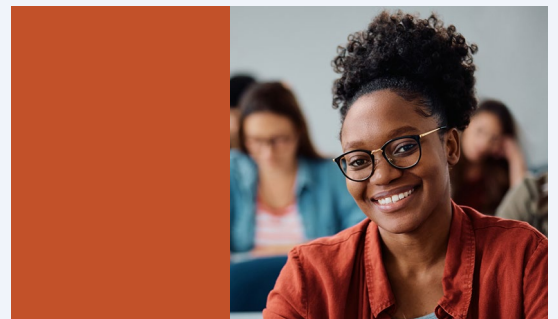
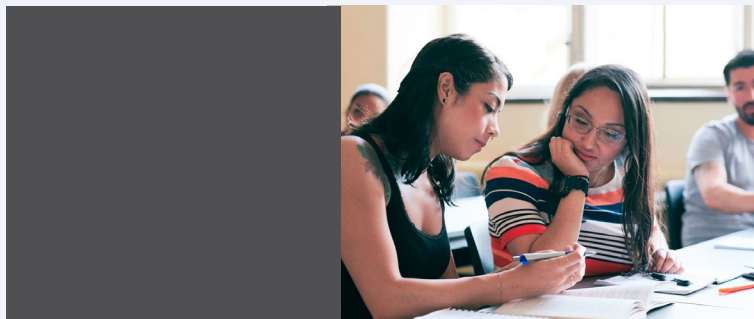
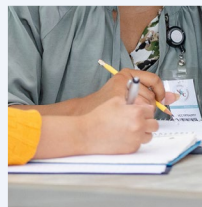
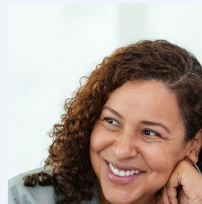


# A Guide to Using an Immigrant Integration Approach in Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)

AUGUST 2024





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## About EARN

Funded by the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), the Enhancing Access for Refugees and New Americans (EARN) project aims to support adult educators in developing and delivering high-quality Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)/Integrated Education and Training (IET) programming in alignment with an immigrant integration approach. For more information or resources created by the EARN project, visit <https://lincs.ed.gov>.

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## Acknowledgments

This guide was developed by the EARN project with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, OCTAE (Contract No. GS00F354CA/91990021F0348). The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred. The guide was developed by the RTI project team, which includes partners from World Education, WestEd, and Safal Partners. Many thanks to the U.S. Department of Education staff who reviewed and supported the development of this guide.

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## About the Guide

This guide compiles resources developed by the project, as well as other national activities projects funded by OCTAE, to support adult education providers in applying an immigrant integration approach to IELCE. Through developing and implementing IELCE activities that provide high-quality services, multilingual learners and immigrants may integrate more efficiently and effectively into their new communities. This guide includes writeable fields for reflection throughout the document. It is intended to be downloaded and printed or saved by the user on their local device to support reflection and planning.

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# Introduction

As the U.S. adult education system serves increasing numbers of multilingual learners and immigrants, adult education programs are adopting innovative and effective ways to deliver services using an immigrant integration and inclusion approach. This approach leverages the strengths and assets of immigrants and multilingual learners, serves their diverse needs, and helps them develop English proficiency, economic self-sufficiency, and civic engagement.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE), often delivered in combination with Integrated Education and Training (IET), is one of the vehicles that adult educators can use to serve multilingual adults. IELCE

activities, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and state adult education agencies, combine English language and civic participation instruction and may include workforce instruction.<sup>1</sup> This approach offers a flexible framework for developing programming that meets the linguistic, civic, and economic integration needs of multilingual adults.

The Enhancing Access for Refugees and New Americans (EARN) project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE), supports the application of an immigrant integration approach to IELCE/IET. This guide describes resources, from both the project and external sources, to assist IELCE providers and instructors in developing and delivering IELCE/IET activities with an immigrant integration approach. It also includes reflection questions to consider how to apply the resources and concepts to IELCE/IET program development and delivery.

This guide contains sections on immigrant integration and inclusion and the use of such approaches in IELCE/IET; IELCE/IET components; and programmatic considerations and instructional strategies for applying immigrant integration approaches.

**IET programs combine instruction in adult education and literacy (which can include English language acquisition), workforce training, and workforce preparation. This guide discusses how IELCE/IET programs support immigrant integration. For more information about how to develop and implement IET programs, explore the [IET Design Toolkit](#).**

<sup>1</sup> WIOA. 29 USC 3271 (203)(12).



# Immigrant Integration and Inclusion

Immigrant integration and inclusion is part of the broader mission of WIOA, and the adult education system plays a critical role in helping multilingual adults successfully navigate economic, linguistic, and community systems in the United States to ensure individual and family well-being. The purposes of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) include helping learners gain academic skills, English language proficiency, and academic credentials. Furthermore, the legislation emphasizes that these academic and linguistic gains are in service of helping adults operate effectively as parents, workers, and community members.

Immigrant integration is a “dynamic, two-way process in which immigrants and the receiving society work together to build secure, vibrant, and cohesive communities.” Integration efforts involve all community members, who create and benefit from a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.<sup>2</sup> Applying an immigrant integration approach to the development and delivery of adult education services intentionally centers the holistic needs of immigrants and multilingual adult learners. Adult education activities to promote the three main pillars of immigrant integration and inclusion—linguistic, civic, and economic—help learners fully engage with their communities.

## The purpose of AEFLA is to

1. Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
2. Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills that
  - a. are necessary to becoming full partners in the educational development of their children, and
  - b. lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family;
3. Assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, including through career pathways; and
4. Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in
  - a. improving their reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English, as well as their mathematics skills; and
  - b. acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> “National Partnership for New Americans,” National Partnership for New Americans, accessed February 21, 2024, <https://www.partnershipfornewamericans.org/what-is-immigrant-integration>.

