Participants' Voices

The following reflections were shared by participants in the 2025 Needs and Aspirations consultations. These voices reflect both shared concerns and the many faces of the challenges we face as we build a future here.

"I am unsure because the work isn't safe. I'm landing with no opportunities are very few and far between. We're not compared to other provinces. It's not the perfect place to do it."

"For convenience' sake I'm staying in my hometown. I'm around but unless employment situation changes... we might be forced to leave. And, I have a child who needs to grow up in a safe space."

"It all depends on how opportunities flow in my career." "We plan to raise our kids on the Island."

"I want to stay here a long time after my school to work and live because the people here are very willing to help and learn." "Let's make sure everyone who comes to PEI home can build a future here."

Thank you. Welcoming. Merci. Salamats. . C m n. Gracias

IMMEDIATE NEXT

Phase 1

Alignment and Foundation

Implementation of this Action Plan will focus on confirming commitments, establishing coordination, and identifying initial priorities. This initial period is about laying the foundation for implementation.

During this phase, partners will develop a shared understanding of the partnership, and identify initial priorities for action.

Within the First 6 Months:

1. Confirm Participation and Leads

- Confirm lead partner(s) for each priority stream
- Identify organizational responsibilities for coordination
- Clarify which actions partners are prepared to take

2. Establish Cross-Sector Navigation Table

- Confirm membership and meeting cadence (e.g., monthly)
- Define scope and relationships with the Provincial Immigration Partnership
- Agree on immediate coordination priorities

3. Clarify the Scope of Priority Streams

- Credential Recognition: Confirm recognition of credentials and identify initial occupation focus
- Hiring Practices: Confirm hiring practices for business, and mentorship streams
- Navigation & Coordination: Confirm initial navigation and coordination efforts aligned with 211 PEI

4. Identify Resource Requirements

- Outline funding needs for coordination and pilot
- Identify potential funding pathways
- Clarify what actions can be completed within existing

5. Establish Shared Progress Indicators

- Identify 3–5 coordination-related indicators to track
- Confirm update cadence and communication format

BIPOC BPN will share progress with participating community organizations during implementation planning for Years 2 and 3.



JOIN THE WORK

This Action Plan is grounded in shared recognition of the importance of economic inclusion and workforce inclusion as a collective responsibility.

The challenges identified in the BIPOC BPN Needs Assessment are significant. In many cases, employers and service providers across Prince Edward Island have revealed that people are not truly working forward together.

Implementation requires participation across sectors and organization brings different authority, resources

BIPOC BPN invites you to:

- Confirm participation in one or more priority sectors
- Identify a representative from each sector to coordinate
- Share existing initiatives that align with this plan
- Explore opportunities to lead or support specific projects
- Contribute expertise, networks or skills to support

Participation can take many forms. Involving a pilot group of others, it may involve hosting a town hall, co-developing programs, aligning existing programs, instituting a shared influence to advance a shared goal.

The Action Plan intends to evolve and deepen, resources are secured, and shape. Continued engagement will strengthen collective progress.

BIPOC BPN will follow up with participants and support coordination across the priority areas.

Appendix A :Project Overview

Workshop Title :B POC BPN Economic Integration Action Plan

Dates :Day 1 -February 4 ,2026 & Day 2 -February 18 ,2026 .

Location :Rotary Auditorium ,Charlottetown Library,PEI.

Participants:Approximately 40 participants per day,cutting across business development,career development,economic development,municipal government,provincial government,post-secondary education,B POC community,settlement,social action / justice .

Project Phases (Literature Review → Needs Assessment → Action Planning)

According to the B POC Economic Integration Needs Assessment report, recent literature (2020 onward) was reviewed to understand key labour market trends in PEI and Atlantic Canada, with attention to economic integration , entrepreneurship ,and sector-specific workforce needs. The materials were analyzed for recurring themes,evidence gaps,and insights relevant to the project focus. The review also highlighted gaps in available research ,particularly related to Indigenous workforce pathways and new com er credential recognition .

