

A Report by Talent Beyond Boundaries

SEPTEMBER 2018

GLOBAL REFUGEE

TALENT

Business leaders
share insights on the
skills and potential of
the global refugee
talent pool



TALENT BEYOND
—BOUNDARIES—

This report is presented by Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB). Corporate and government institutions interested in partnering with TBB to spearhead refugee labour mobility are invited to contact our global team.

Headquarters

Rachel Lawrie
Corporate Outreach Manager
rlawrie@talentbeyondboundaries.org

Australia

Stephanie Cousins
Australia Director
scousins@talentbeyondboundaries.org

Canada

Dana Wagner
Canada Partnership Advisor
dwagner@talentbeyondboundaries.org

Morocco

Malika Laasri Lahlou
Morocco Senior Advisor
mlaasri@talentbeyondboundaries.org

United Kingdom

John Cameron
Chief Technology Officer
jcameron@talentbeyondboundaries.org

THE URGENT SEARCH FOR TALENT

Talent shortages will affect the future of the world's largest economies in upcoming years, and developing new and creative solutions to address these critical shortages is an economic imperative. The global refugee population should be part of the solution.

This report presents contributions from businesses spearheading efforts to include refugees in international recruitment practices, creating an additional solution to displacement. These business perspectives illustrate the private sector's will to contribute to the global response to the refugee crisis, and reveal the value that refugees can provide if part of the global workforce. By sharing their perspectives in this report, it is the hope of Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) that more companies will be inspired to recruit refugee talent internationally, and that governments will ensure refugees can access economic immigration pathways. This labour mobility solution will benefit companies, countries, and refugees worldwide.

Alan Guarino, the CEO of Korn Ferry, said, "the world can't afford to have tens of millions of unfilled jobs and trillions of dollars in unrealized revenue. Companies must work to mitigate this potential talent crisis now to protect their future. If nothing is done, this shortage will debilitate the growth of key global markets and sectors."¹ Developed countries are seeing trends of slowed population growth, ageing populations, and education pipelines that do not match market demand, resulting in large skill gaps. The working-age population in the EU is expected to shrink by 9 per cent by 2030 and by 28 per cent by 2060 due to an ageing population.² Forty-five per cent of employers globally report talent shortages that inhibit expansion. Nearly 70 per cent of large organizations (250+ employees) cite talent shortages.³ Korn Ferry's analysis predicts that talent gaps in three industries – financial and business services; technology, media and telecommunications (TMT); and manufacturing – will result in 85.2 million unfilled jobs and a loss of \$8.5 trillion in revenue by 2030.⁴

Companies and countries must make use of all available talent to succeed in the globalized economy. Economies benefit if companies have access to the talent they need to grow. Many countries are working hard to attract immigrant talent, and many companies are already recruiting internationally to fill hiring needs. There are 25 million refugees worldwide. Many are working-age professionals with competitive skills who are restricted from working in their professions in their host countries. In a world in desperate need of skills, facing the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War, it is time to bring refugee talent into the global workforce.



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A WORD FROM OUR **FOUNDERS**

MARY LOUISE & BRUCE COHEN



Talent Beyond Boundaries was founded to create a new private sector driven solution to the refugee crisis.

Our goal is to demonstrate that refugees have the experience and training required to fill global talent gaps, and can move as skilled immigrants to live safe and productive lives. The private sector plays a critical and leading role in our work and this report shares the vision and leadership behind their efforts.

the aim of unlocking the global refugee talent pool, and opening labour mobility as another durable solution that could see more refugees move to safe countries on the basis of their skills. This would be in addition to continued resettlement efforts for the most vulnerable refugees.

Labour mobility for refugees is an obvious solution to urgent problems, but it takes leadership to make such a catalytic change.

There are over 25 million refugees worldwide and less than 1% have access to traditional resettlement.⁵ While the number of displaced people has risen in recent years, the opportunities available to them to move to safety have fallen as governments close borders and limit resettlement. Many of these refugees have employable skills, work experience, training and education and had successful careers before they were forced to flee. They are rarely allowed to work legally in host countries of first asylum, leaving their talents and skills to waste.

As we began an Advanced Leadership Institute (ALI) program at Harvard University in 2014, we attended a UNICEF USA event where a speaker highlighted the fact that she had met many Syrian professionals now unemployed and living on humanitarian assistance. We were surprised to discover that no organization was connecting refugees to international employment and skilled immigration. We created Talent Beyond Boundaries with

In a few short years, we have seen the incredible will of the private sector to be part of this global shift towards recognizing the skills and agency of refugees. Early corporate partners of Talent Beyond Boundaries are primarily based in Australia and Canada, where immigration systems are positioned to welcome international talent. Our partners represent diverse industries and operations, both large and small, recruiting for roles that range from software engineers to butchers to management consultants. They are leading a new frontier in talent acquisition that includes the global refugee talent pool - because it's the right thing to do, and because they'll be more competitive for it.

