

## IRCC Dedicated Service Channel

### Evergreen Questions and Answers for Referral Partners

#### General

#### 1. Why is this Dedicated Service Channel being created?

Canada is an attractive place for companies to move to or scale-up their operations, but ensuring they can access the talented workers they need quickly can be a concern. IRCC is launching this service channel to help domestic and foreign companies meet their immigration needs when they are making a significant, job-creating investment in Canada. The Dedicated Service Channel will aim to support the work of other federal departments and provincial and territorial governments that are working to bring major investments to Canada.

#### 2. Why the emphasis on significant investment?

While we'd love to offer specialized services to all companies investing in Canada that have immigration needs, we need to focus our resources on helping those companies that will have the greatest impact on the Canadian economy.

#### 3. What do you mean by significant investment?

A significant investment is a new endeavour in an existing firm's operations, or the entrance of a firm that is beginning operations in Canada that will result in a substantial improvement to the Canadian, provincial/territorial, regional or local labour market or economy, without displacing jobs for Canadians.

In assessing the significance of an investment, referral partners may wish to consider a combination of factors, including the amount of the investment, new jobs for Canadians, and the labour market and/or economic impact in the region. In some cases there may be capital investment, such as a head office being relocated. In other cases, the significant investment may be entirely job creation.

#### 4. What kinds of companies will qualify for this new service?

We're targeting the following categories:

- **High value investments:** Large scale investments made by foreign or multinational companies in Canada.
- **High potential (high growth) companies:** Companies with proven market acceptance and a capacity for accelerated growth that will significantly impact the Canadian economy, as well as start-up companies for which the recruitment of highly-skilled foreign talent will positively impact the company's growth.

Current as of June 1, 2017

- **Innovative Companies:** Companies with a focus on innovation and willingness to scale-up and grow that are operating in Canada and recruiting global talent via Employment and Social Development Canada's Global Talent Stream of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

We will also have a category for foreign nationals awarded a research chair position at a Canadian university.

**5. Can any company that defines themselves as innovative, high-value, or high-potential access the channel?**

Access to the channel will be based on a referral system. Companies will not be able to directly approach the service channel.

**6. Can a referral partner refer any company under the categories of innovative, high-value, or high-potential?**

It depends. Each referral partner will be able to refer companies for some or all of the categories listed above. The exact categories for which a partner may refer will be contained in their individual arrangement.

**7. Won't the eligibility criteria for the channel disproportionately benefit large multinationals?**

We've left the eligibility criteria intentionally broad so that a wide variety of firms, both domestic and international, larger and smaller, can qualify.

**8. Is access to the channel limited by economic sector?**

So long as a company meets one of the eligibility criteria and is appropriately referred, they will be eligible for service by the new channel. There is no list of eligible or ineligible sectors. All sectors may benefit.

**9. Where will the channel be located? Will there be regional representation or officials that we can work with?**

We expect that the vast majority of employees working in the dedicated service channel will be located in Ottawa. The extent and nature of regional representation via the channel is still being determined.

**10. When will the channel be ready to offer services?**

The channel will be launched on June 12, 2017.

## **Services Offered**

### **11. What services will be offered by the Dedicated Service Channel?**

Referred companies will be linked with a dedicated “account manager” that will provide services such as: information on available immigration program options; explanation of processes; linking investing companies to relevant operational staff in Canada or abroad, and; serving as a coordinating point of contact to ensure smooth processing and communication. The dedicated service channel will not itself process applications or guarantee positive decisions, nor offer new, tailored exemptions from application requirements.

### **12. Who actually gets the service? Is it the company or the potential applicant?**

For high-value investments, high-potential and innovative companies, the service will be offered to the company, not foreign nationals. It will be the responsibility of the company to determine how it will coordinate or communicate the needs of their employees to the service channel. Direct communication with a foreign national would only occur where required by law.

For research chairs, the service will be offered to the foreign national and/or their representative.

### **13. How will you provide updates on case-specific information if you’re dealing with the company, not the applicant?**

Companies wishing to obtain information about a potential employee’s application will be required to follow normal privacy procedures and obligations, including designation of authorized representatives. More information on this procedure will be available once companies have been referred to the channel.

### **14. Will the channel be processing applications or offering expedited services?**

No. All applications, regardless of services offered by the Dedicated Service Channel, will be referred to the appropriate processing network; they will not be processed by Dedicated Service Channel employees. Expedited processing will not be guaranteed to a company who is part of the service channel unless such processing is already available through other means (eg: two-week processing of select work permits). All applications will be processed in accordance with the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, its regulations, and other relevant policies.

### **15. Will the channel provide services focused on temporary residents, permanent residents, or both?**

We expect that the vast majority of inquiries will be related to foreign workers seeking to work in Canada temporarily and their accompanying family members. However, we also expect to offer information on permanent residence where required.

Current as of June 1, 2017

**16. Who is the IRCC employee that will be offering the service? Will a company have a dedicated client service officer?**

We expect staff of the dedicated service channel will have a wide variety of immigration experience and will be knowledgeable about IRCC programs. To the extent possible (accounting for turnover, etc), we hope that a company will be able to work with the same client service officer for the duration of their experience with the channel.

**17. How long can a company use the dedicated service channel?**

The Dedicated Service Channel is there to assist companies as they mobilize foreign talent to support their significant investment. The duration of the company's use of the Dedicated Service Channel will depend on the nature and stage of their investment, what their foreign talent needs are, and how long it takes them to move to or scale-up in Canada.

**18. Can a company that has been referred to the dedicated service channel in the past be referred again?**

Yes. Companies that have previously made significant investments may have built on their success and made new decisions to expand.

