

# Linguistic Mentorship Initiative



# Overview of today's presentation

- Organizational context
- Linguistic mentorship initiative: how we got here
- Where the initiative stands now
- Where we are going

# Organizational context



# About PERT

## Our mission

The Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT) is a non-profit organization working to address the employment challenges and opportunities of the English-speaking communities across Québec.

How we do it

Through policy & research, development, and engagement efforts, we collaborate with diverse partners including regional and community organizations, educational institutions, employment service providers, employers, and government. PERT is dedicated to building and strengthening employment support networks and ensuring inclusion in Québec's labour market for generations to come.



# New Strategic Plan Launched





# Strategic Plan Development Summary

## Development Process

Led by a subcommittee of three PERT board members—Trina Belanger, Rachel Hunting, and Malcolm Lewis-Richmond—supported by an external consultant and PERT’s Executive Director.

## Subcommittee Activities

- Held six meetings to review key documents and conduct internal and external scans.
- Developed a draft plan based on these findings.

## Consultation & Feedback

- Consulted PERT’s Board and associate members through three consultation sessions in summer 2024.
- Conducted a member survey to gather additional feedback.

## Outcome

Resulted in a comprehensive strategic plan addressing employability challenges and opportunities for Quebec’s English-speaking community.



# Five Key Shifts in Focus

1

**Expand and deepen relationships with francophone stakeholders**

2

**Communicate more assertively while leveraging a robust evidence-base**

3

**Identify and implement a PERT-driven research agenda**

4

**Develop innovative solutions to increase employability for the English-speaking community**

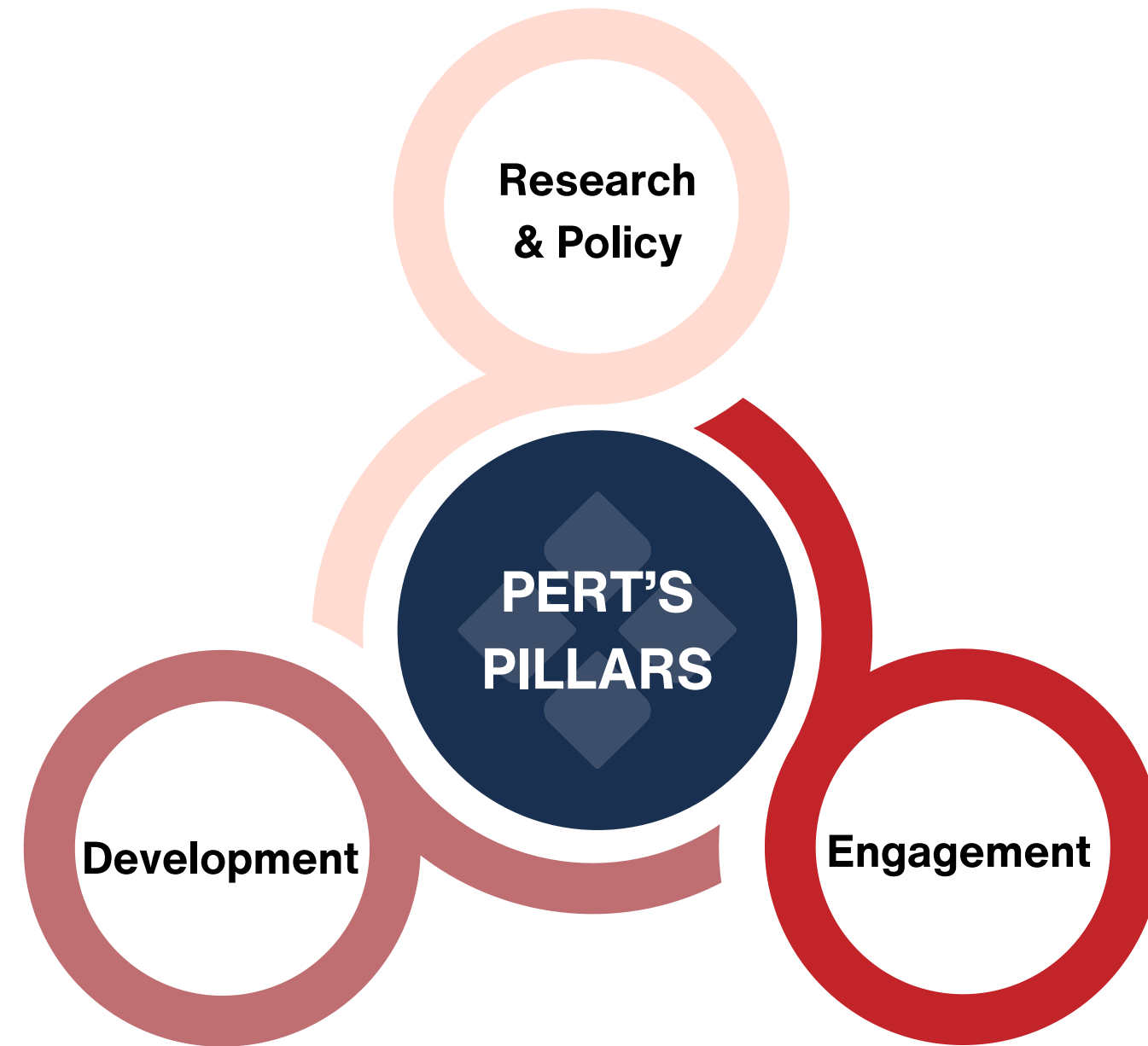
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**Grow PERT internally to be able to respond to new realities**





