



NATIONAL
CONNECTOR
PROGRAM

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Inspired by Award-Winning Halifax Program, All for All Launches Pittsburgh Connector Program

PITTSBURGH, PA — On June 7, 2018, [All for All](#) will launch the [Pittsburgh Connector Program](#) to address workforce needs in the region's foreign-born community. Closely modeled after the [Halifax Connector Program](#) which began nearly a decade ago and is now [replicated across Canada](#) as well as in St. Louis and Detroit, the Pittsburgh Connector Program will use an online platform to connect immigrants, refugees, and international students with established professionals, business-owners, and community leaders in some of the region's high-demand industries, including healthcare, finance, engineering, and technology. The program will kick off during Immigrant Heritage Month with a [press conference](#) from 11AM-11:30AM in the courtyard of Nova Place/Alloy 26, also serving as the formal announcement of the [All for All Summit](#) on September 13th.

Through the program, a foreign-born community member (Connectee) — who has valuable skills and professional experience but lacks an extensive professional network — will be matched with a Pittsburgher (Connector) in their field of interest. Following their initial meeting, the Connector will introduce the Connectee to at least three individuals in the field, each of whom will similarly make a minimum of three introductions to prospective Connectors in their network.

"The beauty of this program is its simplicity: one 30-minute meeting that opens doors to three new contacts," says Betty Cruz, Project Director of All for All. "Connectees expand their networks and learn more about their communities, Connectors get exposed to community members with a range of backgrounds and experiences."

Through a one-time meeting, the Connector Program will benefit Pittsburghers and newcomers alike by facilitating intercultural communication and creating personal connections based on both shared interests and community members' desire to make Pittsburgh a more welcoming and connected city.

"The fundamental idea behind the Connector Program is the power of human connections," says Robyn Webb, Executive Director of the National Connector Program. "To date, the Halifax and National Connector Programs have assisted more than 3,028 participants and engaged with more than 4,704 Connectors, contributing to more than 1,722 jobs found. We are excited to see how this model will help cultivate meaningful connections that will impact the Pittsburgh economy and community."

An initiative that specifically engages un/underemployed foreign-born community members is essential in Pittsburgh. Tarek Dumont, a Syrian immigrant with a background in healthcare reflects on the difficulties he faces when searching for a job: "The feedback I got was always either I am overqualified or have no relevant job experience. But there were times where I felt that the reason was simply my name or where I came from, or my accent, or the lack of connections." Launching during Immigrant Heritage Month, the Connector Program will allow Connectees to gain valuable insight into the local job market while providing established professionals with an opportunity to play a direct role in helping open doors for newcomers like Tarek.

"As the immigrant population continues to grow in the Pittsburgh region, we must recognize this emerging untapped pool of professionals and their unique needs," says County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. "This new Connector Program will reach the people who otherwise would not know about the many opportunities available in alignment with their interests and skill set."

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We invite you to celebrate the launch of the Pittsburgh Connector Program and Immigrant Heritage Month with All for All and [GlobalPittsburgh](#) at the [First Thursday Happy Hour](#) on June 7th from 5:30-8:00PM. More on the Pittsburgh Connector Program and its progress will be shared this fall at the [Second Annual All for All Summit](#) on Thursday, September 13th at the University of Pittsburgh University Club.

To learn more about the National Connector Program and how to become involved please visit: www.connectorprogram.ca.

To learn more about the Pittsburgh Connector Program, visit changeagency.world/connector/ or contact All for All Coordinator Anna Shepperson: anna@changeagency.world.

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*About **All for All***

***All for All** connects people, organizations, and communities to actions that build a welcoming and inclusive region for all. Driven by collaboration with community and cross-sector partners, All for All aims to advance economic opportunity, break down barriers, and further immigrant inclusion across the Pittsburgh region. All for All is guided by the Immigrant Community Blueprint, a comprehensive community-designed plan. Learn more at www.changeagency.world/all-for-all.*

*About the **National Connector Program***

The National Connector Program is based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the birthplace of the initial Connector Program. This program provides communities with a turn-key solution that increases talent retention through the process of networking. Currently based in 35 communities and growing, the National Connector Program is a successful model to help retain talent, engage employers, and create a more welcoming community. Learn more at www.connectorprogram.ca.

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