

The first workshop of the Economic Immigration had a big task to accomplish; launching 40 individuals into the work of making better systems for attracting, welcoming and retaining newcomers to the province of New Brunswick. In order to accomplish this task, a 3 day workshop packed with activities, plenary sessions and conversation was developed by the NouLAB team.

Participants arrived with various levels of knowledge and understanding of the lab process. With this in mind it was essential to introduce concepts quickly and effectively. Combining lecture style teaches with participant guided processes, the NouLAB team engaged the participants and guided them through multiple activities to open their perspectives on seeing the whole system of economic immigration in NB. Emphasis was placed on the conversations participants had with each other. The experts were in the room and structured ways to share knowledge were provided.

Out of the first workshop 7 teams were formed with the following questions to guide their fieldwork and investigative process:

How might we help employers find the right fit? How might we match the newcomer skills to a suitable employer?

How might we help prospective and current newcomer immigrant entrepreneurs to fulfill their journey from pre-arrival to execution of business plan?

How might we help international francophone students find meaning and full employment to be able to contribute to the NB community?

How might we have a civil service that better reflects the society it serves through diversity? How might we help the government of NB's civil service be a more culturally diverse and welcoming employer?

How might we smash the barriers to shape a collaborative social fabric through intentional exchange? How might we help each other to catapult into a vibrant NB where everyone has the support they need to self-actualize?

How might we help NB private sector employers to recruit an international workforce?

How might we share locals' and newcomers' stories of integration in NB to create community engagement?

Leaving The Chocolate River Station on the banks of the Petitcodiac after the 3rd day, teams had formed agreements, discussed working styles and setup a time for their next meeting. They are now out in the field collecting information on the potential users of their prototypes and getting a rounded understanding of the system those users are experiencing. Feedback from the post-interviews conducted has been positive, with interviewees sharing that they feel a sense of importance and worth as being a part of this project. Going into the next workshop on October 18th, the NouLAB team is looking to further describe the user and build an actionable prototype to test in the real world.

To follow the progress of the lab please visit economicimmigrationlab.org/archive