<sup>3</sup> WIOA. Pub. L. 113-128, title II, §202, July 22, 2014, 128 Stat. 1608.



## Linguistic Integration

Linguistic integration includes instruction in literacy and English language acquisition (ELA) that provides adult multilingual adult learners with the English language skills necessary to fully participate and succeed in their roles as parents, workers, community members, and U.S. citizens. Multilingual adult learners bring language and literacy assets to the classroom, to their communities, and to the workforce. Language learners at beginning and advanced levels require dedicated instruction to increase their English proficiency levels. A multilingual approach to IELCE design and instruction frames adults' multiple languages as assets that can support ELA in the English classroom and the community.

### ***Key Partners for Supporting Linguistic Integration***

Partnerships are key to supporting learners' linguistic integration and may include:

- Local immigrant-led organizations to support multilingual teaching and learning
- Refugee resettlement organizations for referrals and programming opportunities
- Volunteer networks to support multilingual language access and one-on-one tutoring
- Local employers to help build bilingual career pathways

## Civic Integration

Civic integration includes understanding and effectively navigating civic and community systems. IELCE program requirements support civic integration through instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. Programs can address civic integration through instruction on civics education topics, civic integration efforts, opportunities for civic engagement, and civic understanding for the workplace.

### ***Key Partners for Supporting Civic Integration***

Key partners for civic integration include:

- Citizenship preparation class providers to provide resources and instruction related to naturalization
- Local immigrant-led organizations, including organizations focused on supporting one or more specific immigrant populations, to help adult education programs and instructors better understand learners' civic needs
- Libraries, churches, food banks, and schools that are ready to collaborate on engagement projects



## Economic Integration

Economic integration emphasizes building knowledge and skills to ensure that multilingual adults can be successful in the workforce. Integration efforts acknowledge the wealth of assets that immigrants and multilingual adults bring to the U.S. workforce, including international credentials, formal and informal work experiences, multiple languages and literacies, and experience building social capital. Programs can support economic integration through learner-centered IET activities, career pathways, and credentialing opportunities, including designing strategies for those with beginning-level English language skills and limited education/work experience.

### ***Key Partners for Supporting Economic Integration***

Key partners for economic integration can include:

- Office of New Americans member and participating states to connect adult programs with larger state or regional efforts
- Industry and professional associations to provide networking and mentoring opportunities
- Community colleges and universities to support development of career pathways
- Employers who can create opportunities for additional funding and occupational training
- Financial Empowerment Centers to provide no-cost personalized financial counseling

## IELCE Immigrant Integration Framework

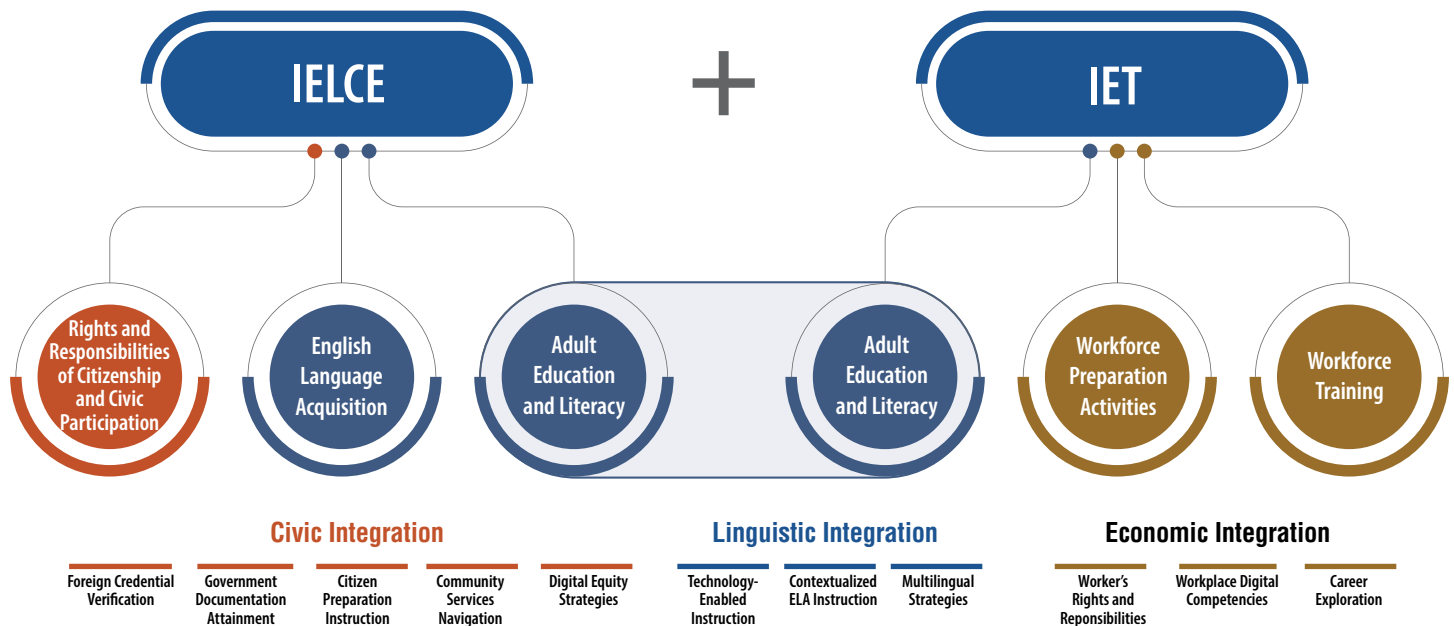
The IELCE Immigrant Integration Framework (**Exhibit 1**) illustrates the alignment of legislative programmatic requirements of IELCE and IET and services that support immigrant integration. Adult education services support all three pillars of immigrant integration and inclusion—linguistic, economic, and civic integration—through

- English language instruction,
- workforce training through IET programs, and
- instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation through IELCE.