There is a global demand for skills while a global talent pool yearns to respond. Labour mobility for refugees is an obvious solution to urgent problems, but it takes leadership to make such a catalytic change. It is our hope that governments will increasingly facilitate the mobility of skilled refugees, and more and more companies will follow the lead of their peers.

In their own words, this report tells the experiences of companies that have demonstrated groundbreaking leadership and have begun recruiting international refugee talent.



1

SKILLED TRADES

Countries of all economies big and small face a shortage in skilled trades workers, inhibiting the development of key industries like construction and transportation. Electricians, welders, and mechanics are the most in-demand occupations globally.⁶ Forty-seven per cent of employers hiring skilled trades workers expect a need for additional permanent staff in the future.⁷

DAVERT TOOLS

BOB COLLIER
PRESIDENT &
FOUNDER

My company is experiencing the demographic challenge of too many experienced people retiring without enough well-trained people coming into the workforce to replace them.

When I heard that TBB was focusing on matching talented refugees with jobs in Canada, I thought this would be the solution that Davert needed.

If this idea successfully addresses the skilled trades shortage, it would not only help Davert, but industry as a whole. We need these skills to promote the economy in Ontario and Canada. My company is experiencing the demographic challenge of too many experienced people retiring without enough well-trained people coming into the workforce to replace them. Davert needed two tool and die makers due to retirements. I called TBB and they came up with a number of candidates who they thought would meet my needs.

I could see this could be something bigger than just Davert hiring a single employee (refugee). This may be a breakthrough moment for many companies in the same position as Davert. Ontario and Canada would benefit economically by filling those job vacancies which are now costing manufacturers' time and money. So I said: I would like to go to Beirut and interview these candidates myself, in order to get a first-hand look. So I did!

Ontario and Canada would benefit economically by filling those job vacancies which are now costing manufacturers' time and money.

I wasn't really sure what to expect, but, after interviewing a number of candidates in the TBB Beirut office, I was surprised to see that most met my requirements from a skills point of view. Language skills are important, but in many cases it is not critical as engineering drawings are universal. Presently, I have a multilingual team including staff who speak predominantly Polish and Vietnamese with little English. However, they know their job and they know engineering drawings. Their language skills are not an impediment to doing an excellent job. Elementary English should not be a disqualifier in certain trades.

Interviewing these refugees had a profound effect on me. These well-educated candidates were impressive on so many levels. They are driven, persistent and determined to succeed and would be an asset to any company. What is good for business is good for the community and the country. It would be a mistake, in my opinion, for any country not to recognize the value they bring with them.

It is my hope, that by continuing to work with government to streamline the process, this will bring these valuable people into our communities faster. At the same time, we need to continue to get the word out to the rest of industry about this resource. Many Western societies are facing the same skills shortages and this is a solution to a serious problem. Hiring a refugee candidate is good for the economy, humanitarianism is the outcome.





There are many skilled refugees whose talent could not only help to reduce the skilled shortages in BC, but also serve to support other refugees already in the country.

ABIGAIL FULTON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Skill shortages have been top of mind for the construction industry in British Columbia for many years.