# Introducing a Third Organisational Pillar to Deliver Solutions







# Eleven Strategic Goals

## Engagement



### Goal 1

Inclusion of Québec's English-speaking community as a priority clientele within the action plans of the Government of Québec



### Goal 2

Develop and expand relationships with Francophone civil society partners



### Goal 3

Develop relationships with a broad base of employers and employer representative groups

## Research & Policy



### Goal 4

Improve the data environment on employability of the English-speaking community

## Strategic Capacity Building



### Goal 8

Mature PERT's HR capacity



### Goal 7

Diversify funding

## Development



### Goal 6

Explore and implement multi-stakeholder partnerships to develop and deliver innovative employability solutions



### Goal 5

Identify and implement PERT's research priorities



### Goal 9

Continue to strengthen the governance structure



### Goal 10

Ensure agility and strength of organisational practices



### Goal 11

Enhancing engagement with members



# Linguistic mentorship initiative

How we got here



# Our research

Since our founding in September 2020, PERT has published 35 reports and 8 briefs examining the employment and employability realities of English speakers living in Quebec.

These reports have allowed us to draw a clearer picture of the economic trends and employment profiles of English speakers in all 17 regions of Québec. They have also provided us with invaluable insights in to the French language learning infrastructure available to English speakers throughout out Quebec.



# **This is what we found**

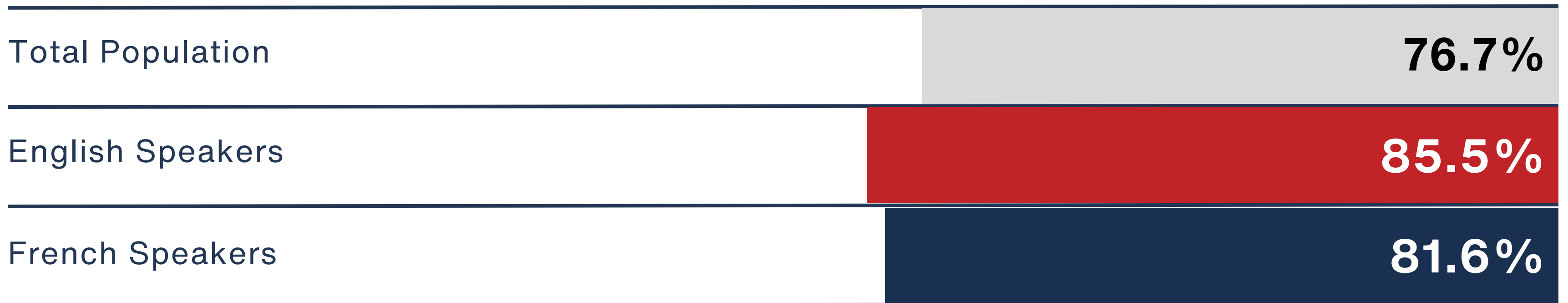




# Education

English speakers in Québec have higher educational attainment rates than French speakers (**85.5% vs 81.6%**) when comparing the rates for secondary education and higher.

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

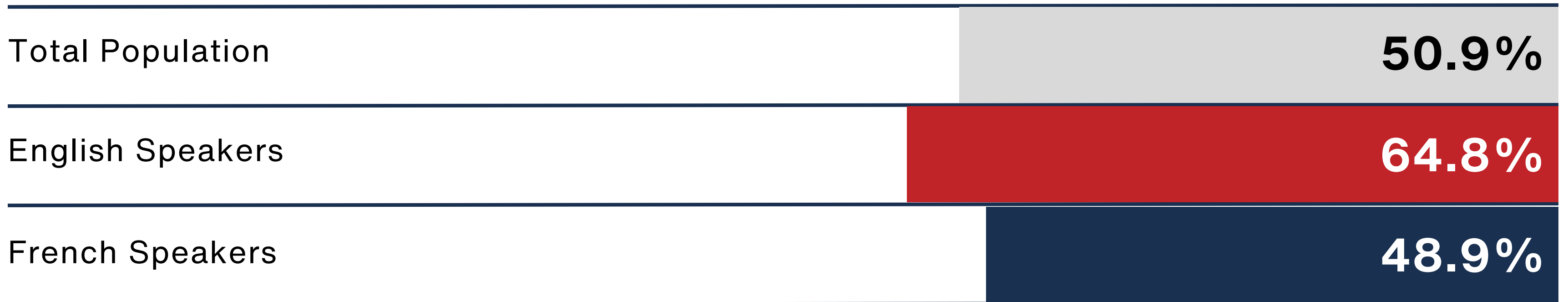




# Bilingualism

English-speaking Quebecers report higher rates of bilingualism compared to their French counterparts

## ENGLISH-FRENCH BILINGUALISM RATE





# Labour market participation

English speakers are also actively participate in Québec's labour market.

English speakers in Quebec, who represent **14.9%** of the population, actually have a higher rate of labour market participation than their francophone counterparts, and the total population.

## LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION

Total Population	64.1%
English Speakers	66.6%
French Speakers	64%



# Unemployment

## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

English Speakers

Total Population

7.6%

10.9%

French Speakers

6.9%

However, despite high labour market participation and high levels of bilingualism and high educational attainment rates, English speakers still experience significantly higher unemployment rates than their French-speaking counterparts **(10.9% vs 6.9%)**.



# What is causing this?



# Barriers to Employment

- Lack of access to English language employment services
- Limited access to English-language adult education, vocational training, and English-language CEGEPs or universities
- Mismatch between qualifications and regional employment opportunities
- **Lack of French language proficiency**



# Language Barriers

- There is a lack of availability of French-language training for English speakers.
- There is a lack of access to existing French-language training available to English speakers.
- There is a shortage of French teachers with the qualifications and experience required to teach French to adults.
- The majority of French-language training programs are poorly adapted for English-speaking communities, who often have a basic knowledge of French, but require a program to acquire a more advanced level of French.

# 9 Key Recommendations

To Improve Adult Language Learning in Québec





# Reports

Between April 2022 and November 2023, PERT published 4 reports on French Second-Language learning for adults in Québec.





# Recommendations

- Increase investments and improve availability of on the job language training programs.
- Improve program accessibility through investment in wrap-around supports and financial assistance for language learners.
- Improve the promotion and visibility of available French-language learning programs.



# Recommendations

- Strengthen collaboration among the Québec government, educational institutions, and professional bodies to address French-language needs and promote lifelong training.
- Increase collaboration between the government, the community sector, and the private sector to expand the provision of adult French-language training programs.
- Begin regularly collecting linguistic data to better track and understand the economic health of the community



# Recommendations

- Invest in educational staff to improve the quality and availability of French-language training programs.
- Develop programs that take into account the needs of diverse language learners.
- Expand the scope of French-language training programs to include immersive and informal learning experiences.

# Putting our recommendations into action





# Putting our recommendations into action



**August 16, 2022**

First meeting with Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration to present the findings of our F2L reports



**November 16-17, 2022**

Putting Language to Work Conference



**March 7, 2023**

Presented findings to Francisation Québec



**February 7, 2023**

Presented updated findings to MIFI following appointment of a new Minister



**November 6, 2023**

Presented findings of our latest reports to the cabinet staff of the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration



**November 27, 2023**

Discussed recommendations with the leadership at Francisation Québec



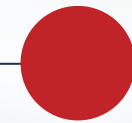


# Putting our recommendations into action



**December 11, 2023**

Received the official call for proposals for the mentorship & networking program



**January 31, 2024**

Submitted mentorship & networking Application



**March 4, 2024**

Confirmation that PERT would be awarded funding to launch a province-wide mentorship and networking initiative

# Where we stand now





# Where we stand now

## Hired:

- Community Engagement & Events Coordinator
- Policy Researcher
- Mentorship Consultant
- Pedagogical Consultant
- Marketing Firm

## Partnered with:

- Regional Development Network
  - Support with regional outreach
- Townshippers Association
  - Program development and evaluation
- Chambre de Commerce de Montreal
  - Support with Mentor recruitment
- Conseil du Patronat du Québec
  - Support with Mentor recruitment
- Concordia University
  - Support with Mentee recruitment