## Exhibit 1. Immigrant Integration Framework



### Take Action: Immigrant Integration

- Watch EARN's video [Expanding Immigrant Integration in Adult Education](#).
  - Consider who you can share this video with, including potential and current partners.
- Identify potential local partners by determining whether there is a [Financial Empowerment Center](#) or an [Office of New Americans](#) in your state.
- Review this guide for information and resources on each element of the [IELCE Immigrant Integration Framework](#).

### Reflect and Apply: Partnerships to Support Immigrant Integration

*Type your response into the writeable fields. Then save or print this document to save your responses for your planning.*

How does the immigrant integration approach (linguistic, civic, and economic) align with your program's overall goals?

Conduct an inventory of the assets you have to support linguistic, civic, and economic integration for multilingual learners in your program. What resources can you rely on and what new resources will you need to fill critical gaps?





# The Fundamentals of IELCE

WIOA expanded the scope of ELA services to connect instruction with workforce preparation and civics through the IELCE program.<sup>4</sup> As shown in **Exhibit 2**, IELCE activities and programming provide education services to English learners (called multilingual adults in this guide), including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enable them to achieve competency in the English language and acquire both basic and advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States.

## Exhibit 2. The Who, What, and Why of IELCE

Eligible Population	Instructional Services	Objectives
Provided to English learners who are adults, including professional with degrees and credentials in their native countries. <i>See Eligible Participants §463.70</i>	Education services shall include instruction in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Literacy</li><li>• English language acquisition</li><li>• The rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation</li></ul> These services may also include workforce training. <i>See English Language Acquisition and Civics §463.70 as described under §463.33v</i>	To enable such adults to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Achieve competency in the English language</li><li>• Acquire the basic and more advances skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers and citizens in the United States</li><li>• Gain unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency</li></ul> <i>See Eligible Provider Requirements under §463.73</i>

IELCE activities can be delivered in one of two ways:

3. Using Section 231 funds to deliver instruction in literacy, ELA, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and, possibly, workforce training. These types of IELCE activities do not need to be delivered in combination with an IET program.
4. Using Section 243 funds that have been separately competed to provide similar instructional services but are delivered in combination with IET program. The requirements for delivering IELCE in combination with IET may be met by creating access to an IET using a career pathways approach; however, some states may require IELCE and IET activities to be concurrent and synchronous or to meet other state requirements.

<sup>4</sup> WIOA. Pub. L. 113-128, title II, i§203, July 22, 2014, 128 Stat. 1609.



IELCE activities are intended to serve multilingual adults and immigrants. This population is incredibly diverse in their countries of origin, languages spoken, levels of educational attainment, circumstances entering the United States, employment status, and goals. Within this large group are subpopulations that can include Internationally Trained Professionals (ITPs), refugees and asylees, and learners with emerging literacy skills.

States and programs have flexibility in how to design IELCE/IET activities to be responsive to the diverse needs of multilingual adults. At the same time, some states require providers to adhere to a specific model or have state-level requirements that adult education providers should be aware of before designing IELCE/IET programming.

There are a wide range of approaches to designing IELCE in combination with IET, including the following:

- **IELCE activities delivered concurrently with IET** – IELCE English language instruction, instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, workforce preparation activities, and other adult education and literacy instruction necessary for the occupational area of the IET are contextualized to the workforce training component of the IET. Learners participate in IELCE and IET activities at the same time through one integrated program.
- **IELCE activities that serve as a bridge to an IET program** – IELCE activities prepare multilingual adults for a specific IET program. The IELCE activities occur prior to the IET but align content and offer direct access for IELCE learners to enter the IET program as the next step along a career pathway.
- **IELCE activities that provide or promote access to an IET** – IELCE activities can complement IET programming by providing additional supports that help multilingual adults meet their immigrant integration goals, which may include advancing along their career pathway through participation in an IET. These IELCE activities can include navigation, language support, civics coursework, and other supports that benefit learners. These IELCE activities could occur before the IET or during it to provide additional support.

### Take Action: IELCE Fundamentals

- Use OCTAE's [IELCE Self-Assessment](#) to review program components to ensure that programs meet IELCE's regulatory requirements.
- Check with your state office to be sure you understand the IELCE requirements in your state.

### Reflect and Apply: IELCE Fundamentals

How do IELCE activities and programming align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen IELCE/IET activities and programming?

What resources and partnerships do you need to strengthen your IELCE/IET activities and programming?



# IELCE/IET Components

Importantly, as described in WIOA, the components of IELCE and IET must be integrated into the overall scope of the program. This means that the components of each program are not offered as separate, stand-alone classes but are intentionally combined to create cohesive education experiences. This section describes the required components for both IELCE and IET: ELA, rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civics, adult education and literacy, connections to IET, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training. It discusses common approaches to and resources for making connections between the two programs.

## English Language Acquisition

ELA classes, which offer instruction in English language reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, are a key strategy for linguistic integration in IELCE programs.

The ELA component of IELCE typically focuses on teaching English language skills. ELA content may vary in approach and content depending on the needs and English and academic literacy levels of the learners. Some ELA classes focus on functional English to prepare multilingual adults to navigate daily life. Others focus on contextualizing English language instruction to a specialized occupation or pathway, such as an IELCE/IET for manufacturing. Some classes may have a workforce goal but focus more broadly on career exploration and academic literacy skills to help learners earn a high school equivalency certificate. Generally speaking, an ELA class is usually designed to support developing language and literacy skills so that learners can navigate civic, social, and economic contexts and expand their digital, health, financial, and academic skills. Furthermore, ELA classes often provide or link learners to social services and other

**As defined in WIOA (Sec. 203), “English language acquisition program” means**

**“A program of instruction—**

**(a) designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and**

**(b) that leads to—**

**(i) attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and transition to postsecondary education and training; or**

**(ii) employment.”**



supportive systems. In sum, they are intended to meet the complex task of supporting immigrant integration along with English language proficiency.

