

# Digital and tech-related Metropolis Conference 2026 sessions

I like to go through Settlement-related conference program agendas for conferences I'm not attending to see what might be of interest from a digital perspective. This year's Metropolis Conference does not disappoint. Hopefully, at least the slides from these presentations, discussion notes, summaries, as well as reports mentioned will make it on the [Metropolis conference platform](#) or be shared publicly at some point. Here are some of interest. I'm sure I missed some, [check the program here](#).

- Teaching in the GenAI Era: Practical AI Literacy for Language Instructors .....2
- Connecting the Dots: Efficient Referrals and Tracking Client Journeys for Economic Integration .....2
- Strengthening Digital Resilience: Insights, Challenges, and Co-Created Solutions .....2
- Gateway to Impact: Transforming Settlement Support Through Digital Collaboration .....3
- Testing the Edges of AI: A Sector-Led Workshop for Responsible Innovation .....3
- Employer Navigator - Strengthening Employer Capacity to Unlock Immigrant Talent .....4
- Digital by Default, Equity by Design: Scalable Information Delivery for Newcomers in a Changing Landscape .....4
- Optimizing Newcomer Success: An Integrated Model for Settlement and Employment Services .....5
- Building Responsive Programs for Underserved Populations in Their Communities .....5
- Co-Designing a New Digital Model for Settlement Information Delivery to Newcomers .....5
- Data and Tech Insights for Canada's Immigration Future: How innovation can accelerate services, capacity, and outcomes .....6
- Recent findings from IRCC's Settlement Program Evidence Base .....6
- POSTERS .....7
  - Empowering CLIC Instructors Through CCLB Digital Resources .....7
  - Reconceptualizing Language Training Provision amid Immigration Reductions and Program Cuts: An Analysis of CanAvenue .....7

## Teaching in the GenAI Era: Practical AI Literacy for Language Instructors

This session examines how language educators can build AI literacy to enhance communicative and task-based language teaching.

Grounded in research on adult learning, technology integration, and emerging frameworks for AI use in second language education, it demonstrates strategies for evaluating and adapting generative AI output, designing safe classroom tasks, and supporting learner autonomy. Drawing on LINC and EAL examples but relevant across additional-language programs, participants will work with adaptable prompts, see classroom applications, and gain access to a sector-wide professional learning resource to strengthen AI literacy across teaching teams nationwide, along with a planned follow-up study.

- Hanna Jodrey, Saskatoon Open Door Society

## Connecting the Dots: Efficient Referrals and Tracking Client Journeys for Economic Integration

Join us for an interactive roundtable filled with practical activities and real-world insights. Economic integration is vital for newcomer success, yet fragmented services often create barriers. This session will explore how coordinated referrals and integrated tracking systems streamline access to language training, employment services, and settlement programs. Through client journey mapping and data-driven strategies, we'll show Achēv is using collaborative models and technology-enabled solutions to reduce duplication, improve efficiency, and deliver holistic support, always putting the client at the centre of everything we do.

- Moderator: Agnes Wilczak, Achēv
- Samantha Iyere, Achēv
- Andrea Williams, Achēv
- Natalie Renton, Achēv

## Strengthening Digital Resilience: Insights, Challenges, and Co-Created Solutions

- Led by the National Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Working Group and the Technology Working Group, this roundtable will spark discussion and gather insights on the challenges SPOs face in digital service delivery, cybersecurity, and data privacy. Sharing key findings from their joint survey and facilitating dialogue on current pressures—including resource constraints, and cyber-safety.

Participants will explore emerging risks, AI, remote work and discuss how digital capacity and infrastructure must evolve. The session will include a co-creation activity to identify and prioritize the tools, policies, and supports needed to strengthen sector-wide digital transformation and service delivery.

- Jennifer Freeman, PeaceGeeks
- Alicia Couto, ISANS
- Traicy Robertson, Manitoba Possible

## Gateway to Impact: Transforming Settlement Support Through Digital Collaboration

As immigration policy and service needs evolve, digital transformation has become essential for effective settlement support. Immigrant Services Calgary scaled Gateway from a pilot to a city-wide designated NAARS provider through a structured change management approach. Built on Salesforce, Gateway streamlines client intake, triage, personalized planning, and targeted referrals across 80+ partners. Gateway serves as a collaborative infrastructure enabling real-time tracking of client journeys, enhancing cross-sector coordination, and supporting continuous improvement. This session offers practical insights for leaders managing complex change and demonstrates how aligning people, processes, and purpose can create a sustainable, scalable service model.