Building on the literature review ,a comprehensive Needs Assessment was conducted in 2025 to ground the initiative in PEI-specific evidence. The assessment synthesized secondary quantitative data (Statistics Canada labour market data ,in migration trends,workforce participation data) and gathered primary qualitative data from B POC communities (ImmigrantNew com er and Indigenous participants) through pilot interviews ,focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews .

The Action Planning phase translated Needs Assessment findings and recommendations into structured ,multi-stakeholder commitments. Two in-person workshops were convened in February 2026 at the Rotary Auditorium ,Charlottetown Library,bringing together approximately 40 participants in each session .These workshops were designed to validate findings,prioritize interventions,and co-design an Economic Integration Action Plan .This phase culminated in the development of a 36-month Action Plan (2026–2029), structured around phased sequencing :

Year 1: Mobilization and Alignment (Clarify gaps, align existing structures, and advance feasible occupation-specific pathways.)

Year 2: Implementation and Strengthening (Advance pilot, institutional uptake, and structured policy engagement.)

Year 3: Strengthen and Expand (Refine pilot initiatives, expand viable pathways, and strengthen institutional alignment.)

Workshop Design

The two full-day workshops were intentionally structured to move from validation and prioritization to solution design and accountability.

Day 1 Morning: Opening; context/Needs Assessment presentations (changing population and workforce, labour market snapshot, business & entrepreneurship ecosystem, barriers & challenges to economic participation and existing enablers)

Day 1 Afternoon: Breakout groups and priority setting (review of the Needs Assessment recommendation); Democracy exercise to streamline priorities; environmental scan and SWOT analysis exercise; problem mapping (root causes); asset mapping; and narrowing key priorities to 3 ahead of workshop #2

Day 2 Morning: Synthesis of Day 1 leading in to the objectives of Day 2; building on the input and insights from Workshop #1; advancing three priority areas for the work moving forward:

- Improving credential recognition processes
- Increasing fair and transparent hiring practices
- Strengthening collaboration, communication, and system navigation

Day 2 Afternoon: Action planning sessions; brainstorming solutions; developing draft action plans for each priority area; exploring elements of the Collective Impact Framework, with a focus on:

- Shared Measurement: how we will know whether this work is making a difference
- Continuous Communication: how partners can stay aligned and accountable to the community over time

Day 2 ended with a Commitment Activity, inviting all participants to identify concrete actions that they or their organizations can take to support this work.

Data Sources

The initiative drew on multiple data sources to ensure rigour, contextual relevance, and credibility, including data sources from the needs assessment:

- Statistics Canada population and labour force data (2021 Census; 2024–2025 updates)
- Atlantic Provinces Economic Council
- Atlantic Economic Council
- Black Business Initiative
- Government of Canada
- Entrepreneur
- Futurepreneur
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
- Black Entrepreneurship Program
- PEI Connectors
- PEI Statistics Bureau, Department of Finance, Economics, Statistics and Federal Fiscal Relations
- Smith, S. (2021). BPOC entrepreneurs tackle systemic barriers in Atlantic Canada
- The Conference Board of Canada
- The Tribe Network
- Uhooweg

Data sources for the workshop /Action Plan

- 2025 BPOC Economic Integration Needs Assessment findings
- Workshop participant input (breakout notes, prioritization matrices, SWOT analyses)
- Stakeholder insights from employers, regulators, immigrant-serving agencies, Indigenous representatives, and community leaders present
- Navigation and service coordination frameworks

How priorities were selected

The selection of priorities followed a structured and transparent methodology grounded in evidence and stakeholder consensus. Using breakout discussions and dotmocracy exercises, participants assessed barriers against criteria, including:

- Magnitude of impact
- Alignment with provincial economic priorities
- Potential for cross-sector collaboration and readiness of partners to engage
- Using the SWOT analysis to guide the proposed intervention

Appendix B : B I P O C Economic Integration Needs Assessment Summary

1.0 Key Barrier Themes

Changing demographics and labour-market context, PEI's population growth is being driven largely by immigration, with members of racialized groups representing a rapidly increasing share of the population.