# To Launch...



# Circonflexe Mentorship Program



# WHËRE AÇCENTÛS DON'T MATTER.

Get down to business  
*en français.*

< Circonflexe  
Mentorship  
Program >

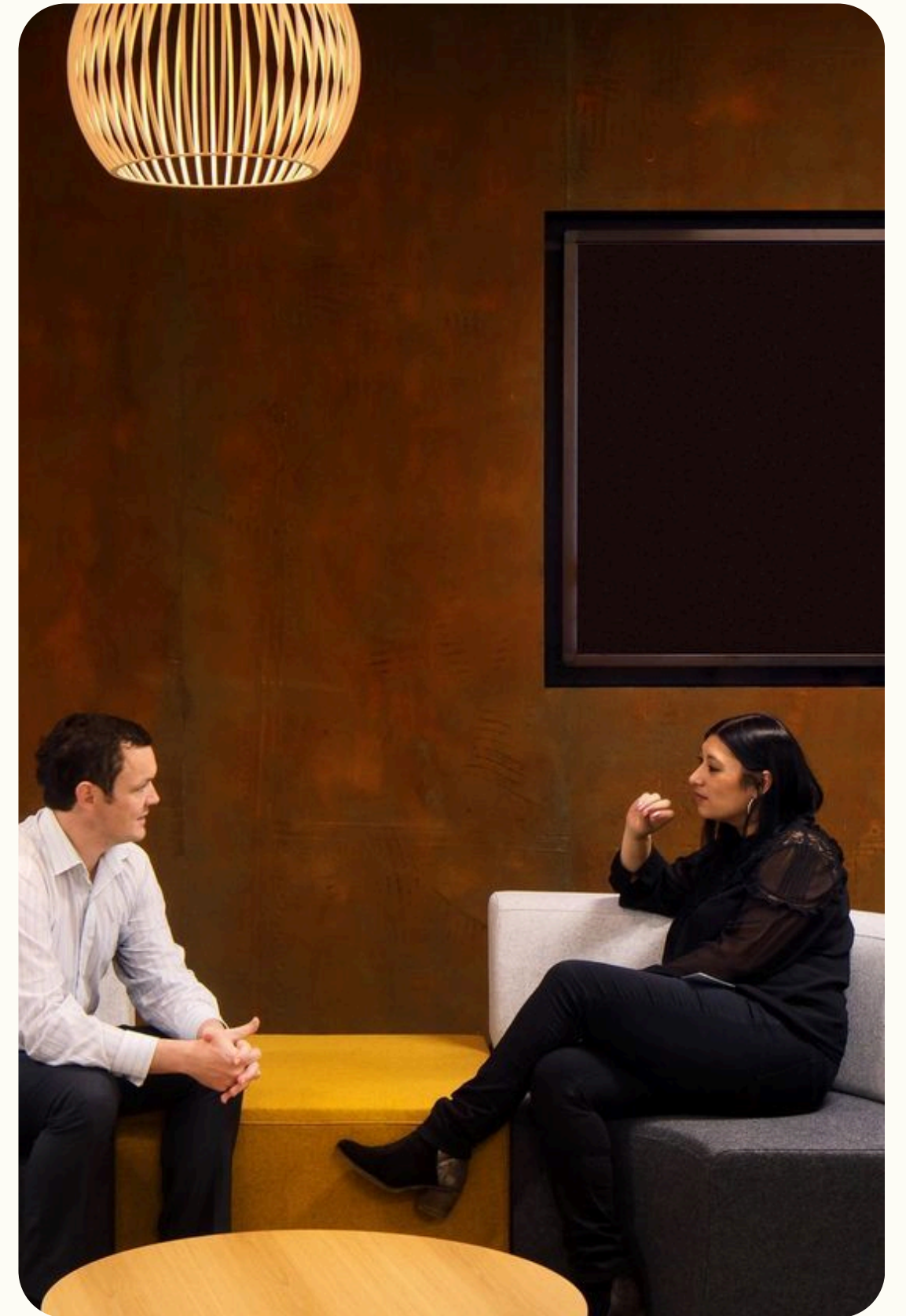
# PROGRAM OVERVIEW



# OBJECTIVES

< 1 >

Increase links and **linguistic exchanges** between English-speaking Quebecers and francophones in the job market



# OBJECTIVES

< 2 >

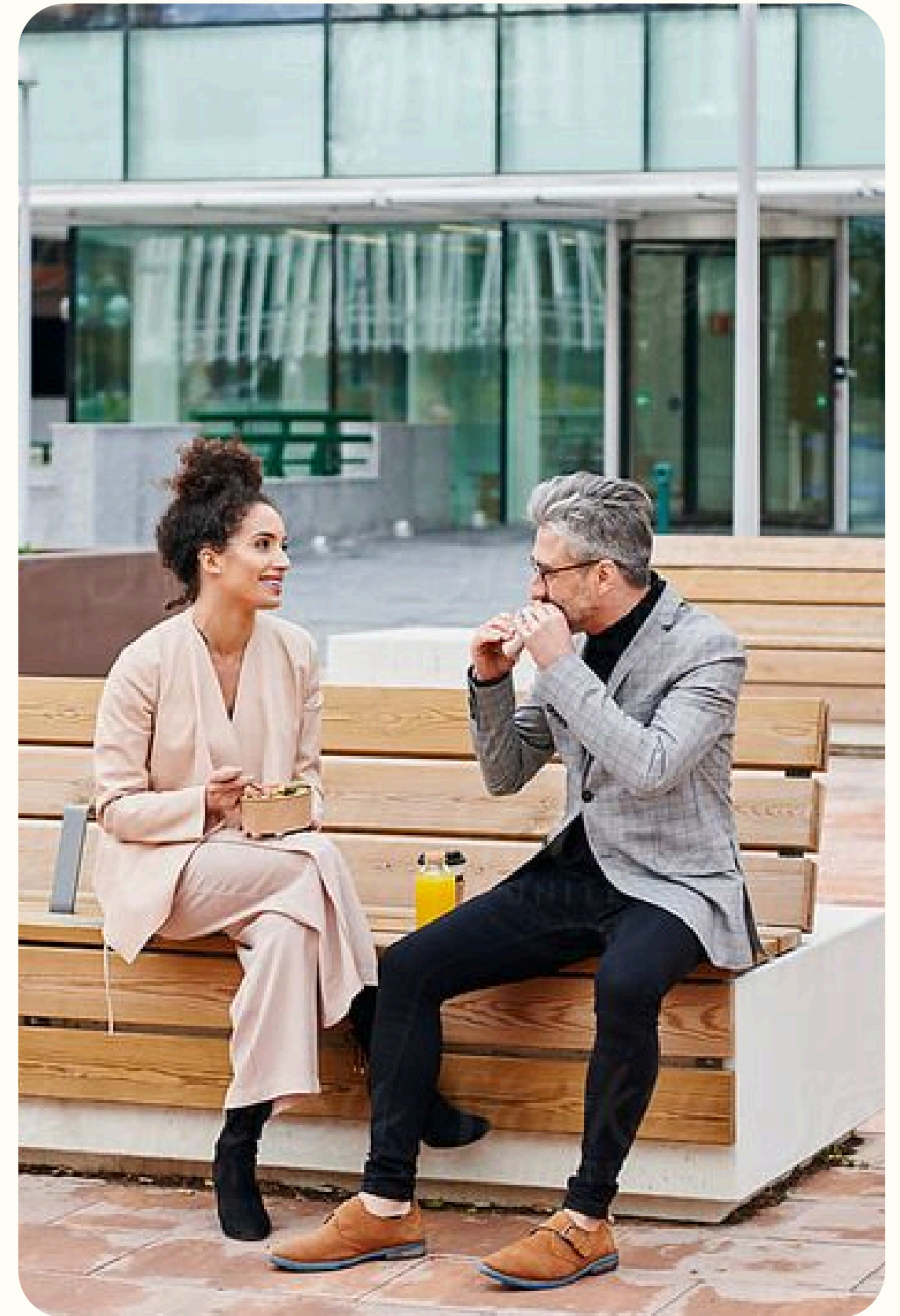
Improve English speakers' confidence and language skills when communicating in French-speaking workplaces and professional contexts.