- Moderator: Vibha Kaushik, Immigrant Services Calgary Noah Mebarak, Immigrant Services Calgary Wissam Shalaby, Immigrant Services Calgary, 1. Driving System Change: Gateway's Model for Effective NAARS Delivery
- Sameena Arif, Immigrant Services Calgary, 2. Partnerships in Action: Enhancing Collaboration for Newcomer Services
- Zohaib Ajaz Faridi, Immigrant Services Calgary Prashant Dhungana, Immigrant Services Calgary, 3. Turning Data into Action: Continuous Improvement in Practice

## Testing the Edges of AI: A Sector-Led Workshop for Responsible Innovation

As IRCC considers a Digital Refresh, this roundtable invites participants to actively explore the opportunities, risks, and practical challenges of integrating AI into newcomer employment and settlement services. Through a collaborative workshop format, attendees will examine what ethical, human-centered, and collectively designed AI should look like in practice—and how responsible innovation can strengthen outcomes for both organizations and newcomers. WelcomeCoach.ca, an AI-enabled workforce development platform created by PeaceGeeks with SPO partners and studied by

Toronto Metropolitan University's Bridging Divides researchers, will serve as the case example to surface real-world considerations and guide shared learning.

- Moderator: Jennifer Freeman, PeaceGeeks
- Ladi Onasanya, PeaceGeeks
- Rupa Bannerjee, TMU

## Employer Navigator - Strengthening Employer Capacity to Unlock Immigrant Talent

This workshop will share findings and lessons from a cross-Canada pilot of the Employer Navigator, a hybrid service designed to support employers in recruiting, onboarding, and retaining immigrant talent. A joint initiative of WES and the Immigrant Employment Council of British Columbia, the Employer Navigator pairs a custom-built digital platform with concierge-style support offered by employment engagement specialists. The session will share early outcomes and practical tools that empower employers to efficiently hire immigrants and contribute to equitable workforce integration. Participants will discover the model's potential to unlock immigrant talent and strengthen employer capacity in Canada's evolving immigration landscape.

- Daniel Cervan Gil, WES: Community Co-Design and Implementation Rania Younes, IEC-BC: A Novel Approach to Employer Engagement Brindha Ganesan, IEC-BC: Employer Engagement in BC: Reflections from the IEC-BC Navigator Team
- Jessie Castello, WES: Evaluating the Pilot: Early Outcomes and Reflections

## Digital by Default, Equity by Design: Scalable Information Delivery for Newcomers in a Changing Landscape

As immigration patterns and services vary across regions, equitable outcomes increasingly depend on newcomers accessing reliable, timely information in the language and format that works for them. This session highlights a multilingual, multi-format digital ecosystem as essential infrastructure that can reduce misinformation, shorten support time, and improve readiness through every stage of decision-making. We demonstrate how digital delivery can support newcomers throughout their entire journey: from the moment someone considers immigrating to Canada, through pre-arrival, arrival, and long-term settlement. Orientation to Ontario will be presented as a best-practice model, shared in partnership with TBMA and CCI.

- Ruchika Singh, COSTI
- Cathy Woodbeck, TBMA
- Sofiane Maghrebi, CCI

- Rahila Mushtaq, COSTI
- Arshia Azam, COSTI

## Optimizing Newcomer Success: An Integrated Model for Settlement and Employment Services

Effective newcomer integration is often hindered by siloed service delivery. This proposal presents the need for stronger strategic and operational alignment between settlement and employment teams, both within organizations and across the national service ecosystem. We will introduce a proven, data-driven framework enabling seamless referrals, shared case management, and coordinated planning across agencies. This integrated model moves to accelerate economic integration and strengthen long-term outcomes for newcomers. Designed for nationwide scalability, the framework offers adaptable best practices that enhance cross-organizational collaboration, improve NAARS consistency, and create a more coherent, client-centered system of support.

- Moderator: Mohamed Bagha, Saint John Newcomers Centre
- Tavia Han, Saint John Newcomers Centre
- Lina Gharbiya, Saint John Newcomers Centre

## Building Responsive Programs for Underserved Populations in Their Communities

This workshop discusses how the Centre for Newcomers assists underserved seniors, children, and families through its Community-Based LINC for Seniors with Digital ESL support program, the Community-Based Child-Care for Newcomers (CBCNC), and a long-standing daycare partnership. Presenters share collaborative approaches to reducing barriers, identifying community needs, and building inclusive programs for diverse communities.