Immigrants and Indigenous peoples contribute significantly to the labour force and to entrepreneurship, particularly in sectors facing persistent shortages. However, growth in workforce participation has not translated in to equitable access to stable, well-paid, or advancement-oriented employment.

Across focus groups and interviews, immigrant and Indigenous participants consistently described systemic barriers that limit economic integration, including:

- Credential recognition and validation of skills, resulting in underemployment for immigrants and the devaluation of Indigenous cultural knowledge and lived expertise.
- Fragmented and difficult-to-navigate systems, spanning employment services, licensing, training, settlement supports, housing, and business development.
- Informal hiring practices and reliance on personal networks disadvantage those without established local connections.
- Experiences of racism, bias, and exclusion, both subtle and overt, affect hiring, advancement, and workplace belonging.
- Housing instability, transportation barriers, and limited healthcare access directly affect the ability to secure and maintain employment.
- Significant mental and emotional strain, linked to repeated barriers, uncertainty, and prolonged underemployment.

Despite these challenges, participants overwhelmingly expressed a desire to remain in PEI, contribute to their communities, and build long-term futures, provided that meaningful employment pathways and adequate support are available.

1.1 Indigenous experiences

Indigenous participants described additional barriers shaped by colonial history, intergenerational trauma, identity gatekeeping, and the lack of Indigenous-led, culturally grounded employment and training support. Participants emphasized that Indigenous knowledge, cultural practices, and land-based skills are frequently undervalued within mainstream labour and training systems. Short-term, project-based employment was also identified as a major source of instability, limiting long-term economic security and career development.

At the same time, Indigenous participants highlighted strong community assets, including cultural practices, relationship-based supports, and Indigenous-led organizations that provide trusted, culturally safe guidance.

12 Relevant Data Highlights

The initiative drew on multiple data sources to ensure rigour, contextual relevance, and credibility, including data sources from the Needs Assessment:

- Statistics Canada population and labour force data (2021 Census; 2024–2025 updates)
- Atlantic Provinces Economic Council
- Atlantic Economic Council
- Black Business Initiative
- Government of Canada
- Entrepreneur
- Futurepreneur
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
- Black Entrepreneurship Program
- PEI Connectors
- PEI Statistics Bureau, Department of Finance, Economics, Statistics and Federal Fiscal Relations
- Smith, S. (2021). BPOC entrepreneurs tackle systemic barriers in Atlantic Canada
- The Conference Board of Canada
- The Tribe Network
- UInooweg

13 Demographic Context

Participants in the Needs Assessment reflect a predominantly new comer/immigrant, Indigenous community, working-age population with a strong labour market attachment and diverse racial and ethnic representation.

A majority of respondents (67%) were between 25 and 44 years old, indicating prime working-age participation, and 59% are employed full-time. Notably, 92% were born outside Canada, and 80% have lived in PEI for less than five years, underscoring the relatively recent settlement patterns shaping the province's evolving workforce.

Geographically, 44% reside in Charlottetown and gender representation was balanced (52% female, 46% male, 1% gender diverse), while racial and ethnic identities included 37% Black/African Caribbean, 22% Latin American/Hispanic, 20% Southeast Asian, 10% East Asian, and 8% Indigenous respondents.

Appendix C: SWOT Summary

A traditional SWOT analysis is a strategic planning framework used to assess an organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It is often grounded in competitiveness, efficiency, and market positioning. This approach can be useful for clarifying priorities and identifying operational gaps. However, when applied to social justice and Indigenous-centered organizations, a competitiveness-focused lens can miss the deeper realities shaping the work, including power, history, relationships, and structural inequities.