# OBJECTIVES

< 3 >

Increase the **capacity of Quebec community organizations to meet the French-language learning needs of their local communities.**



# **INTENDED OUTCOMES**



**Increased confidence in the use of French in participants' professional exchanges.**



**Participants are aware of the benefits of continuing to learn and improve their French.**



# **INTENDED OUTCOMES**



**Participants have grown their French-speaking professional networks.**

**Participants feel confident using French in the workplace.**

# PROGRAM FORMAT



**MENTORSHIP**

**PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING**

# < Circonflexe Mentorship Program >

- **Program Type:** One-on-one mentorship
- **Target Audience:** English speakers across Québec seeking to improve French language skills
- **Mentor Criteria:** French-proficient professionals from various industries
- **Interaction:** 9-10 mentor-mentee sessions
- **Format:** Flexible, in-person or online via the secure Mentorly platform
- **Focus:** Conducted primarily in French to encourage real-life language practice

# MENTORSHIP RESOURCES

TOOLKITS

EXERCISES

WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS

PROGRESS TRACKING TOOLS

SELF-ASSESSMENT

**THE**

**PITCH**



**MENTORS**

**ENRICH YOUR  
PROFESSIONAL CIRCLE BY  
ENGAGING WITH ASPIRING  
FRANCOPHONES.**

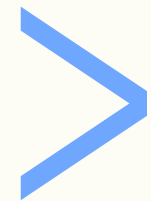


# MENTORS



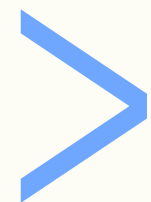
## **Make a difference:**

Contribute to the growth and vitality of Québec's professional landscape.



## **Expand your network:**

Connect with a diverse, province-wide community of professionals.



## **Be exposed to new perspectives:**

Engaging with a mentee can inspire new ideas and approaches to your own work, fostering innovation and creativity.



## **Enhance your skills:**

Mentoring often involves addressing challenges outside your usual scope of work, helping you develop a broader range of skills.



## **Enrich your career:**

Being recognized as a mentor can increase your influence and visibility within your industry or organization.

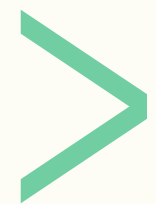


**MENTEES**

**IMPROVING YOUR FRENCH  
IS OUR BOTTOM LINE.**



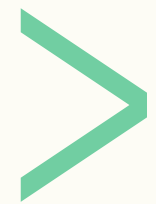
# MENTEES



Develop new interpersonal skills and acquire new competencies



Benefit from personalized support and advice from a seasoned professional

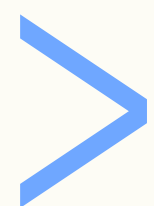


Grow your network

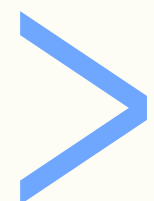


Increase self-efficacy and build confidence;

# OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE



**Locally run versions of Circonflexe  
across the province**



**Adaptation of the program to  
local realities**



**Support from PERT in the form  
of:**

- Resources
- Communications
- Outreach
- Program evaluation
- Other supports as needed

**CASE**

**STUDY**



# Inclusive Mentorship Initiative



*With the financial support of the:*

*Secrétariat aux relations  
avec les Québécois  
d'expression anglaise*



**Heather Ancliffe  
Program Manager**



# Inclusive Mentorship Initiative

## FRENCH LANGUAGE IMMERSIVE MENTORING

- **Improve language skills : confidence and fluency**
- **Cross-cultural sharing: building bridges between the two linguistic communities.**
- **Personalized guidance: one-on-one mentoring**
- **Experiential learning for practical application**



# What is the Inclusive Mentorship Initiative?

## Immersive French Language Mentorship Program

### THE HOW

- **Pair English-Speakers w/ French-speaking professionals**
- **Meet once per week: Virtually or in-person**
- **Immersion activities and group events**
- **Duration 5 months**