- Man (Mandy) Xu, Centre for Newcomers
- Zi Ye, Centre for Newcomers

## Co-Designing a New Digital Model for Settlement Information Delivery to Newcomers

Refugee 613 is scaling up its national Newcomer Info Hub (NIH) service for digital settlement information through expanded content production, enhanced dissemination models, and deeper engagement with sector stakeholders. Metropolis attendees are invited to join an interactive co-design exercise for a new pilot for information dissemination to newcomers. Participants are invited to bring their knowledge, expertise

and insights to help shape the design and early testing of this digital model. Refugee 613 will also share preliminary findings from its most recent research into digital settlement information delivery.

- Moderator: Louisa Taylor, Executive Director, Refugee 613 Zarin Eizadyar, Research and Knowledge Mobilization Specialist, Refugee 613 Adedamola Ogungbe, Digital Strategist, Refugee 613
- Justine Trinh, Communications and Project Coordinator, Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)
- Rahila Mushtaq, Director of Social Services, COSTI Immigrant Services

## Data and Tech Insights for Canada's Immigration Future: How innovation can accelerate services, capacity, and outcomes

Canada's immigration priorities are changing rapidly while emerging tech revolutionizes the way we collect and use data. While innovation offers significant promise, harnessing it requires holistic, ethical, and client-centered approaches. This panel brings together leaders working at the intersection of tech, data, and immigration to improve processes, insights, and outcomes. They will explore approaches to bridge tech, social impact, and governance. Examples include novel computational methods for skills and job matching, harnessing preferences and experiences to understand mobility trajectories, using existing data to optimize organisational resources, and funders' expectations for data-driven, people-centered monitoring & evaluation.

- Moderator: Alice Craft, Signal49 Research
- Craig Damian Smith, Pairity - Co-Founder, VP Policy & Social Impact
- Abdulla Daoud, The Refugee Centre - Impact Manager, Northpine Foundation / Executive Director, The Refugee Centre
- George Carothers, Institute for Canadian Citizenship – Senior Director, Ideas & Insights

## Recent findings from IRCC's Settlement Program Evidence Base

IRCC will present on three different topics. First, using the most up-to-date data available, we'll present an overview of trends we are seeing under the first year of the new agreements. Next, we'll provide an overview of the 2025 Settlement Outcomes Report (will hopefully have been published at that time). Last, we'll provide more recent research findings and link it to how that evidence is informing the ongoing renewal of the Program.

- Meghan Foran, IRCC, Looking Forward: How Evidence is Informing Evolution
- Fadoua ElBouamraoui, IRCC, 2025 Settlement Outcomes Report

- Meghan Foran, IRCC, Recent Trends in IRCC's Settlement Program Data

## POSTERS

### Empowering CLIC Instructors Through CCLB Digital Resources

P12 This presentation showcases key resources from the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks to support CLIC instructors. These include practical teaching tools such as workshops, online modules, instructional videos, and classroom activities designed to support language development. The materials help instructors plan lessons, assess learners' progress, and apply CLB competencies in real-world communication. Overall, these resources provide clear guidance and best practices to ensure effective learning at all proficiency levels.

- Kaouter Mekersi, Centre des niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens
- Raoul Daguilh, Centre des niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens
- Shannita Martineau, Centre des niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens
- Mohamed Taha Rahmouni, Centre des niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens

### Reconceptualizing Language Training Provision amid Immigration Reductions and Program Cuts: An Analysis of CanAvenue

This poster examines CanAvenue, a free, self-paced English and French language learning and settlement-orientation platform, as a scalable model of digital language and settlement support for newcomers. Through analysis of platform features and early implementation insights, it explores how self-directed online learning can address gaps created by waitlists, limited classroom access, and diverse learner needs. The poster considers pedagogical design, cultural relevance, and digital-literacy outcomes, and discusses implications for integrating policy and service delivery. Findings suggest that free, flexible platforms like CanAvenue can play a significant role in expanding equitable access to language learning in Canada's evolving immigration.

- Sepideh Alavi, New Language Solutions
- Rob McBride, New Language Solutions