For this workshop, we used the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats framework through a decolonial and community-accountable lens, as designed by SH Chung, PhD. This approach shifts the compass from competition to accountability. It centres relationships with community, cultural grounding, and lived experience as core strengths. It examines weaknesses as areas of strain or harm, understands opportunities as openings for alignment and repair, and names threats as structural forces that shape the conditions in which we operate. Participants were divided into facilitated breakout groups and guided through a structured SWOT analysis to examine the internal and external factors shaping economic integration efforts for BPOC in PEI.

Under Strengths, participants identified high levels of cooperation and collaboration across organizations, a strong sense of community, and a shared commitment to helping new comers and BPOC residents succeed.

PEI's small size and proximity to decision-makers were recognized as strategic advantages, enabling direct access to leaders and potentially faster decisions and change.

The growing and youthful BPOC population, diversity of perspectives, accessibility of resources, faith-based networking spaces, and alignment around common challenges were also noted as key strengths.

Under Weaknesses, groups highlighted structural pressures, including housing shortages, an overloaded health system, childcare gaps, income insecurity, and limited full-time employment opportunities.

Participants also identified systemic issues, including a lack of openness among professional regulators, insufficient multilingual resources, funding misalignment, and weak public education to counter misinformation and anti-immigrant sentiment.

In discussing Opportunities, participants emphasized the potential to adopt a more human-centred and accessibility-focused approach. There was a strong

desire to establish connectors or a centralized hub for navigation. There are opportunities to strengthen transparency in government processes and explore cooperative business models and cross-cultural collaborations.

Finally, under Threats, participants noted external and systemic risks such as political shifts affecting funding, racism and rising anti-immigration sentiment, regulatory complexity, nepotism, limited access to capital, infrastructure gaps, and burnout resulting from slow system change.

Appendix D :Workshop Participation Snapshot

Number of participants

Day 1:40 Participants

Day 2:35 Participants

Workshop Operations Team :7

Organizations represented :

1. WorkSource Alliance
2. BPOC Business and Professional Network (BPOC BPN)
3. PEI Community Navigators
4. Community Business Development Corp -Central PEI
5. Community Business Development Corp -Western PEI
6. PEI Business Women's Association
7. PEI Co-operative Council
8. Greater Charlotte town Area Chamber of Commerce
9. Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (Atlantic Immigrant Career Loan Fund)
10. City of Summerside
11. City of Charlotte town
12. Workforce ,Advanced Learning ,and Population Division , Government of PEI
13. PEI Office of Immigration
14. Holland College
15. University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI)
16. Native Council of PEI
17. Miqmaq Confederacy of PEI
18. Immigration and Refugees Services Association PEI (RSA)
19. Chinese Society of PEI
20. Chinese Culture Federation
21. Latinos Association of PEI
22. Nigerian Canadian Association of PEI
23. Black , Indigenous and People of Colour United for Strength ,Home and Relationships (BPOC USHR)
24. Filipino Community of PEI
25. Filipino-Canadian Association of Prince Edward Island

26. Canadian Lebanese Association of PEI
27. Somali Community of PEI
28. Sri Lankan Community
29. PEI Provincial Immigration Partnership
30. Cooper Institute,
31. Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW)

Sector breakdown

- Business development
- Career development
- Economic development
- Municipal government
- Provincial government
- Post-secondary education
- BIPOC community
- Settlement organizations
- Social action / justice.

Appendix E: Glossary of Acronyms

211PEI - Province-wide information and referral service operated by United Way of Prince Edward Island

ARAISA - Atlantic Region Association of Immigration Serving Agencies

BPOCBPN - BPOC Business and Professional Network

HR - Human Resources

RSA - Immigrant and Refugee Services Association PEI

ISANS - Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia

MUN Faculty of Medicine – PEI Campus - Memorial University of Newfoundland
Faculty of Medicine – PEI Regional Campus

PEIHR Toolkit – Online human resources resource designed to support Prince Edward Island employers.

PIP - Provincial Immigration Partnership

PSC - Public Service Commission

UPEI - University of Prince Edward Island