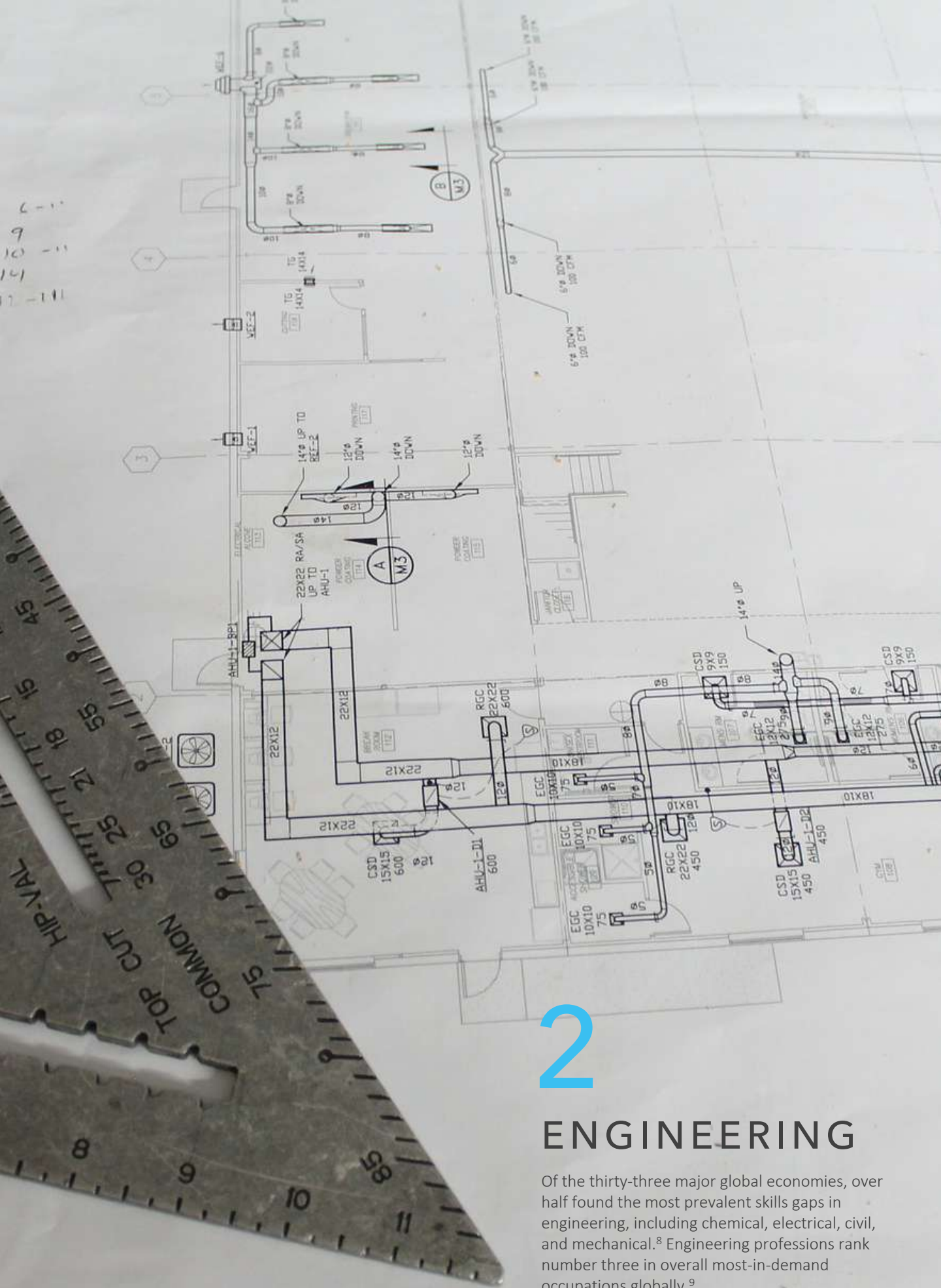
High levels of investment, both private and public, along with significant levels of retirement within the trades have created an ever-increasing need for skilled trades people across the province. Unfortunately, while the demand continues to grow, fewer and fewer young British Columbians are choosing to enter the trades. BC is not alone in this dilemma. Other regions of Canada, as well as other industry sectors are facing a similar scenario, restricting the likelihood of finding Canadians to fill available jobs. In many cases, immigration has become the only opportunity to find skilled workers. It is not an easy route to take, however, as often the immigration streams available to workers offshore are not well aligned with the needs of the construction industry.

Most construction firms are small to medium-sized enterprises and they do not have the capacity to recruit offshore. The work being done by TBB was immediately attractive to those firms. TBB's approach to building a comprehensive data base and their ongoing commitment towards identifying and vetting the right individual for the position available made the recruitment process feasible for the industry. As an organization that has been connecting foreign skilled workers with construction firms for many years, we were excited to work with TBB and had high expectations for success.

Most construction firms are small to medium-sized enterprises and they do not have the capacity to recruit offshore.

While the process has proven to be more challenging than originally thought, we continue to believe that TBB is on the right track. There are many skilled refugees whose talent could not only help to reduce the skill shortages in BC, but also serve to support other refugees already in the country, who are just learning the skills they need to build a career. The need is there. The will is there. The challenge has been the immigration system itself and the policies within it that are not yet flexible enough to enable the transition from skilled refugee to skilled worker in BC. We will continue to support TBB as they work to overcome that challenge.

CONSTRUCTION
FOUNDATION OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA



2

ENGINEERING

Of the thirty-three major global economies, over half found the most prevalent skills gaps in engineering, including chemical, electrical, civil, and mechanical.⁸ Engineering professions rank number three in overall most-in-demand occupations globally.⁹

JOHN HOLLAND

We are thrilled to be working with Talent Beyond Boundaries and to have been introduced to the talented people they have recommended to us.

When we were approached with the proposal to offer employment to a refugee still living overseas, we were uncertain how it would work.

We approached the opportunity with great respect for the people involved and they didn't disappoint. Each step of the process gave us more and more confidence that we were hiring a talented, industry-experienced professional who would be a good fit for our company. It has taken longer than we thought and the exact role we offered the candidate had to be filled, but

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FACT
33% of companies are seeking new talent pools to bring into the workforce.¹⁰

our project team is engaged in the process and as soon as we have a confirmed arrival date, we will find another suitable role for the same skill set and experience.