### THE WHY

- **Improve participants' comfort level when speaking French**
- **Estrie workforce is understaffed:**
  - **Increase employability**
  - **Networking**
- **Increased presence of bilingual staff in Region**





## Who can join the IMI?



- **English institution adult students who wish to improve their confidence when speaking French.**
- **English-speaking job seekers looking to improve their employability by increasing their French Skills**
- **Ages 18-50**
- **Lives in Estrie**



# Partnerships for recruitment:

- **The CIUSSS-E**
- **French-Speaking Community Organizations**
- **Champlain Regional College**
- **ETAGE: Eastern Townships Adult General Education**
- **Lennoxville Vocational Training Center**
- **Bishop's University: French Department**
- **English-Speak Community Organizations**

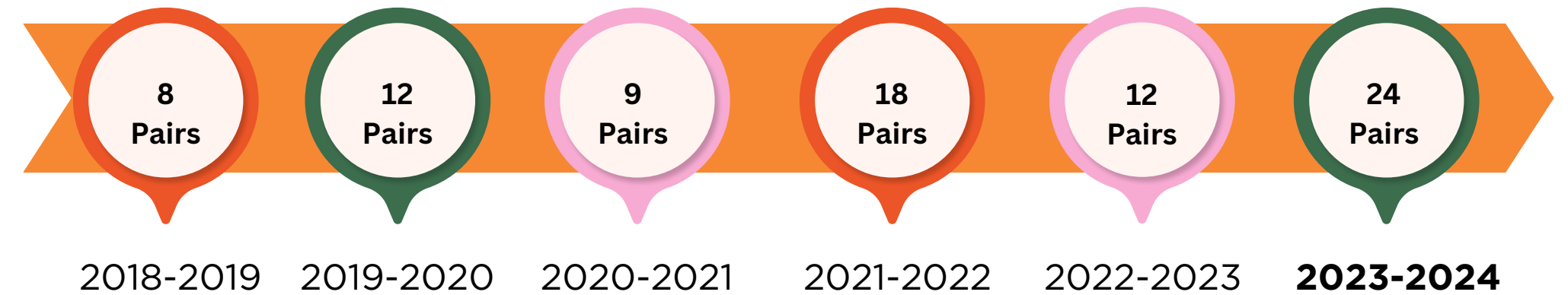


# Performance Summary 2023- 2024

6 PROFESSIONAL SECTORS REPRESENTED

6 COHORTS OF THE IMI

- Information technology
- Health and social services
- Education
- Administrative
- Professional, scientific & technical services
- Food and beverage





## 2024-2025 Thus Far

7 PROFESSIONAL SECTORS REPRESENTED

52 Participants

- Information technology
- Health and social services
- Education
- Administrative
- Professional, scientific & technical services
- Food and beverage
- **Community sector**

**26 Pairs**



## Manual Pairing Methods

### PAIRING BASED ON:

- **Field of work / studies**
- **Availability**
- **Location**
- **Meeting preferences: In-person / virtual**



# Optional French Evaluations

## French oral competency

- **2 sets of evaluations.**
- **1<sup>st</sup> is done at the start of the cohort – November.**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> is done at the end of the cohort - February.**
- **Used to personalize mentoring sessions, and,**
- **See how far the mentees have progressed at end of cohort**
- **Only French oral and comprehension skills are assessed**



## Bilingual Events Held for IMI Participants

DATE	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Oct 19, 2023	Virtual Meet and Greet Orientation	28
Dec 12, 2023	Speed Networking Event at Brewery	14
Jan 16, 2024	Virtual Budgeting Workshop	8
Feb 15, 2024	English Tea Networking at Heritage Centre	25





## A FEW KEY STRENGTHS OF THE IMI



- ENGAGING BOTH LINGUISTIC COMMUNITIES
- THE HIGH LEVEL OF PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION
- THE DIVERSITY OF EMPLOYMENT FIELDS
- CONTINUAL SUPPORT
- DIVERSITY OF THE RECRUITMENT METHODS
- “FUN” SOCIAL EVENTS: “Speak Dating” aka speed networking
- HIGH PARTICIPANT RETENTION
- RIGOROUS DATA COLLECTION
- IMPROVEMENT OF MENTEES’ CONVERSATIONAL FRENCH SKILLS



# Survey Highlights: Mentees



78%

said they felt their mentor was a good match for them (personality, interests, profession)

78%

said their mentors were able to support all their learning goals

96%

said they felt they improved their confidence, vocabulary, comprehension, and/or spelling in French

83%

said they have felt unqualified for a job because of their French skills in the past

83%

said they felt their participation in the IMI provided them with a sense of belonging

87%

said their expectations for this initiative were met



# Best Practices

- Pairing based on a personalized approach
- Hosting in person events: Networking
- Staff member available to oversee mentorship pairs
- Large recruitment pool: Backup mentors
- In person and virtual meetings
- Max capacity of 50 participants
- Learning resources and incentives
- Mentor appreciation
- French evaluations



Q&A

Thank you / Merci !



