



# **TULSA PROFESSIONAL CONNECTOR PROGRAM**

**Toolkit for Connectors**





## WELCOME!

### Thank you for participating in the Tulsa Professional Connector Program (TPCP) as a Connector.

The Tulsa Professional Connector program is one of the immigrant and refugee inclusion efforts by the City of Tulsa toward having a more robust, diverse, and inclusive community as a world-class city. It is a unique and innovative workforce development initiative to support the growth and development of a more highly skilled workforce and foster connections between immigrants and long-term residents. It is designed to broaden a job seeker's network through one-on-one in-person meetings with established business leaders and professionals of the fields within the community. Expanding connections based on similar interests and backgrounds has proven to be very effective for newcomers.

Tulsa Professional Connector Program is a simple, effective, no-cost referral process that puts internationally skilled immigrants in touch with highly networked individuals and professionals in the field. The objective of this program is to enable internationally skilled immigrants to get connected to the local workforce, build their professional network and settle more successfully in the City of Tulsa. The networking session will begin with an informational meeting such as a coffee chat to build a professional relationship between the Connectee and Connector. During or after the initial meeting, the Connector will provide three referrals to the Connectee to expand his or her professional network. The Connectee and Connector can decide whether they want to have a one-on-one check-in after the initial meeting.



## BE A CONNECTOR: BUILDING BRIDGES IN TULSA

The purpose of the Tulsa Professional Connector program is to put internationally skilled immigrants, newcomers, young professionals and recent immigrant college graduates in Tulsa directly in touch with business owners, community leaders, and professional experts... People like you!

The economic future of Tulsa hangs in the balance, dependent on our ability to recruit, develop, and retain the talents of Tulsans, ensuring a workforce that is both robust and diverse. By achieving this, we can unlock the region's economic potential and create a landscape of prosperity and growth.



## WHO ARE CONNECTORS?

Connectors are successful professionals with well-established professional networks within the community and Tulsa area who:

- Know large numbers of people
- Enjoy making introductions and connecting people
- Are effective communicators and can give supportive and constructive feedback
- Have a desire to support immigrants and refugees by building their network



## HOW DOES THE PROGRAM BENEFIT CONNECTORS?

The Connector Program gives you access to the global marketplace by putting you directly in touch with professionally skilled immigrants in Tulsa. By getting involved, you have access to local talents, connect talented people with job opportunities and resources, create a more welcoming community within your region, and help your industry and city grow.

### What is the Time Commitment?

This program requires a minimal time commitment of 45 to 60 minutes to meet with a Connectee.



## BY BECOMING A CONNECTOR, YOU ...

- Make Tulsa a more welcoming and diverse community and contribute to talent retention
- Grow your own network as well as demonstrating you are an industry leader and professional by sharing your knowledge and expertise
- Build brand awareness about your organization
- Open doors for people and help them succeed and stay in Tulsa.



## HOW DOES THE PROGRAM BENEFIT EMPLOYERS?

The Tulsa Professional Connector Program supports immigrant-serving organizations, local businesses, and career centers to engage and increase the likelihood of expanded partnerships and collaboration.

**Some of the benefits for the Employer include:**

- Increase inspiration to integrate immigrants into the local workforce
- Increase employer awareness & interest toward hiring refugees
- Increase employer engagement in immigrant workforce development
- Build a pool and network of skilled immigrants, residents, and employers



## CONNECTOR'S ROLE

**As a Connector, your role includes:**

- Meet the Connectee in-person at a public space for 45–60 minutes
- Listen, ask questions, and share knowledge of current market demands and the skills that are required
- After meeting with the Connectee, you are required to introduce the Connectee to three relevant referrals from your network, essentially helping them create a basic professional network. You can also connect them with available employment or educational resources such as credential evaluation services
- We suggest sending an email to your three referrals to inform them about the Connectee. (Refer to the email template in the FAQ section)
- Provide honest feedback to the Connectee.
- Share information about the program with your network, so they can refer new Connectors or Connectees

### Is This A Mentorship Program?

While we encourage our Connectors to build relationships beyond the first meeting, this is not a mentorship program. The Connectors' commitment is an informational meeting that is 45 to 60 minutes per year.



## EXPECTATIONS FROM CONNECTEES

Connectees are expected to:

- Set up a meeting with the Connector
- Arrive prepared and on time for the meetings with Connectors
- Demonstrate professionalism during all meetings
- Respect the time and dedication of the Connector
- Ensure business inquiries and concerns align with the goal of finding work in their related field
- Be responsible for subsequent contact with the Connectors and any other referrals provided

### How does TPCP screen the Connectee?

Each participant is screened by the Program Coordinator or partner organization before being matched with a Connector. Participants that lack in work experience may make up in their skill set, education and willingness to learn. The business network created from this program will connect them to opportunities available in Tulsa.

Applicants who are not deemed employment-ready by the Program Coordinator will be referred to community partners for additional training before participating in the Connector program.



## HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

In order to be considered as a Connector or Connectee, submit an application at: [www.cityoftulsa.org/tpcp](http://www.cityoftulsa.org/tpcp)

### Step 1: Match

The Program Coordinator will email you when you are matched with a Connectee with similar educational background, experience or profession. You will receive an email with the Connectee's resume, and the Connectee will contact you to set up a meeting. **Please respond to the Connectee within 48 to 72 hours.** Please be aware that the meeting must occur within two weeks of the email interaction. We prefer for you to have an in-person meeting.

### Step 2: Connect

A 45 to 60 minute informational meeting is held between you and your Connectee. This is where you will be asked questions related to your work experience, company, and/or industry sector. No preparation is required.

### Step 3: Refer

During or after the meeting, your responsibility is to provide the Connectee with three referrals within your network.

### Step 4: Survey

You may be emailed a brief survey following your meeting or you can follow up directly with the program coordinator. You can reflect on your Connectee meeting and program experience. Your response directly impacts program efficiencies.



## INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS

An informational meeting is an opportunity for the Connectee to learn through the Connector's professional experiences by asking questions related to their career progression, occupation, or industry.



## MANAGING REFERRALS

### Why is providing referrals important?

Connectees are involved in the Connector program because they have limited connections and are looking to build their professional network. Referrals are extremely valuable to Connectees as they allow them to:

- Gain information from different professional perspectives that can be applied to their career or job search
- Meet knowledgeable and experienced professionals in the community
- Have a better understanding of the local job market and industry of interest

### How soon should referrals be provided?

Connectors are strongly encouraged to provide referrals during or within two weeks of meeting with the Connectee.

## Potential referrals:

- Referrals include anyone within your personal or professional network who would be a good resource for the Connectee
- These could include: Executives, Managers, HR professionals, influential business leaders, members of industry associations, or even someone who is looking to fill a job vacancy
- Notify the potential referrals in 24 to 48 hours that their contact information has been shared with the Connectee
- Invite the Connectee to a local networking event or attend an association networking event with the Connectee

*Note: While most Connectees seek a job, some are also open to volunteer activities to help them break into the job market in certain sectors.*

We know you will do your best to provide the Connectee with at least three referrals. There is no 'perfect' match but making connections based on similar interests and backgrounds works well for professional newcomers and also benefits our community.

## Which resources are best for referrals – educational, employment, others?

After you have been matched with a Connectee and have met with them, you can connect them to educational and employment resources based on their need. You can refer them to organizations that can help with mock interviews, restructure and evaluate their resume and align them with local culture and needs, internship opportunities, scholarships and tuition fees, and credential evaluation resources.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What happens after you agree to meet with the Connectee?

- The Program Coordinator will introduce you to the Connectee via email. The email will provide details including your name, title, employer, contact information, and a brief biography. Most Connectors are on LinkedIn so the Connectee may look you up in advance.
- The Connectee will contact you directly to arrange an informational meeting at your convenience.
- Following the informational meeting the Connector will provide a warm introduction to three contacts. It is then the Connectee's responsibility to arrange informational meetings with these contacts.

### Where will the informational meeting take place?

The meeting will be scheduled ideally at a convenient public location of your choice, such as a coffee shop or gathering place. In-person meetings are recommended, but may not always be possible.

### What happens at the informational meeting?

You could discuss the following topics with your Connectee:

- Professional background, skills and areas of expertise
- Sector-related news
- Industry-specific labor demands
- Potential career opportunities within your industry in the Tulsa area
- Networking tips
- Where they should apply for a job
- How can they tailor their resume and make it more professional?

### How does the referral process work?

As a Connector, you are asked to provide three referrals to the Connectee within two weeks of your meeting. We highly encourage that each of your referrals provide three additional contacts to the Connectee if needed. The basic business network created from this program will better connect immigrants and graduates to the opportunities available in Tulsa.

### Do I need to keep in touch with the Connectee?

For this program, we do not expect a 'mentor connection' where you would routinely keep in touch. It is up to you if you would like to stay connected but it is not expected. We do hope that the Connectee will share the good news with you when they secure employment.

## Do we have to be able to offer a job to the Connectee?

- No. The purpose of this program is to help Connectees grow their professional networks, learn more about the local business community and accelerate their job search and community integration.
- Connectees are aware that the goal of the Connector Program is to enhance their networking skills and current job search strategies.
- They are aware that there is no guarantee they will find employment through the program.

## Am I a Connector?

If you answered yes to all of these questions, **Congratulations!** You are a Connector candidate. Please complete your application to register as a Connector. We will be in touch with you soon.

- ✓ I am an employed or retired industry professional with at least five years' experience in my field.
- ✓ I have a welcoming and inclusive attitude toward foreign-trained professionals and want to make Tulsa an inclusive and welcoming city.
- ✓ I am willing to refer my Connectee to at least three other people in my network with relevant backgrounds and career interests.
- ✓ I agree to communicate with the Tulsa Professional Connector Team.
- ✓ I agree to adhere to all requirements of this program.



## REGISTER AS A CONNECTOR

Fill out the Connector application form at:

 [www.cityoftulsa.org/tpcp](http://www.cityoftulsa.org/tpcp)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

 [tulsaconnectors@cityoftulsa.org](mailto:tulsaconnectors@cityoftulsa.org)