**Promotion of the Channel**

**19. What is the channel called? Will it be given a name?**

At this time, the channel is being referred to as the Dedicated Service Channel.

**20. What information will be publically available about the channel?**

As the channel will only be accessible on a referral basis, we are not planning wide-spread promotion of the new service. We wouldn't want to place our referral partners in a situation where they are flooded with requests for referral. We may update our website to provide a brief overview of the channel for June 12<sup>th</sup>. In the future, we also expect that, in the interests of transparency, the names of our referral partners will be made available publicly on our website.

**21. As a non-governmental or not-for-profit organization, can I promote the fact that I am a referral partner for IRCC's Dedicated Service Channel?**

A referral partner may share information about their ability to refer eligible companies to the channel as they wish. However, this promotion must not bring material benefit to the referral partner (ie: referral partners cannot use their ability to access the dedicated service channel for financial gain) and must not portray the referral partner as an agent, employee, or servant of the Government of Canada.

## **On making an actual referral**

### **22. When is the right time to make a referral? Does the company need to have actually made an investment decision? Does the company need to be ready to make immigration applications?**

You can make a referral to the Dedicated Service Channel at various stages of investment. The Dedicated Service Channel will make account managers available to answer questions whether the investment is still at the planning stage or whether a company is ready to submit applications to mobilize the talent it needs to move or scale up the business in Canada.

### **23. What will I need to do as a referral partner?**

Your primary role as a referral partner will be to assess any given company against the criteria identified in the referral arrangement. If, in your opinion, a company meets the referral criteria AND has foreign talent needs, you may refer the company to the channel.

### **24. What information will you require from me as part of the referral?**

Once a company has been assessed as eligible for referral to the channel, the referral partner will send an email to [IRCC.DSC-MSR.IRCC@ci.gc.ca](mailto:IRCC.DSC-MSR.IRCC@ci.gc.ca) with the following information:

- Name of referral partner
- Name of company being referred and their contact information
- Whether the company is domestic or foreign
- Describe briefly whether the company is considered to be high potential, innovative, is making a high value investment, or whether the referral is for a research chair.
- Describe briefly, for companies, how the investment meets the definition of significant investment

### **25. Do I have to prove that a company meets the eligibility criteria for a referral?**

No evidentiary proof will be required as part of the referral. This means that you don't have to collect or forward financial information, data, or business plans of the company. However, you do have to be able to describe, in writing and at a high level, how the company meets the definition of significant investment.

### **26. How will I make an actual referral? Will I have to send an email or call someone?**

All referrals must be made by email to [IRCC.DSC-MSR.IRCC@ci.gc.ca](mailto:IRCC.DSC-MSR.IRCC@ci.gc.ca).

### **27. Will I know when IRCC has acted upon a referral that I have submitted?**

Once a referral is received by IRCC, you will receive an email acknowledging receipt of the referral. Communication by the dedicated service channel will be undertaken directly with the referred company. IRCC will not include the referral partner in direct correspondence with the company in question.

**28. Am I limited in how often I can make a referral?**

There is no limit on how many referrals a partner can make in a given year, although IRCC reserves the right to implement limits as necessary. Limits could be implemented where the number of referrals exceeds our ability to provide reasonable service.

**29. Can my referral be refused by IRCC?**

Yes. While we appreciate the effort of referral partners to identify eligible companies for the channel, there may be situations where IRCC is not able to provide service to a company and will refuse the referral.

**30. Will I be told if my referral is refused?**

In the event that a referral is refused, you may be informed (with explanation) if doing so does not violate privacy or confidentiality policies of IRCC.

**31. Will I be given feedback on the quality of my referrals, or on areas for improvement?**

All MOUs contain either a review or a feedback mechanism. Should you have questions at any time about the referral process, please do not hesitate to contact the Dedicated Service Channel at [IRCC.DSC-MSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca](mailto:IRCC.DSC-MSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca).

**32. Who can I talk to if I have questions about making a referral?**

Referral partners wishing to talk with a representative of the Dedicated Service Channel can email the generic email inbox ([IRCC.DSC-MSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca](mailto:IRCC.DSC-MSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca)) and someone will respond to your query.

**On the referral arrangement**

**33. Is this a legal document? Is it legally binding?**

The referral arrangement is not a legally binding document.

**34. What are my obligations under the arrangement?**

As a referral partner, where you are aware of a significant investment that aligns with the criteria for the dedicated service channel, you agree to make referrals consistent with the process identified in the arrangement.

**35. Will I receive supports, financial or otherwise, as a referral partner?**

No. Referral partners are responsible to self-fund all activities undertaken in support of the arrangement.

**36. What if I'm not happy with my role as a referral partner? What can I do?**

While there is no formal dispute resolution mechanism under the arrangement, you are encouraged to communicate with the designated IRCC representative to voice any concerns you may have about the operation of the arrangement. Referral partners also retain the ability to cancel the agreement, the process for which is described in the arrangement.

**On connections with other federal government departments and agencies**

**37. How does this channel differ from the dedicated service channel being established by Employment and Social Development Canada as part of the Global Talent Stream?**

The service channel being created at Employment and Social Development Canada is focused exclusively on companies accessing the Global Talent Stream of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and offers expedited processing for labour market impact assessments. The IRCC Dedicated Service Channel will assist companies with a wide variety of immigration needs. Partners wishing to refer companies to the Global Talent Stream will require an agreement with ESDC.

**38. How will the IRCC Dedicated Service Channel work with other government departments?**

IRCC is committed to ensuring that companies who access the IRCC service experience seamless connections with other Government of Canada services for attracting investment and supporting economic growth. We will be working closely with Employment and Social Development Canada to ensure appropriate connections with respect to the Global Talent Stream.