# Testimonials



**"Je me considère comme une apprenante avancée, et ce programme m'a beaucoup aidée avec mes compétences orales. Ça fait une grande différence lorsque nous pratiquons une langue avec un locuteur natif qui veut nous aider à nous améliorer.**

**Mon mentor m'a expliquée des expressions québécoises et elle m'a donné des suggestions d'émissions québécoises pour entendre des accents différents. De plus, nous avons fait des jeux de rôles ensemble pour que je puisse pratiquer des conversations spécifiques (par ex., expliquer mes symptômes chez le médecin, expliquer un problème avec mon four au technicien, expliquer mon travail pendant une réunion de réseautage). Je recommande ce programme aux personnes qui veulent être plus à l'aise en parlant français."**

**"A really good experience, I spread the word to a few latecomers, and they seemed happy with their outcomes too. I truly appreciated the opportunity."**

**"Thank you for doing this! I hope the government continues to invest in this program to integrate English-speakers."**

**"I'd like to join again! I am very thankful for this project, and I really appreciate you."**

**"Thank you for this opportunity :))))"**

**"Thank you, Heather, you are amazing and very motivated"**

**"Thank you so much for your help, support, and this opportunity! It is an incredible experience, and I appreciate these types of opportunities."**

**"Thank you so much, this was a great experience!"**

## **PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING EVENTS**

Our professional networking events will bring together French-speaking employers and professionals, as well as English-speaking Quebecers looking to improve their professional French skills and develop their French-speaking professional networks.



**Circonflexe  
Mentorship  
Program**

# **PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING EVENTS**

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!



**PARTNERS  
MENTORSHIP  
EVENTS FUND**



# PARTNERS MENTORSHIP EVENTS FUND

To strengthen our regional approach, we are looking to collaborate with local English-language community organizations and employment service providers to facilitate and host regional networking opportunities that will:

Convene French proficient individuals and French language learners to attend networking events. >

Offer valuable networking opportunities with professionals from various sectors. >

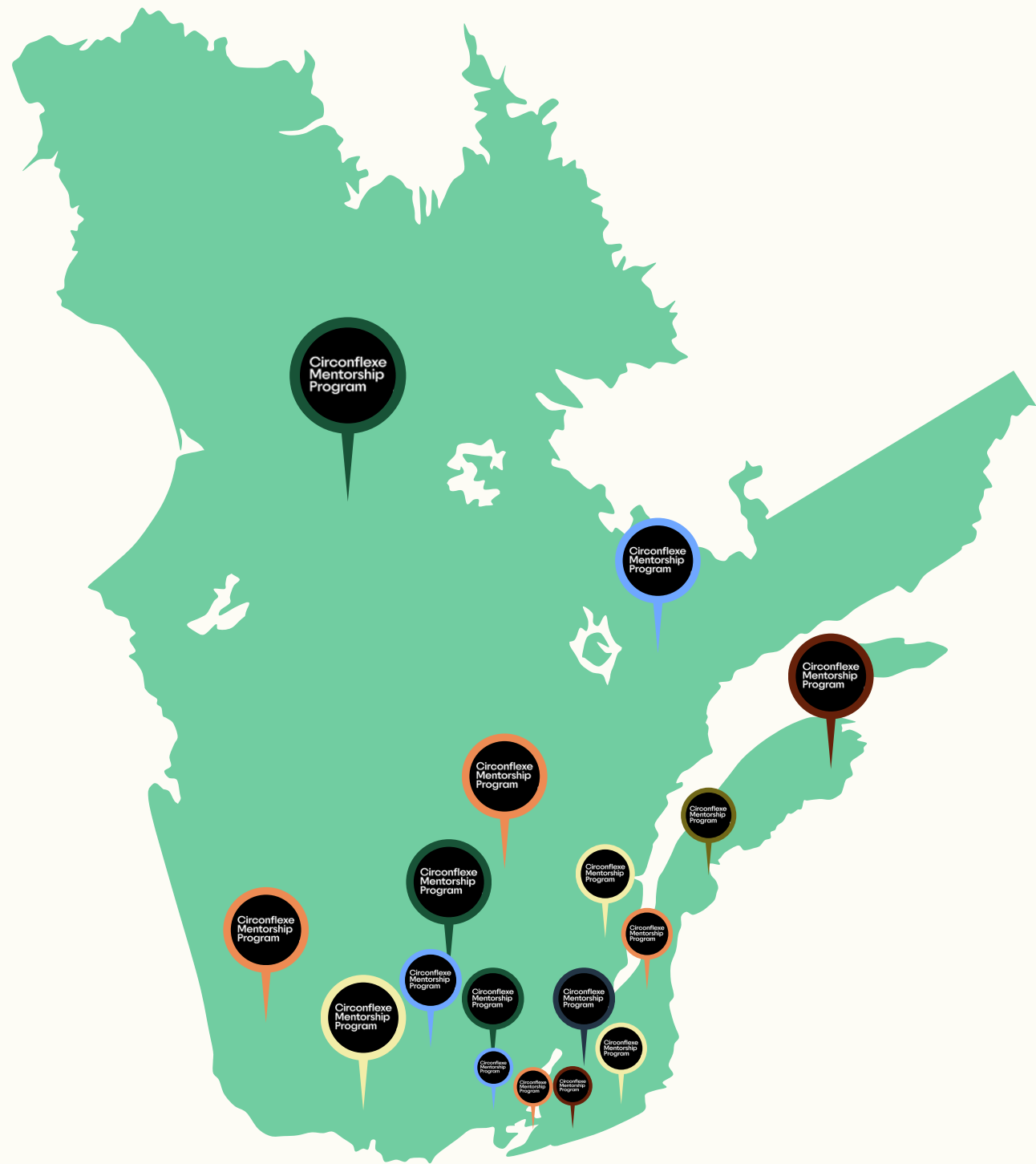
Foster potential mentorship pairings and employment opportunities. >

Serve as a space for mentor-mentee meetings and relationship-building.





