

BUSINESS

A diverse workforce

The Norwegian Center for Multicultural Value Creation facilitates an entrepreneurial spirit among immigrants



Photo: Terje Rakke / Nordic Life – Visitnorway.com

The Norwegian Center for Multicultural Value Creation provides coaching and motivation to talented immigrants who bring their valuable skills to Norway.

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During the recent decades, Norway has become a multicultural society with a growing number of immigrants coming as refugees, on family reunification grounds or as work immigrants. The unemployment rate among immigrants is three times the general unemployment rate. Another issue of concern is the high level of over-qualification among immigrants in the job market. Researchers point at the challenge immigrants face in moving between many temporary jobs and conclude that we have not been able to use a good portion of our qualified immigrant workforce properly.

This gave way to the establishment of the Norwegian Center for Multicultural Value Creation in 2005. The aim is to facilitate and stimulate strong business start-ups and an entrepreneurial spirit among immigrants. The long-term goal is to create successful and competitive businesses that would contribute to value creation, growth and employment. This value creation center distinguishes itself from other business establishment centers. "We work proactively to find opportunities for value creation and matching the user's competence, cultural background and motivation level with business opportunities in the market," says the director of the center Zahra Moini. "We believe this is the way we can create more sustainable businesses."

One of the immigrants that have received help from the center is Rajvindu Kaur Aulakh (35). She established Nipunn Engineering AS in January 2010. Today they have

38 employees. The startup is an engineering, procurement and construction contractor catering its services to subsea, offshore oil and gas and marine industry. The company offers complete solutions to its customers from concept stage to delivery along with documentation, testing and follow-up. Since 2011 they have a subsidiary in India with a focus on reducing cost on bulk design work, drawings and modeling.

The entrepreneur got coaching and motivation from the center. She participated in their start-up program, got advice before and after the start-up and was introduced to a professional network for immigrants run by the Norwegian Confederation of Enterprise.

Rajvindu Kaur Aulakh is from India. Her education is from the university in Stavanger and she has worked as an engineer at Aker Solutions and Det Norske Veritas. She decided to become a citizen because she wanted to have the possibility to affect society, to vote and have influence and the possibility to change things. Together with 155 new countrymen from 35 different countries she became a citizen at a ceremony at the Drammen Theatre in 2009.

The traditional view has been to look at immigration and immigrants as a problem. The Norwegian Center for Multicultural Value Creation was established to change this public attitude and rather focus on the opportunities! The aim has been to create a success recipe from the beginning.

Have a nice weekend!