Our whole team and company is excited to be involved in this ground-breaking opportunity. Our employees understand the difference it will make to the people being offered the chance to come to Australia and have a job waiting for them.

For our company and our projects, this program offers us access to a new talent pool of highly qualified people that we can tap into when we have those hard-to-fill roles. We're proud to be raising awareness of the need to provide skilled employment opportunities to refugees so that they can rebuild their careers. We would highly recommend this program to other organizations and companies looking to make a difference.

Our whole team and company is excited to be involved in the ground-breaking opportunity.

LEIGH
HARDINGHAM
SOCIAL PROCUREMENT
& INCLUSION MANAGER
WEST GATE TUNNEL PROJECT



3

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Talent in the IT sector is the sixth most in-demand skill globally.¹¹ Companies and countries are competing for cybersecurity experts, network administrators, and technical support professionals, among others. Of the thirty-three major global economies, twenty-six identified IT skills as the most in-demand in 2017.¹² The World Economic Forum predicts greater difficulty in recruitment in the industry in 2020¹³ and there is a predicted skill gap of 1.8 million people in the cybersecurity workforce by 2022.¹⁴

The Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) summarizes the need to incorporate additional sources of talent into the workforce to meet the growing need for IT and Tech professionals:

“Attracting and retaining global talent is critical to Canada’s digital future. In order to ensure Canada is able to meet the demand of future ICT labour needs, we must consider all labour market sources including domestic and international. We must ensure international talent is competitive by collapsing the immigration timeline between recruitment and arrival. Our programs provide unique and targeted solutions for recruiting, retaining and integrating women, Indigenous persons, youth and internationally educated professionals into ICT workforce. Refugees should absolutely be a part of that talent pipeline.” - Sandra Saric, Vice President of Talent Innovation, ICTC

Bonfire chose to partner with Talent Beyond Boundaries in large part because we already have a connection to Syria through a team member who immigrated from Syria to Canada with his family years ago.

In the Waterloo Region, we've seen many refugees arrive with very little to start their new life in Canada. As a company, we've seen the potential of talented people coming together to achieve ambitious goals, especially when those people come from diverse backgrounds. So when Talent Beyond Boundaries offered to connect us with strong candidates for our Engineering team, knowing those candidates could resettle somewhere their particular skills are needed, we jumped at the opportunity.

The response from the entire Bonfire team has been extremely positive. Our employees feel proud to be part of a company that is invested in creating opportunities for refugees. As Bonfire's Director of Engineering, I thoroughly enjoyed the recruiting process. Despite the challenges of timezones and long-distance connectivity, my team and I loved seeing talent that shared many of our technical experiences while holding many experiences beyond those of local candidates.

Our employees feel proud to be part of a company that is invested in creating opportunities for refugees.

Since it was our team's first experience with global hiring, everything was new. We weren't sure what to expect for calibre of talent, or what kind of accommodations we'd need to make to our interview process to assess technical abilities. Talent Beyond Boundaries guided us through the process, providing helpful candidate profiles including video introductions, translating cultural differences and ensuring we had the best possible video connections for interviews. In the end, we went through a very similar process to the one we use with local candidates, applying both experiential questions and a programming assignment.

During the evaluation of candidates, we knew it was important to keep an open mind, as each candidate's experience and interview style was different than what you might expect to see on a typical, local resume. Three Bonfire team members reviewed each candidate and came to a consensus about the candidate we would like to join our team.

Initially, the program can feel like a big undertaking because it's not just a new job that the new team member will be adapting to when they arrive, but also the learning curve of immigrating to Canada. That's why it's crucial to have the resources from Talent Beyond Boundaries to support the transition and ensure successful integration into the community as well. It's great to know that we will have their continued support, as will our new team member.

We believe the program can have a big impact on other organizations in the tech community. It's no secret that it's tough to find qualified engineering talent—it's a challenge that requires creative solutions and a willingness to go beyond the status quo. Organizations should seize the opportunity offered by Talent Beyond Boundaries to fill their skills gaps while providing refugees the opportunity of a new life in Canada. We are looking forward to the arrival of our new team member, and the successes and challenges we will experience together.

It's no secret that it's tough to find qualified engineering talent—it's a challenge that requires creative solutions and a willingness to go beyond the status quo.

KRIS BRAUN
DIRECTOR OF
ENGINEERING

BONFIRE



SHOPIFY



To find an organization that is committed to sourcing refugee talent was an incredible resource - I was able to work with the organization to identify a new untapped talent pool that had the skills we were looking for.

JULIA
HURRELMANN
SENIOR
RECRUITMENT
RESEARCHER

At Shopify, it's our mission to make commerce better for everyone and reduce the barriers to entry for entrepreneurs.