IELCE providers can support linguistic integration through various instructional methods, including by taking a multilingual approach to ELA activities. This may mean providing instructional opportunities for multilingual adults to use their full linguistic repertoire to accelerate ELA.

### Take Action: English Language Acquisition

- Read EARN's spotlight: [Using Multilingual Approaches to Support English Language Acquisition](#).
  - Complete the “IELCE Activities: Multilingual Approach Checklist” on your own or with colleagues.
  - Identify actions that integrate multilingual approaches at the state, program, and classroom levels.
- Read EARN's spotlight: [Supporting the Economic Integration of Adult Learners with Emerging Literacy Skills](#).
  - Review the key integrated topics and the associated activities.
  - Identify two or three activities to support English language and literacy development for learners to use in your classroom.
- Review the [LINCS ESL Pro educator resources](#) on meeting the language needs of today's multilingual adults. Resources include an issue brief, an online module, and a companion learning guide.
- Explore [Teaching Skills That Matter resources](#) about integrating civics education content into instruction.

### Reflect and Apply: English Language Acquisition

How do your ELA offerings support your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen ELA offerings in your program?

What resources do you need to strengthen ELA offerings in your program?



## Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship and Civic Participation

**As defined in WIOA (Sec. 243), IELCE services must include “instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.”**

Integrating instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation with ELA, adult education and literacy instruction, and—in some cases—workforce training and workforce preparation activities, differentiates IELCE activities from other ELA activities. There is a wide range of civics-related content that can be addressed in IELCE activities.

Educators can:

1. Teach specific civics education topics, without duplicating services that can be funded through other sources, such as citizenship preparation classes.
2. Support civic integration, which can include community services navigation and helping students become integrated into their new communities.
3. Offer opportunities for civic engagement, such as advocacy and volunteerism, or engaging in family literacy activities to prepare parents to support their children’s education.
4. Focus on a civic understanding for the workplace. IELCE/IET activities provide a unique opportunity to focus on civics that have been contextualized to the workplace and specific career fields or occupations.

### Take Action: Citizenship and Civic Participation

- Explore EARN’s spotlight: [Civics in the Adult Education Classroom](#).
  - Consider which strategy(ies) you will use to integrate instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation in your IELCE activities.
  - Answer the reflection questions on how to best integrate instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation in IELCE activities.
- Watch EARN’s video: [Contextualizing Civics for the Workplace](#).
  - Reflect on how Montgomery College in Maryland designed its IELCE activities as a bridge to a pharmacy technician IET program and contextualized civics content in IELCE activities relevant to the career of pharmacy technician. Consider how this approach could be used to contextualize civics in your program.
- Watch EARN’s video: [Civic Engagement Activities in Adult Education](#).
  - Reflect on how Briya Public Charter School embeds civic engagement into classroom work and leverages students’ growing English skills to help them become more engaged in their local community. Reflect on whether there are civic engagement activities that could be delivered in your program.
- Review the Teaching Skills that Matter [suite of resources on civics education](#).



### **Reflect and Apply: Citizenship and Civic Participation**

How do your citizenship and civics participation offerings support your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to develop and improve your citizenship and civic participation offerings?

What resources would you need to strengthen your citizenship and civic participation offerings?



## Adult Education and Literacy

IELCE activities must integrate adult education and literacy activities into program design and instructional delivery. IELCE providers have flexibility to determine which adult education and literacy activities to use in IELCE programming.

Many providers offer ELA as the adult education and literacy component of IELCE, given their students' language development needs. Some programs may want to select other activities to fulfill this requirement. For example, providers employing two-generation approaches may offer family literacy activities as a component of the IELCE activities. IELCE providers working to help multilingual adults attain high school equivalency may select adult education or literacy as the component. For IELCE activities that are delivered in combination with IET, additional workplace adult education and literacy activities, such as English language/literacy content contextualized to a particular occupation or sector, may be incorporated into IELCE programming.

### As defined in WIOA (Sec. 203), adult education and literacy activities include

- Adult education
- Literacy
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities
- Family literacy activities
- ELA activities
- IELCE

### Take Action: Adult Education and Literacy

- Explore OCTAE's [Standards-in-Action](#) materials that focus on [boosting English learner instruction](#), including professional development materials and sample literacy lessons. Standards-in-Action materials also include standards that can help determine appropriate content to deliver in IELCE/IET programming.







## Connections to IET

As stated in WIOA, IELCE activities may be delivered in combination with IET. The legislation outlines how Section 243 funds can be used to deliver combined IELCE/IET activities. In practice, adult education programs can connect multilingual adults to IET programming through strategies like offering instruction that specifically prepares them for IET participation (such as through a bridge program or another precursor to IET); creating access to IET instruction offered by the provider; and integrating IELCE activities into IET programs. Each of these strategies should be designed to provide relevant support to multilingual adults to ensure their success in IET programming and allow participants to progress along their career pathways.

Considerations for connecting IELCE and IET activities include:

- Keeping the learner experience in mind when designing synchronous or integrated IELCE/IET programming to ensure that multilingual adults have a unified and streamlined experience.
- Designing IELCE programs that use bridge strategies or other methods to connect with IET programs. Bridge strategies include any programming that prepares learners for their next steps in a career pathway, such as on-ramps, preparation courses, pre-IET programs, and bootcamps. These strategies are designed to be flexible to meet the needs of learners, fit into organizational and program structures, and can be tailored to specific occupational sectors and pathways. In the IELCE context, bridge strategies help multilingual adults gain the specific language and academic skills they need to be prepared for an IET program.
- Providing additional support to multilingual adults to help them succeed in IET. Adult education programs can also prepare multilingual adults for success in IET programs by partnering with employers and workforce organizations to help multilingual adults navigate employment in the United States, advising learners on how IET programming fits into their career pathways, and using instructional approaches that integrate workforce content with English language skills.

