

Exciting immigration news for startups! **The Canadian Federal Government has announced a 2 week work permit program for [low-risk, high-skill talent](#).**

Last week we learned about two big program changes that will directly impact the technology sector in Canada. Until now, technology companies in Canada have faced long wait times and processes to bring skilled workers to Canada. Most tech companies have waited 2-5 months for LMIA or PNP based work permits (with some exceptions for American or Mexican citizens who qualify under the rigid categories of NAFTA). After spending months seeking your perfect person, that extra wait time can feel desperately long.

Thankfully, after consulting with tech companies across Canada—including [conversations led by the Vancouver Economic Council](#)—the Canadian Federal Government announced two changes to its immigration programs.



Accepted # of Permanent Residents Bumped to 300,000

First up is a nice change with no major impact to startups: [the number of permanent residents accepted](#) has been increased to 300,000. Permanent residency is a great way to settle your people into your company long term, and allow them to move easily between roles. But until now, Canadian PR programs haven't been fast enough to onboard employees. Even with the launch of Express Entry in 2015, PR still takes employees 6-12 months to get—which feels like a *lifetime* for a rapid-growth startup.

Immigration Work Permits Processed in 2 Weeks

Second, and most excitingly, as we mentioned above [Ottawa has set a two-week standard for processing work permits](#). This applies to high-skilled employees, for both rapidly growing companies and Canadian offices of large global firms. The announcement is light on details, so we don't yet know what is needed to prove *growth of companies, skill level of the role, or Canadian job creation*. Though lacking in detail, we're taking heart from this announcement. It shows that the government is hearing the needs of growing companies in the tech sector.

Immigration Benefits Local Junior Talent

Recruitment strategies are a huge part of a company's growth. In today's competitive workforce environment, many companies are starting to look outside the Canadian borders. They need to find Senior and Specialized High Skilled talent that can take them to the next level. These wonderful additions to your scaling company will help train, mentor, and develop local junior talent, but having to wait nearly half a year can hamstring competitiveness in our ever-shifting global market. Here's our very own [Danielle Lovell](#) speaking about these pain points on [CBC's Power & Politics](#):

[.@DanielleMLovell](#) says Canada doesn't have enough senior software developers to train junior developers [#cdnpoli](#) <https://t.co/0cPKFGsi0Z>

— Power & Politics (@PnPCBC) [31 October 2016](#)

So what happens now? We wait to hear more about the details of this program. Soon we'll learn *who qualifies*, how to define *high-skill*, and how companies can prove they're *high-growth*.

We can only hope that the program is straightforward, simple, and designed to support Canadian businesses in their rapid growth!