We are a commerce technology company that powers 600,000 merchants around the world, enabling them to design, set up and manage their own stores. I am a RnD recruiting researcher at Shopify's headquarters in Ottawa, Canada. It's my job to find and engage with IT talent for roles that Shopify can't fill through a traditional application process.

Often, I am searching for talent with a unique skill set that can sometimes be challenging to find within Canada. I frequently look internationally, because we're committed to finding the best talent, of all backgrounds. When I first heard about Talent Beyond Boundaries in early 2018, I was thrilled. To find an organization that is committed to sourcing refugee talent was an incredible resource - I was able to work with the organization to identify a new untapped talent pool that had the skills we were looking for. Plus, these were folks that had identified an interest in moving to Canada.

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The talent that the organization identified were very strong candidates for Shopify. The candidates we met with had relevant experience and were eager for the opportunity to interview for the roles.

While I found working with Talent Beyond Boundaries an incredible resource, one challenge was the limit of the talent pool. Since the organization is still building their database, there is lots of potential for growth and expansion of their network.

Talent Beyond Boundaries has an opportunity to continue to grow and expand. Research shows that Canada will need to add more than 200,000 jobs in IT alone by 2020.¹⁵ Talent Beyond Boundaries connects Canadian employers with skilled talent, while creating a new solution for the global refugee crisis. I look forward to continued cooperation as this network of international refugee talent grows.

IRESS began its work recruiting with TBB ultimately because it is the right thing and the smart thing to do.

We found the overall talent of applicants from TBB competitive and we were impressed by the level of experience of candidates. In addition to our focus on finding quality people for IRESS, I have been very pleased with the team-building effect this initiative has had within the company. I think it has brought us closer together and provided a fresh perspective. Many have wanted to help and assist and it's been very easy to draw on different levels of expertise throughout the process because people want to make a difference. I'm pleased TBB is getting strong commitment from other businesses and I expect this support will continue to increase.

When we announced that we were planning to hire under this program, we received wonderful support from our teams across the globe:

*This is just amazing! I am so proud of what IRESS has become to make this happen!!
#superproud
#oneiress*

Makes me proud to work for a company who cares!

I am genuinely personally moved by this....in a world of increasing intolerance and self obsession I am so proud to work for an organization that takes the lead in changing mindsets by reaching out to the less privileged. #proudbeyondbelief.

We are well aware of the challenges involved in the immigration processes but we are confident that as TBB works with governments to smooth out those issues, that this will become a solution with which the private sector will increasingly seek involvement. We are committed to partnering with TBB in making that happen and are recruiting international talent in offices in various countries.

FACT Employee participation in CSR programs increases employee retention.¹⁶

IRESS

We found the overall talent of applicants from TBB competitive and we were impressed by the level of experience of candidates.

ANDREW
WALSH
CHIEF
EXECUTIVE
OFFICER





Cority is proud to be part of an initiative that gives refugees living outside Canada the chance to compete for a meaningful job. Our experience shows that by providing an employment opportunity to a refugee, we'll be the lucky ones.

MARK WALLACE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

A core value at Cority is our team diversity. We are a stronger team because of our different perspectives, backgrounds, experiences, and ideas. Diversity is essential to the quality of our software and services, and Cority is a market-leading EHSQ SaaS Platform.

One of the dimensions of diversity on our team is a refugee background. Our experience with refugee talent began with local hiring, and it was such a positive experience that recruiting from this talent pool is part of workforce growth strategy. Cority partnered with a local NGO, Jumpstart (a Talent Beyond Boundaries partner), to begin sourcing refugee newcomers living in Toronto for a Client Support Analyst role, which is a specialized IT position requiring both software proficiency and exemplary client relations. One of our first recruits through this partnership is a key member of our team today. In the interview process, we were struck and impressed by the wealth of experience, richness of life experiences, and skill set that he brought to the table. We hired him right away.

This employee's personal story is a powerful testament to his character and ambition. He has experienced the tragedy of a long war and displacement from his home country of Syria. When he arrived in Canada, the challenges didn't end. There were many things that were unfamiliar — transportation, food, language, culture — all of which felt like barriers to rebuilding a career.

We were fortunate enough to give him his first meaningful opportunity. His performance at the company has been exceptional: He was promoted to a senior position and nominated for an award within two years. By taking a chance on a new recruitment strategy, we gained a valued employee and he gained a workplace that he is proud to call home away from home.

Our positive experience hiring local refugee talent has led us to try recruiting internationally. At Cority, we are firm believers in hiring people based on their talent. It doesn't matter if they're living in Toronto or New York or Beirut, and a refugee background only contributes to the diversity that is a core asset of our team. We are in the early stages of recruiting with Talent Beyond Boundaries and we are optimistic for another success story before long. Among these candidates, we have already seen competitive skills that we need in our fast-growing workforce.