**According to WIOA, IET programs may use Section 243 funds, provided the IET program is delivered in combination with IELCE activities. WIOA regulations (§463.70) specify that an eligible provider that receives funds through the IELCE program may meet the requirement to deliver IELCE in combination with IET activities (as described in §463 Subpart D) by**

- Co-enrolling participants in an IET program funded through sources other than Section 243; or
- Using funds provided under Section 243 to support IET activities.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> WIOA. Pub. L. 113-128, title II, §203, July 22, 2014, 128 Stat. 1609.



### Take Action: Connections to IET

- Read EARN's spotlight: [Enhancing Access: Using Bridge Strategies to Connect IELCE Activities to IET Programs](#).
  - Reflect on how your IELCE activities are currently provided in combination with IET and explore offering bridge programming.
- Explore the [IET Design Toolkit](#), which includes EARN's IET for English Learners Desk Aids, including the [QuickStart Guide](#), the [Research and Assess desk aid](#), the [Design and Plan desk aid](#), and the [Develop and Implement desk aid](#).
  - Consider design elements of IET that help support the success of multilingual adults in accessing and participating in IET through each of the four phases of the IET design process.
- Read EARN's spotlight: [Enhancing Access to Workforce Training: A Guide to Supporting Adult English Learners' Participation in Integrated Education and Training](#).
  - Review the four strategies for preparing multilingual adults for IET.
  - Identify existing IET programs to partner with and design strategies for preparing learners for these programs and/or consider the need to develop or tailor an IET program for multilingual adults.

### Reflect and Apply: IELCE Fundamentals

How does building connections into IET programs align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen connections to IET in your program?

What resources would you need to develop or improve connections to IET in your program?



## Workforce Preparation Activities

Workforce preparation activities help immigrants and multilingual adults acquire the skills needed to be successful in education, job training, and employment. Workforce preparation activities are specifically named as one of three required instructional components of IET programs (along with workforce training and adult basic education) and are typically embedded in education and training programs through contextualized instruction. In the IELCE/IET context, workforce preparation activities might focus on building understanding of workers' rights and responsibilities, especially to help participants to navigate U.S. workplace culture; integrating civics topics related to workforce preparation; and connecting participants with broader community engagement activities.


IELCE/IET programs can help multilingual adults strengthen their workforce preparation skills and civic readiness by incorporating the following skills/activities in instruction:

- Navigating workforce systems to help learners understand the cultural context of the U.S. workplace. For example, instruction might include activities that explore pay systems and structures, workers' rights and protections, employer expectations, and workplace culture.
- Building digital literacy to help learners effectively access and use technology for education and training, employment, and other purposes. For example, instruction might offer digital literacy instruction, or digital skills orientations, or incorporate hybrid or blended programming to prepare learners for workforce training.
- Emphasizing civics topics related to workforce preparation, like navigating community systems, self-advocacy, and communication.

**WIOA (Sec. 203) defines workforce preparation activities as “activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining the skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.”**



### Take Action: Workforce Preparation Activities

- Explore EARN resources for strategies and tips on how to integrate workforce preparation activities into English language instruction.
  - Workforce preparation and civic readiness:
    - Read [Civics in the Adult Education Classroom](#).
    - Watch [Contextualizing Civics for the Workplace](#) .
  - Digital literacy for the workplace:
    - Review the [IET for English Learners Desk Aid: Develop and Implement](#).
    - Read EARN's [Expanding the Use of Online Resources in IELCE Activities to Support Immigrant Integration and Inclusion](#).
- Explore resources from OCTAE's [Teaching Skills That Matter](#) initiative, which has briefs, videos, lesson plans, and other resources on [workforce preparation](#), [civics education](#), and [digital literacy](#).
  - Identify how workforce preparation activities are already integrated into your English language instruction. Look for opportunities to reinforce them through career exploration, civics instruction, community engagement, and other activities.

### Reflect and Apply: Workforce Preparation Activities

How does offering integrated workforce preparation activities align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen your program's workplace preparation activities?

What resources would you need to strengthen workforce preparation activities in your program?





## Workforce Training

According to WIOA, workforce training encompasses a wide range of formal training programs that prepare adults for careers in a specific sector. In workforce training, participants build the specific skills and knowledge needed to work in the specified sector, and, in many cases, gain work experience through work-based learning or contextualized workplace activities.

Workforce training can help multilingual adults strengthen the language skills and workforce knowledge and experience they need to navigate the U.S. workforce and economic systems.

Adult education programs can use numerous strategies to prepare multilingual adults for workforce training, including:

1. Designing programming that prepares learners for workforce training by exposing them to workplace culture and terminology and helping them understand how workforce training aligns with career pathways.
2. Partnering with employers, workforce development, and other organizations to provide career exploration and readiness activities and other support services to help multilingual adults participate in workforce training.
3. Providing career navigation and advising to help learners explore careers and build the necessary employability and digital skills needed to participate in workforce training and be successful at work.
4. Refining instructional approaches to integrate English language instruction with workforce content.

**WIOA (Sec. 134(c)(3)(d)) defines workforce training as:**

- Occupational skills training
- On-the-job training
- Incumbent worker training
- Workplace training combined with related instruction
- Private sector training programs
- Skill upgrading and retraining
- Entrepreneurial training
- Transitional jobs
- Job readiness training
- Adult education and literacy instruction
- Customized training





### Take Action: Workforce Training

- Explore EARN's spotlight: [Enhancing Access to Workforce Training: A Guide to Supporting Adult English Learners' Participation in Integrated Education and Training](#).
  - Prepare multilingual learners to be successful in workforce training by implementing the strategies described in the guide.

