

At [BLANKSLATE Partners](#) one of the things we are passionate about is helping our clients find great candidates to build out their ever-growing teams. This can mean anything from sourcing highly skilled, experienced software developers – senior full stack dev’s with Ruby on Rails experience, [virtual reality developers](#), web app architects with deep AngularJS expertise or a [senior iOS mobile developer](#) – to [PhDs with expertise in nanotechnology](#) or senior project managers with a background in ship building and marine architecture. All in a day’s work for [BLANKSLATE!](#)



(Image courtesy of Gratisography)

Where do we find this specialized, highly skilled talent? The answer is often “not in

Vancouver”, or even “not in Canada” One of our [service pillars is mobility](#) and, because we have the uncommon luxury of having immigration consultants as part of our team, we regularly look outside Canada’s borders to fill these niche requirements. It’s a process, however, that can be fraught with frustration and lengthy delays.



(Image courtesy of Gratisography)

One of our founding partners, [Danielle Lovell](#), was asked to participate in [Startup Canada’s “Day on the Hill 2016”](#) event on May 5, 2016 in Ottawa to provide her expert opinion and perspective in bringing highly skilled employees to Canada. Rubbing shoulders with Ministers including the Hon. Bill Morneau, Federal Minister of Finance and the Hon. Bardish Chagger,

Minister of Small Business & Tourism and entrepreneurs like Tony Lacavera, Founder & Chairman of Globalive Holdings and the founder, past chairman and CEO of WIND Mobile, Sarah Prevette, Founder & CEO, Future Design School, Allen Lau, Co-Founder of Wattpad and Waneek Horn-Miller, Gold Medal Olympian & Brand Ambassador for Manitobah Mukluks, Danielle was in high-powered company.



Industry anchors like Uber, Microsoft, UPS and Intuit participated, along with CPAC, Globe & Mail, the Toronto Star and the National Post. It was an opportunity for entrepreneurs and other stakeholders to help shape and build the future of the entrepreneurial community in Canada and provide direct input into [Canada's Innovation Strategy](#). When the Innovation Strategy was introduced in 2014 it was with this mandate:

*The success of our economy, the prosperity of our communities and the well-being of our families depend on advancing cutting-edge science, technology and innovation in Canada.*

*While our Government has already significantly ramped up support for Canada's quest for knowledge, we recognize that remaining competitive in the global marketplace of ideas demands a long-term commitment and strategy.*

*That is why we are launching Seizing Canada's Moment: Moving Forward in Science, Technology and Innovation, a new strategy that leverages the expertise and resources of post-secondary institutions, industry and government to translate brilliant theories and ideas into applications that will improve the day-to-day lives of Canadians and generate economic growth and jobs across the country.*

If you are interested in the entire document, it can be found [here](#).

In a panel discussion on how immigration policy can be designed to enable entrepreneurship , Danielle shared her perspectives as a global mobility specialist with Vancouver success stories like [lululemon athletica](#) as well as her recent immersive experience as a mobility partner for BLANKSLATE. Her key takeaways for the policy makers:

The current shortage of highly qualified, senior level talent with experience in scaling high growth tech startup companies is stalling business growth in it's tracks.

There are skilled, qualified and experienced people who want to move to Canada and work in the startup community.

The current immigration process, and particularly Express Entry, is unwieldy and overly bureaucratic. 6 - 12 months to process an application is just too long in the highly competitive high tech job market.

[Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#) (CIC) defaults to a deny entry position, rather than assisting highly qualified immigrants and their prospective employers.

Specific accommodations were made for the video gaming industry when it first moved to Canada to allow companies to import the skilled talent they needed. Similar accommodations would go a long way to supporting entrepreneurship in other areas such as SaaS businesses, wearable technology, biotech, cleantech and enterprise solutions.

[Here's the entire panel discussion](#), you can catch Danielle at 14.09 and sharing some of her eye popping war stories at 22.00.



(Image courtesy of StockSnap.io)

Danielle was also invited to present at two different policy sessions with key stakeholders from the government in the Immigration and Finance ministries.

Danielle used her airtime [to advocate for streamlining our ability to recruit & retain key talent.](#)

If you have a highly specialized role to fill, be that in tech, business development or leadership, or you are struggling with the whole process, we are here to help and [we'd love to hear from you.](#)

