



York University Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Professionals – Business & Information Technology

Funded by the Government of Ontario, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, York University's Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Professionals works with small, medium and large local businesses, not-for-profits, professional associations and accreditation bodies to help internationally educated professionals (IEPs) transition into a position in their field that matches their education, credentials and experience. The program attracts candidates from over 30 countries and helps each of them create a customized action plan that is tailored to their individual goals and career path.

The program took in its first cohort of students May 2010.

There are two main program areas:

- **Business, Finance and Administration:** (includes accounting and auditing, emergency and disaster management, logistics and supply chain management, marketing, management and public administration)
- **Information Technology:** (includes application development, systems analysis, and auditing and assurance)

Research shows that it can take several years for immigrants to fully integrate into Canadian society. Statistics Canada estimates that only 24 per cent of foreign-educated professionals find a position in their industry. They face many barriers to employment – including underemployment and unemployment.

The goal of York's bridging program is to significantly shorten this integration period, to familiarize them with Canadian business and culture, and to help them to leverage their education, credentials and experience to get a job that matches their qualifications. At the same time, the program aims to address the labour market demands of employers across Canada, and, more specifically, across Ontario and the Greater Toronto Area.

York partners with local employers, organizations and accreditation bodies to ensure Canadian business needs are met and the most relevant course content is offered to IEPs:

- **Industry leaders such as IBM, KPMG, Ernst & Young, and professional associations such as Certified Management Accountant (CMA) and Certified General Accountant (CGA), have partnered with York** on professional advisory groups, mentorship and internship initiatives; they provide key insights into gaps IEPs can fill in the workplace and what skills and experiences IEPs need to succeed.
- **Canadian businesses are reaching beyond North American markets to increase their competitiveness; IEPs offer partners fresh global perspectives from developing and emerging markets and economies;** contribute highly skilled knowledge and professional experience to various projects; bring with them personal and professional contacts, languages, cultural awareness and experience that can give businesses and organizations a global, competitive edge.



Background | Bridge Training – Business & IT

- The caliber of York's IEPs is impressive; **58 per cent of participants currently admitted have master's degrees; 70% have 6 or more years of professional work experience; most speak two or more languages.** Countries they come from include: China, Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Turkey and Uganda.

York's program differentiates itself from other bridge training programs in a number of ways:

- IEPs are provided with a comprehensive, individualized assessment of their academic qualifications, experience and language proficiencies.
- They engage in hands-on specialized training through live case studies with the help of Greater Toronto Area (GTA) businesses.
- They are provided with industry-specific training and skills through management courses, communications courses and business fundamental courses.
- They are taught and mentored by seasoned industry professionals and business leaders who are committed to helping them succeed.
- Courses are offered primarily in the evenings on a part-time and full-time basis to fit, as much as possible, with each IEPs' schedule.

York has a proven track record:

- York University recognizes the strengths and value that immigrant professionals bring to Canada—highly skilled knowledge, competitiveness, language proficiencies, experience and education—and has become a leader in offering bridge training programs that enhance the qualifications of immigrant professionals from around the globe.
- The bridge training program builds on the strengths of several other programs at York, including a highly successful bridge training program for internationally educated nurses and a program for women wishing to upgrade their skills and explore the possibility of university study.

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