### Reflect and Apply: Workforce Training

How does providing workforce training opportunities align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen workforce training opportunities in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen workforce training opportunities in your program?



# Practices for Developing Effective IELCE/IET Programming

There are many ways that adult education programs can design and deliver high-quality IELCE activities that meet learners' unique needs, support immigrant integration, and help multilingual adults acquire functional language needed to navigate daily life. This section highlights programmatic and instructional practices that center the learner and offer new ideas or approaches to instructional delivery and promote immigrant integration and inclusion (see **Exhibit 3**).

## **Exhibit 3.** Programmatic and Instructional Practices for Developing Effective IELCE/IET Programming

Programmatic Practices	Instructional Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partnerships</li><li>• Regionalization</li><li>• Cultural competence</li><li>• Navigation and advising</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contextualization</li><li>• Technology, online learning, and digital literacy</li><li>• Leadership and civic engagement</li></ul>

### Programmatic Practices

#### ***Partnerships***

**Partnerships** can be crucial for supporting immigrants' integration and inclusion. This ecosystem approach to IELCE activities ensures that services are sustainable and comprehensive. Partnerships provide opportunities to braid resources and funding, and develop responsive, community-based integrated programming. Most programs serve diverse student populations and have created partnerships and programming that offer expanded and targeted services for these learners. As highlighted earlier, partnerships are crucial for addressing the civic, linguistic, and economic objectives of multilingual learners and immigrants in IELCE activities.

Considerations for forming partnerships include:

- **Aligning with student needs.** Gather information from learners to better understand their educational needs and strengths, such as surveys or conversations, and then identify gaps in services.





- **Understanding the partner's services and student eligibility.** Discuss each partners' services to ensure that learners would be eligible to participate. Ask partners about what they hope to gain from a partnership, keeping in mind that this may be a more in depth, two-way conversation that extends far beyond one meeting.
- **Considering your agency's history with the prospective partner.** Prior to approaching a potential partner, it is crucial to understand your agency's previous experiences with the prospective partner. This can avoid duplication of outreach and build on lessons learned from past partnership experiences.
- **Building your relationship with the prospective partner.** Show potential partners that you value their work by reading and asking about their mission statement and attending their events. Provide them with opportunities to learn more about your organization and learners by inviting them to your events, holding regular meetings, and sharing newsletters.
- **Securing leadership commitment.** Include program leadership in partnership discussions, which might include including having them sign a formal agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or a contract. This will help avoid potential future issues and clarify understanding of any previous organizational experience with this partner.

### Take Action: Partnerships

- Read EARN's spotlight: [Forming and Sustaining Effective Partnerships for Immigrant Integration and Inclusion](#).
  - Review the seven essential elements of effective partnerships with potential and current partners.
  - Consider which elements can be applied to strengthen your partnerships.
- Read EARN's spotlight: [Adult Education and the Workforce Development System: Partnering to Improve Services](#).
  - Review the roles and functions of workforce development system partners.
  - Consider examples of innovative partnerships between adult education programs and other workforce development system partners.

### Reflect and Apply: Partnerships

How does forming strong and effective partnerships align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen partnerships in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen your program's partnerships?



## ***Regionalization***

**Regionalization** widens access to education and training opportunities. With this approach, a state or regional consortium of programs offers classes or sections of a class (e.g., a training portion of an IET) that are open to learners from other programs. For example, a learner may enroll in an ELA class under their home program and then join a virtual adult basic education course for literacy skill development or a paraprofessional training course provided by another program. In most instances, learner outcomes and gains are reported as delineated or approved by the state.

Using regional approaches to developing and delivering IELCE/IET can provide numerous benefits:

- Strengthening or accelerating partnerships among adult education programs, which can include co-development and delivery of programs, cost-sharing, and mutually benefiting from outcome attainment.
- Augmenting learner access to opportunities, which increases learner choice and autonomy in selecting programming that meets their goals and needs.
- Leveraging technology to reduce barriers to in-person participation (e.g., childcare, transportation), which benefits all learners but particularly benefits learners in rural areas.
- Recruiting learners from across a region or state, which can help programs enroll students in cohort-based activities.

## **Take Action: Regionalization**

- Explore EARN's [Expanding Boundaries: Taking a Regional Approach to IELCE/IET](#) spotlight.
  - Contact state leadership to understand policies or support for regional programming offerings.
  - Identify opportunities to broaden services through regionalization to better meet the needs of multilingual learners.
  - Consider partnerships with other adult education programs to create opportunities to design and offer regionalized programs.

## **Reflect and Apply: Regionalization**

How do regionalization approaches align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen regional approaches in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen regional approaches in your program?



## ***Cultural Competence***

**Cultural competence** is an approach to program design that values culture and respect for others' beliefs, attitudes, and opinions, and the ability to self-assess one's own cultural positioning. It is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes."<sup>6</sup> Adult education programs can address cultural competence in IELCE activities by:

- Using a cultural competence framework to inform how programs engage with adult learners and how services are identified and provided. For example, applying cultural awareness to intake processes and service identification might inform which and how questions are posed and services are referred. This can be an important step in helping multilingual adults determine the right programming for them, which may include IELCE/IET.
- Ensuring staff receive training on cultural competence to support awareness of personal perceptions, staff and learner engagement, and the development of programming, curriculum, and classroom content.
- Applying principles of cultural competence<sup>7</sup> to IELCE activities to create a safe and engaging learning space that welcomes and draws on learners' experiences and backgrounds.

<sup>6</sup> Sarah Hodge, "Nurturing Culturally Aware Teaching," TESOL International, updated November 2023, <https://www.tesol.org/blog/posts/nurturing-culturally-aware-teaching/>.