By taking a chance on a new recruitment strategy, we gained a valued employee and he gained a workplace that he is proud to call home away from home.

CORITY



4

HOSPITALITY

A majority of countries are facing critical gaps in the hospitality industry.¹⁷ As the middle class grows globally, so does demand on the hospitality industry as more people eat out, vacation, and seek fine-dining experiences.¹⁸ Currently, the hospitality industry employs almost 300 million people worldwide.¹⁹ By 2027, the sector is estimated to grow to encompass an additional 80 million jobs.²⁰



MOHAMAD FAKIH
FOUNDER

Refugees and immigrants of all backgrounds, from all parts of the world, make enormous contributions to the Canadian economy.

PARAMOUNT
FINE FOODS

Paramount is just beginning this journey, but already, the talent in the global refugee population is clear.

Paramount Fine Foods made a commitment in early 2016 to hire 100 refugees in Canada. Over 25,000 Syrian refugees were arriving in a few short months, and we believed that providing a first job opportunity would be a milestone towards helping these newcomers rebuild their lives. Our business was growing fast, with over 40 locations worldwide and a family of over 1,000 employees today, and we needed the talent. Our investment paid off. Paramount proudly employs over 150 refugees and several of our locations are run by talented general managers who arrived as refugees from Syria.

Refugees and immigrants of all backgrounds, from all parts of the world, make enormous contributions to the Canadian economy. This great diversity of skills and experiences has enabled Paramount to excel in our specialty cuisine and become Canada's fastest-growing Middle Eastern restaurant.

Paramount has seen firsthand what it means to offer a refugee their first opportunity in Canada. People grow remarkably quickly in their careers if given the chance to give back, and our company benefits as a result. It made sense for Paramount to provide the same opportunity to refugees living outside Canada with the skills we need, through Talent Beyond Boundaries. This is another investment with potential for major returns.

Paramount is just beginning this journey, but already, the talent in the global refugee population is clear. People who find themselves in the middle of conflict, who flee their homes and their countries, are just like you and me. Many refugees are educated, with professional experience, ambition, and careers ahead of them.

We extended an employment offer to a trained Head Chef who owned and operated his own restaurant before the Syrian War forced him and his family to flee to neighboring Lebanon. It is our hope that he will find stability in Canada, and the chance to grow his skills with our company.

What sets them apart is a vastly limited future. In many countries where refugees are living, pursuing a career is a difficult thing to do.

We extended an employment offer to a trained Head Chef who owned and operated his own restaurant before the Syrian War forced him and his family to flee to neighbouring Lebanon. It is our hope that he will find stability in Canada, and the chance to grow his skills with our company.

Paramount is proud to be part of one refugee family's immigration to Canada, and to gain a talented employee in the process. Our greatest asset at Paramount is our team, and it grows stronger when we go above and beyond for someone to join it.



5

REMOTE REGIONS

Employers in small and rural communities unable to fill hiring needs with local talent face acute challenges attracting and retaining immigrant talent. These communities often lack the critical mass of immigrants necessary for high levels of retention.²¹ All industries are impacted, including essential services. For example, many remote regions face critical gaps in healthcare professions, which can result in fewer services and a lower standard of care.²² Approximately one half of the global population lives in rural areas, but these areas are served by only 38% of the total nursing workforce and by less than a quarter of the total physician workforce.²³



PAULA D. RANKIN

SENIOR DIRECTOR,
HUMAN RESOURCES

Personal Support Workers (PSWs) in Canada are greatly sought after, and international nurses are able to fill this gap and work as PSWs without having to go back to school to become certified.

Closing the Gap Healthcare employs 1,500 healthcare providers offering services in homes, schools, workplaces, long-term care homes, hospitals, and clinics across Ontario and Nova Scotia.

We are the largest interdisciplinary service provider in Ontario and are accredited with Exemplary status. Closing the Gap Healthcare, (CTG) is interested in hiring international refugee talent as we need qualified, caring individuals that can provide exemplary care for our clients. So many internationally recognized healthcare employees come to Canada and need to gain Canadian work experience and CTG has the need to hire qualified people to address the growing need in our community healthcare sector.

Refugees may have different career trajectories due to their circumstances, but in our early experience with this talent pool, they are just as skilled and career-driven as other applicants.

International healthcare employees are a recruitment channel that we focus on, but it is a time-intensive process, with robust administrative documentation to be completed to begin the recruitment process. However, CTG feels the time and effort are worthwhile as we want the very best healthcare professionals to work for us and provide care for our clients. Qualified refugees are no different than other international candidates. Refugees may have different career trajectories due to their circumstances, but in our early experience with this talent pool, they are just as skilled and career-driven as other applicants.

