

Say you're hiring for a particularly important position, one that requires a very specific set of skills and experience. Finding the ideal candidate is hard enough, but what if the perfect person for the job lives in another country? We know that expanding your candidate search beyond of Canada's borders can seem intimidating, but when you're working with a team like BLANKSLATE Partners, you'd be surprised by how easy the path to immigration success can actually be.

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Rodrigo Horta and his wife, Livia, in B.C.

[Genoa Design International](#) came to us with a highly specific, technically advanced role that they needed to fill, and we knew from experience that the pool of qualified candidates was likely to be quite small. Finding someone in Vancouver, or even Canada, was going to be a tall order. We began a detailed recruitment search for naval architects that started in North America, but it soon expanded to encompass the globe. When we found **Rodrigo Horta** in Brazil, we knew we'd found a winner, and Genoa agreed.

BLANKSLATE Partners' work didn't stop there, though—when you're bringing a candidate across international borders, it helps to have an expert, like our **Alisa Nelson**, [RCIC](#), to guide the way forward.

We spoke with Rodrigo and Alisa about some of the challenges and benefits of immigrating to Canada—since Rodrigo now has his permanent residency, we can assure you that this story has a happy ending!

## **Rodrigo, tell us a bit about what you do with Genoa Design International.**

RH: I'm a Detail Design Manager for Genoa, so I'm responsible for the technical direction of the team back in Newfoundland. My main responsibility is matching and balancing the expectations on both sides to ensure that the team can meet the client's expectations, but also to make sure that those needs are in our best interests as well.

## **Alisa, what exactly is an RCIC, and how do you become one?**

AN: RCICs, or Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants, are consultants who are specially trained on Canadian immigration policies. We're licensed and nationally regulated to work on our clients' behalf. To become an RCIC, you have to take an immigration practitioner program, which takes about nine months of full-time study, and pass a regulatory exam.

## **Moving from Brazil to Canada is a pretty big step—what made you decide to move, Rodrigo?**

RH: Brazil had started to suffer an economic and political crisis, so that what's made me start considering a move abroad. I had a great job [in Rio], but I was a little bit uncertain about my future there. There was more stability in Canada, and it was a good opportunity to continue to work in my field.

## **Alisa, when and how do you typically get involved in**

## **the immigration process?**

AN: Generally, a company like Genoa comes to us with a candidate that they've found or want to sponsor for permanent residency. Most candidates come to Canada on a temporary work permit, which links their stay to the company that's sponsoring them. Once the new employee has gone through onboarding, clients can return to us to help with the permanent residency application.



Alisa Nelson, RCIC and HR  
Business Partner

I help choose the best immigration program and work with the candidate to create their application, which can include forms and supporting documentation like medical or police clearance, if necessary. I make sure the application is correct and complete, and then I submit it on the candidate's behalf.

## **Was there anything in particular that made you nervous about the move, Rodrigo?**

RH: There were a few things that made me nervous, definitely. The language, for sure. The cultural differences were an unknown as well. I wasn't sure what to expect because I hadn't been to Canada before. I was also concerned with how well my wife would adapt to living in Vancouver. That was probably my biggest concern.

## **Once you made it to Canada, what were some of the early challenges you didn't anticipate?**

RH: I think most of those were specifically related to Vancouver. The cost of living in Vancouver was not what I was expecting. I started preparing for the move about six months before we actually came, and the housing situation had changed a lot in that time.

There were some challenges we expected, though: everything was new! Genoa helped us with housing for the first month, but I also needed to get a new driver's license and a car, and paperwork for everything was different in Canada. A lot of things took me out of my comfort zone, because everything was brand new, all at once.

## **Alisa, does your RCIC work go beyond assisting with the initial application?**

AN: It can, depending on the client's familiarity with the immigration process. Usually, I prepare the candidate to cross the border, and then the employer handles onboarding. If they haven't hired a non-Canadian before, though, BLANKSLATE Partners offers full-service onboarding assistance on demand. We can help ease the stress of some of those new challenges!

## **How do you feel now, Rodrigo—was it worth it?**

RH: It was definitely worth it! I really enjoy living here, and Genoa is a great company. When we first moved here, my wife and I agreed that we would stay for two years, maybe five if we liked it. Now I've got my permanent residency, and we're planning for a future here.

## **What advice would you give to someone hoping for their own immigration success story?**

RH: It's important to recognize that it's a really big move, and there will be a lot of struggles. There are some great things in Canada, but be prepared for challenges. I'd recommend studying the place and the culture to get a better sense of it before moving.

AN: I always tell people to really assess their level of understanding and confidence in making their immigration applications. It's not a "one size fits all" approach—each individual is unique in their background. Finding a knowledgeable immigration expert can help expedite their process and save them money in the long term. It's really important to ensure they are dealing with someone who is qualified to give immigration advice, especially if this comes at a cost. Check out [Immigration Consultants Search](#) or [Lawyers & Paralegals](#) to ensure that you're dealing with a professional.

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Hoping to write your own immigration success story? [Contact us](#) for a free consultation now!