<sup>7</sup> Randall B. Lindsey, Kikanza Nuri-Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell, *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* (Corwin, A Sage Company, 2018).

## **Take Action: Cultural Competence**

- Explore EARN's spotlight: [Valuing Diverse Cultural Assets in Adult Education](#).
  - Review the principles of cultural competence and examples of how they are applied in adult education programs and classrooms.
  - Consider resources related to Cultural Competency and Responsiveness, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, Universal Design for Learning.
- Read [Teaching Culture in Adult ESL: Pedagogical and Ethical Considerations](#).
  - Reflect on the two guiding questions to consider how you address cultural concepts in the classroom.

## **Reflect and Apply: Cultural Competence**

How does the cultural competency approach align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen the use of a cultural competency approach in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen the use of a cultural competency approach in your program?



## ***Navigation and Advising***

Career navigators and advisors provide **individualized and targeted support** to learners to navigate education and training options. Career navigators and advisors play a particularly important role for multilingual adults and immigrants, who benefit from additional aid navigating complex U.S. systems and accessing services to help support their integration into U.S. society. Navigators and advisors can guide multilingual adults along a career pathway that can include IELCE/IET components. In addition to working directly with multilingual adults, navigators and advisors can also support elements of program design and implementation, especially by developing and maintaining collaborative partnerships.

Navigators have an important role to play at all phases of working with multilingual adults, including recruitment and pre-screening, enrollment, ongoing support, transitions to next steps, and ongoing involvement with programs.

### **Take Action: Navigation and Advising**

- Explore EARN's spotlight: [The Role of Navigators in IELCE/IET Career Pathways](#).
  - Review the phases of navigator support.
  - Consider engaging in professional development opportunities for navigators.
  - Identify actions that state- and program-level staff can take to institute or support the role of the navigator in your adult education program.

### **Reflect and Apply: Navigation and Advising**

How does increasing navigating and advising in your program align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen navigating and advising services in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen navigating and advising services in your program?



## Instructional Practices

As demonstrated throughout this guide, multilingual adults are a diverse group of learners; therefore, instructional approaches and practices require differentiation to meet their various needs. These instructional practices include contextualization, digital literacy skills instruction, and leadership and civic engagement activities.

### ***Contextualization***

**Contextualization** is an instructional strategy that accelerates learning by building content knowledge alongside language and literacy skills. As an instructional strategy, it reinforces new language and learning through practice in an authentic setting, as well as in the classroom. Contextualized learning for IELCE/IET typically combines occupational training, workforce preparation, English language and literacy, and, often, civics. For example, a lesson may include information on housing regulations (civics and occupational training), specific housing vocabulary (English language and occupational training), modal verbs (English language), and how to address a landlord concerning a housing infringement (English language, civics, and occupational training).

#### Take Action: Contextualization

- Watch EARN's video: [Contextualizing Civics for the Workplace](#).
  - Note how workplace preparation activities are contextualized with occupationally specific situations.
  - Consider how you can contextualize activities and scenarios using industry- and sector-specific content for your program.
- Review [LINCS ESL Pro](#) professional development resources on preparing multilingual learners for work and career pathways. Resources include an issue brief, online module, and a companion learning guide.
- Review the LINCS [Teaching Skills That Matter in Adult Education](#) professional learning materials for support integrating civics education, digital literacy, financial literacy, health literacy, and workforce preparation content into IET, problem-based learning, and project-based learning activities.

#### Reflect and Apply: Contextualization

How does providing quality contextualized instruction align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen the quality of contextualized instruction in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen the quality of contextualized instruction in your program?



## ***Technology, Online Learning, and Digital Literacy***

**Using technology to support online learning and digital literacy** expands access to learning opportunities for multilingual adults and builds the skills they need for economic, linguistic, and civic integration. Instructors may develop lessons to support digital literacy skills development. The use of technology supports learners' increased knowledge about the digital world and helps them acquire the skills needed to access a child's school website, navigate a work task requiring digital devices, or conduct research for a class activity or to find community services. Instructional technology can be used across in-person, hybrid, and distance education instruction.

### **Take Action: Technology, Online Learning, and Digital Literacy**

- Explore EARN's [Expanding the Use of Online Resources in IELCE Activities to Support Immigrant Integration and Inclusion](#).
  - Review the resources on how the use of online instruction can support IELCE instruction (p. 9).
- Explore resources from World Education's [EdTech Center](#) to identify new activities to use in the classroom:
  - [EdTech Integration Strategy Toolkit](#)
  - [ESL Story Bank: Pre-Beginner Activities](#)
  - [Remote Adult ESOL Case Studies](#)
- Review LINCS resources to find new digital instructional tools:
  - [Instructor Implementation Guide for the Digital Literacy Framework for Adult Learners](#)
  - [Integrating Digital Literacy Into English Language Instruction: Companion Learning Resource](#)
- Review LINCS ESL Pro professional development resources on [Integrating Digital Literacy into English Language Instruction](#). Resources include an issue brief, online learning module, and a companion learning resource.
- Explore [Teaching Skills that Matter](#) resources for integrating digital literacy into instruction.

### **Reflect and Apply: Technology, Online Learning, and Digital Literacy**

How does increasing access to online learning and digital skills align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

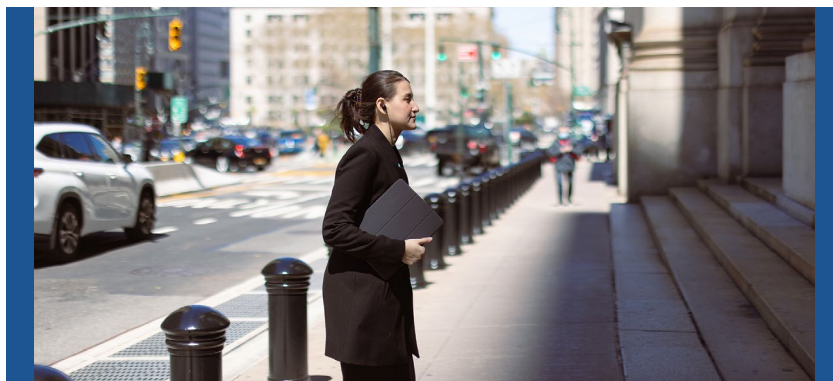
What assets can you build on to strengthen access to online learning and digital skills attainment in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen access to online learning and digital skills attainment in your program?