Personal Support Workers (PSWs) in Canada are greatly sought after, and international nurses are able to fill this gap and work as PSWs without having to go back to school to become certified. Ontario and Nova Scotia have a growing need for PSWs and hiring international talent helps us meet the needs of our clients. Closing the Gap Healthcare has found success with our international recruitment channel and we look forward to on-going partnerships with the agencies that help support this channel.

CLOSING THE
GAP HEALTHCARE

HARVEY BEEF

WAYNE SHAW
GENERAL MANAGER

Due to skilled labour shortages in some sections of our local industry, we were investigating all options to source labour when we came across Talent Beyond Boundaries.

TBB introduced Harvey Beef to a wide range of candidates that were available through their refugee international hiring pool. Among them we discovered one fantastic candidate that checked all the selection criteria for a position at our abattoir.

We expect the skills shortages in regional Western Australia to continue to tighten due to a pickup in local industries and see initiatives like TBB as vital to us achieving our goal of trading at full capacity.

As a company that prides itself on maintaining a high standard of corporate citizenship, we are proud to be involved in initiatives that contribute to solving global issues, like the settlement of refugees. We look forward to working with TBB to recruit more quality, international talent in the future.

We expect the skills shortages in regional western Australia to continue to tighten due to a pickup in local industries and see initiatives like TBB as vital to us achieving our goal of trading at full capacity.





MAKING GLOBAL REFUGEE RECRUITMENT WORK FOR **BUSINESS**

Businesses are eager to contribute to solutions to the refugee crisis and to access a new talent pool, but there are barriers that slow the adoption of international refugee recruitment as a pillar of the global response to displacement. Immigration experts working with Talent Beyond Boundaries explore the significance of business engagement and the basics behind making it work for both governments and the bottom line.

NICK ADLER

MIGRATION
EXPERT

I speak from the perspective of my work as a provider of international migration and refugee legal advice in Australia and, to a lesser degree, in Europe.

Issues surrounding migration, and particularly the provision of humanitarian protection, are highly politicized globally, and no more so than in Australia. Governments struggle to respond to massive displacement crises while maintaining their citizens' trust in the management of their borders.

As a result, refugees in host countries are mostly only granted temporary protection without the right to family reunion and live in constant fear that such protection will not be extended or renewed. Participation in the workforce, while permitted in some countries, is in practice made almost impossible by the temporary visa status that applies to the majority of refugees and which acts as a powerful deterrent to potential employers.

The overall result is the creation of a cohort of many thousands of refugees who are disenfranchised from both their families and the workforce, and who live in constant fear of their refugee status being withdrawn. It is clear to most observers that the creation of a situation in which people are unable to fully participate in, and contribute to, the society in which they are living, is counter-productive not only for refugees but also for host countries.

This is a key initiative in finding new pathways that will allow refugees and their families to find durable solutions which also benefit businesses within, and the governments of, receiving countries

Given the existing parameters, the work of Talent Beyond Boundaries aims to change these norms by connecting skilled refugees with employers, thus making international employment opportunities the basis upon which refugees move to a third country. This is a key initiative in finding new pathways that will allow refugees and their families to find durable solutions which also benefit businesses within, and the governments of, receiving countries. Complementary resettlement pathways based on labour mobility can offer a sustainable and beneficial way forward into the future.

Specializing in International Refugee Law, Nick is based in Sydney and works both on the mainland and in Papua New Guinea in the complex regimes that are a feature of the Australian asylum system. He works with Talent Beyond Boundaries on a pro bono basis.





HEATHER SEGAL
FOUNDER, SENIOR
IMMIGRATION LAWYER



VERONICA WILSON
IMMIGRATION LAWYER

Segal Immigration Law's primary practice focuses on Canadian and US corporate immigration law. However, our lawyers have always been interested in humanitarian issues and have previously worked and volunteered in refugee law. Our firm has married both passions by developing an innovative pro bono project with Talent Beyond Boundaries and supporting employer-backed immigration applications for refugees.

Talent Beyond Boundaries' business-driven approach offers a unique solution to address an international humanitarian problem.

There are immensely talented people among the world's 25 million refugees, many of whom cannot put their skills to use. And yet there are businesses across Canada and other advanced economies that cannot find the local talent to grow. Providing refugees access to Canada's economic immigration pathways creates a win-win for all parties involved.

- Increases government capacity to uphold international commitments to meeting humanitarian needs by enabling more refugees to move to Canada through both humanitarian and economic pathways
- Benefits the economy by bringing in new skill sets that can be immediately put to use by Canadian businesses, supporting the economy and growing Canada's tax base
- Facilitates skills-based entry of refugees and promotes the recognition of refugees as assets to Canada
- Allows employers to meet business challenges by finding the best workers to support their employment needs
- Enables refugees to migrate to a new country with a job already in place
- Having a pool of talent available whose goal it is to create stability and commitment to their new lives is an obvious bonus to Canadian employers

SEGAL
IMMIGRATION LAW

In many respects, Canada's current economic pathways successfully help businesses attract skilled workers to drive economic growth and address skills and demographic challenges across the country. Every day we work with corporate clients facing an urgency in wanting to hire international workers expeditiously due to shortage of local talent.

