

## Sparking Economic Development By Investing in Skilled Immigrants

Note: This publication summarizes selected content from a 60-minute webinar. To view a recording and slides from the presentation, please visit [www.imprintproject.org](http://www.imprintproject.org).

Investments in human capital have typically been seen as a workforce development issue. Yet, **local and purposeful initiatives to connect immigrants to economic opportunity can help regions achieve their overall economic development goals.**

In this publication, you will learn how two economic development organizations from geographically different regions of the country are working to incorporate international talent into their economies.

Human Capital  
as an  
Economic  
Development  
Strategy



### This publication reviews:

- The impetus for integrating newcomers into the local economy
- What economic development initiatives for skilled immigrants consist of
- How these initiatives are funded

Helping NYC  
Immigrants  
Regain Their  
Professional  
Identities

In recognition that a diverse economy needs a variety of investments in human capital, the New York City Economic Development Corporation developed eight pilot initiatives to increase economic opportunity for all New Yorkers.



One such pilot, the **Immigrant Bridge Program**, was launched in 2013. It focuses on helping internationally trained immigrants who are currently employed in “survival-level” jobs gain US employment in their original field.



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Drawing on research findings and Canadian program models such as the Immigrant Access Fund and the Ontario Bridge Training Programs, the NYC initiative is made up of two components:

- **Case management:** help participants navigate the process of re-entering their former fields through partnerships with three local nonprofits (see right sidebar)
- **Microfinance loan:** fund the costs of necessary exams, training courses, and basic living expenses incurred during program participation through low-interest loans of between \$1,000 and \$10,000 (administered by Amalgamated Bank)

**IMMIGRANT BRIDGE PARTNERS**





**Goodwill NY NJ**  
www.goodwillnynj.org

**CAMBA**  
www.camba.org

**Upwardly Global**  
www.upwardlyglobal.org

The program costs \$1.5 million over the course of two years. It is funded by NYCEDC and Amalgamated Bank, with additional support from foundations.

**By the end of 2014, the Immigrant Bridge Program hopes to help between 200-400 immigrants via its workforce training programs and can make up to 200 loans to qualified applicants.**

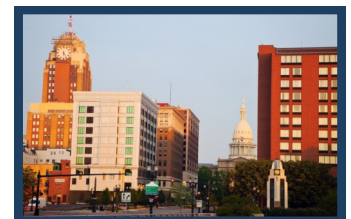
To learn more about the Immigrant Bridge Program and additional NYCEDC programs, visit [www.nycedc.com/service/workforce-local-business-programs](http://www.nycedc.com/service/workforce-local-business-programs).

**Welcoming  
International  
Students  
in  
Michigan**

Responding to both the need from employers for high-skilled talent and a robust influx of international students at Michigan State University, the **Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP)** and **Global Lansing** took action to foster a new, diverse workforce.

Their **“Getting Started” Fellowship** helps integrate international students into the community by placing them into internships with local companies.

Pilot funding was provided through a \$20,000 seed grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The program was developed with the intention of helping companies become familiarized with the process of hiring global talent, while helping students venture beyond campus and gain relevant work experience.



**This pilot program has achieved tremendous success, with a modest cohort, serving 30 participants with 7 placed into jobs with local companies.**



Learn more at [www.purelansing.com/GlobalLansing](http://www.purelansing.com/GlobalLansing)