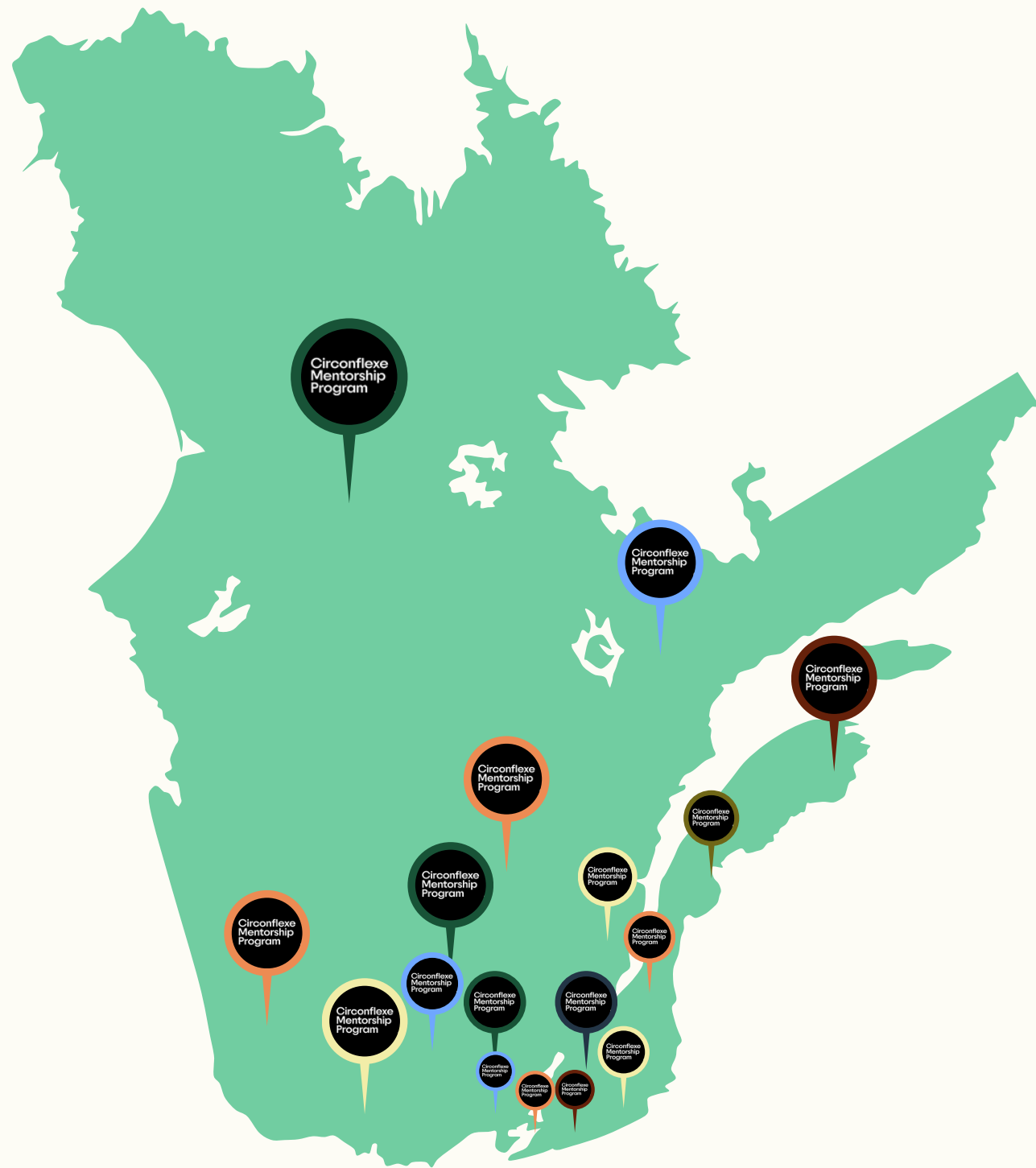
# PARTNERS MENTORSHIP EVENTS FUND



Regional inclusivity is central to our mission.

We aim to deploy Circonflexe across all of Québec's 17 administrative regions, providing English-speaking Quebecers with opportunities to develop French language skills, build professional connections, and succeed in a Francophone environment.

# NETWORKING SUPPORT STRUCTURE



The Partners Mentorship Events Fund:  
**\$90,000** in grants to community groups  
located outside of Montreal.

Applicants can submit a proposal of up  
**\$20,000** per project per year.

PERT will also provide support and guidance in  
the planning and execution of events.



**Partner with US**

**info@pertquebec.ca**

# PARTNERS



**WITH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF:**

*Immigration,  
Francisation  
et Intégration*

Québec 

**PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:**