However, since working on this pro bono project, we have seen evidence that the economic pathways within Canada's immigration system were not built for refugees. Design changes are needed to remove systemic barriers and facilitate broader economic pathways if we want to attract people of all backgrounds (including refugees) on the basis of their skills.

Examples of barriers faced by Talent Beyond Boundaries' candidates who meet program eligibility requirements and have job offers from Canadian employers have included the following:

- Expired passports prevented candidates from creating online profiles, the first step in many skilled work applications;
- Inability for refugees to obtain records of their education from home-country institutions, which is required for many applications;
- Many provincial economic pathways require the applicant to be lawfully residing in their country of residence, which inadvertently excludes many refugees; and
- Refugee candidates lack bank accounts to provide proof-of-funds, and without some external support, all would be unable to pay standard immigration costs.

For all of these challenges, there are practical solutions that maintain program integrity while providing equitable, legal pathways for refugees to immigrate on the basis of their skills. An economic immigration system that works for refugees has the potential to be a watershed in solutions to displacement, and make Canada more competitive internationally.

Every day we work with corporate clients facing an urgency in wanting to hire international workers expeditiously due to shortage of local talent.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

There are significant shortages of skills in diverse sectors around the world. Data and private sector voices demonstrate the need for additional talent to keep industries functioning and expanding. Ready to fill the gaps are people of all backgrounds.

As more countries look to immigration to yield demographic and skills dividends, they are competing to attract the best and brightest. And yet a major segment of the world's mobile population, refugees, are overlooked. Talent Beyond Boundaries has captured a snapshot of the skills in just one refugee population living in Jordan and Lebanon, and the data show they have competitive skills, education, language abilities, and experience.

The perspectives in this report showcase some of the companies that are unlocking talent in the global refugee population. Their experiences with recruitment demonstrate the private sector will to drive an innovative solution to the refugee crisis. It's a story about the critical need for talent, felt by growing companies every day, and a solution that makes business and human sense to everyone from executives to recruiters to team leaders. The following are some of the lessons from their experiences.

INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

Many small and medium-sized companies lack the human resources capacity that larger companies have to recruit internationally. Finding the talent and navigating the immigration processes can be time- and resource-intensive. Currently, only 25 per cent of organisations believe their human resources teams excel at sourcing international talent and are able to support their globalisation strategy,²⁴ yet companies are increasingly looking internationally for talent. Governments and civil society organizations like Talent Beyond Boundaries can simultaneously meet humanitarian objectives and assist companies in international recruitment by helping them identify refugee talent to fill their needs, and by facilitating immigration and settlement.

RETENTION STRATEGY

Companies in remote regions in particular are invested in hiring for the long term and finding talented workers who will put down roots in the community. Data show that resettled refugees are more willing than other immigrants to relocate to obtain employment, will accept jobs that many others would reject, and have high retention rates with employers.²⁵ Such data suggests the retention rates of refugees who move through economic pathways may prove higher than other immigrants for certain regions and jobs.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

In addition to providing a talent solution, participating in the recruitment of international refugees as part of spearheading efforts to create an additional and economically driven solution to the refugee crisis enhances teamwork and company pride. Employees' participation in Corporate and Social Responsibility initiatives is linked to stronger retention.²⁶

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Companies see the value in creating diverse teams with varied experiences. Employees in publicly-traded organizations with staff diversity based on inherent traits (ex. gender and ethnicity) as well as experiences are 70 per cent more likely to see their organization capture a new market.²⁷ Diverse teams are also more effective; they are 75 per cent more likely to implement marketable ideas,²⁸ and are more innovative and collaborative.²⁹

THE WAY FORWARD

Talent Beyond Boundaries has conducted only a preliminary mapping of refugees in Lebanon and Jordan (roughly 10,000 of over 4.3 million in 2016),³⁰ uncovering more than 800 trades workers and hundreds of engineers and tech professionals.³¹ There are many more skilled workers among the world's 25 million refugees, ready, willing, and waiting to join the global workforce. Additional companies incorporating this talent acquisition will push the movement forward.

Governments can make it easier for companies, especially smaller companies with less flexible hiring timelines and human resources restraints, to recruit international refugee talent by shrinking timelines of recruitment, and accommodating refugee circumstances. Economic immigration pathways are typically designed without refugees in mind, and as a result, current systems unintentionally bar refugees from the global workforce. It is time for governments, business, and civil society to spearhead a new and additional solution for refugees which marries a humanitarian response to the prosperity of companies and countries.

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