## ***Leadership and Civic Engagement Activities***

Opportunities to take on **leadership and civic engagement roles** allows learners to actively participate in program design, curriculum development, and other relevant aspects of the learner experience. They also provide multilingual adults with increased familiarity and hands-on experience with U.S. systems, such as local government, schools, and community organizations. Programs can prepare multilingual adults to take advantage of these opportunities by building their speaking skills and confidence, helping them better understand local systems, and encouraging them to become civically engaged through structured activities like volunteering, co-governance, and advocacy. Such activities can support learners in increasing knowledge about systems, advocating for their children or communities, and becoming community leaders. Furthermore, leadership and learner engagement activities bring many benefits to learners, including increased self-efficacy, confidence, sense of agency, civic engagement, literacy and language skills, and persistence.<sup>8,9</sup> Importantly, multilingual adults can also gain self-confidence through leadership activities that support their active contributions to their families, schools, and community. Not all learners will want to or be able to commit to time-intensive activities; therefore, less intensive, high-impact opportunities should also be available so that they may participate as time allows or ramp up into leadership or robust engagement activities. Civic engagement activities are one way that adult education programs can meet the requirement to include instruction on civic participation in IELCE activities.



<sup>8</sup> Joshua Cramer and Blaire Willson Toso, “Family Service Learning Brief,” National Center for Families Learning and the Goodling Institute, 2015, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED593411.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Turonne Hunt, Amy Rasor, and Margaret Becker, “‘We are the Voice to Speak Up’: Cultivating Adult Learner Voice Through Leadership,” COABE, accessed February 2024, <https://coabe.org/we-are-the-voice-to-speak-up-cultivating-adult-learner-voice-through-leadership/>.





## Take Action: Leadership and Civic Engagement

- Watch EARN's video: [Civic Engagement Activities in Adult Education](#).
  - Reflect on how Briya Public Charter School embeds civic engagement into classroom work and leverages students' growing English skills to empower them to become advocates for themselves, their children, and their community.
- Explore EARN's spotlight: [Civics in the Adult Education Classroom](#).
  - Review the suggestions for topics to include in instruction and consider how they could foster student leadership in the classroom.
- Learn about centering student voices and creating leadership opportunities: [Moving towards Participatory Adult Education: Involving Family Literacy Students in Meaningful Leadership Experiences](#).
- Explore COABE's [Programs Succeed When Learners Lead](#) for ways you can promote student leadership.
- Review the [Family Service Learning Brief](#) to identify substantive civic or leadership engagement opportunities for your learners.

## Reflect and Apply: Leadership and Civic Engagement

How does promoting and supporting student leadership align with your immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) program goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen student leadership opportunities in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen student leadership opportunities in your program?



# Considerations for Serving Specific Populations of Multilingual Adults

As adult educators design learner-centered IELCE/IET programs, they may use particular practices and approaches to better serve distinct subpopulations of multilingual adults. This section describes program design considerations for programs who are serving ITPs, refugees, and learners with emerging literacy.

**Internationally Trained Professionals (ITPs)**, also known as skilled immigrants or foreign-born professionals, are immigrants who have degrees, credentials, and professional experience from their native countries. Often, their educational and professional skills are underutilized in the United States.<sup>10</sup> ITPs generally want to resume the professional roles for which they were trained in their home countries but may need additional credentials or training to secure U.S. employment. Strategies for serving ITPs include:

- Helping ITPs build sector-specific technical vocabulary related to their target professions. Incorporating opportunities for ITP learners to build specific skills through independent study, mentoring, or work-related activities within their occupational interest area can increase their progress into employment.
- Providing ITPs with an understanding of credentialing and licensing processes related to their specialized interests and experience. By drawing on industry guides or other industry-relevant information, programs can help ITPs to better understand and navigate their target industry, as well as create opportunities for all multilingual adults.
- Providing one-on-one advising for ITPs to help them successfully navigate the complex requirements for regulated professions in the United States.
- Supporting ITPs to build social networks to help them enter and navigate the U.S. workforce. Programs can identify partners that can offer site visits, internships, mentoring opportunities, classroom speakers, and other opportunities for ITPs to build their networks.

## Take Action: Internationally Trained Professionals

- Read EARN's spotlight: [Serving Internationally Trained Professionals in IELCE Activities](#).
  - Review the resources to learn about national organizations working to support ITPs, advising and instructional tools, and ways to improve the ITP experience.
- Read EARN's spotlight: [The Role of Navigators in IET/IELCE Career Pathways](#).
  - Reflect on how the four phases of navigation are applicable to working with ITPs.

<sup>10</sup> Jeanne Batalova and Michael Fix, "Leaving Money on the Table: The Persistence of Brain Waste among College-Educated Immigrants," Migration Policy Institute, June 2021, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/brain-waste-college-educated-immigrants>. 



### Reflect and Apply: Internationally Trained Professionals

How does providing ITP-specific resources and support align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen services for ITPs in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen services for ITPs in your program?

**Learners with emerging literacy** bring a unique need to quickly build language and literacy skills, which can be more difficult to do as adults.<sup>11,12</sup> Often, these learners do not have the time to dedicate to intensive language and literacy study, due to their need to care for family, navigate local community systems, obtain work, and settle into their local communities.<sup>13</sup> However, literacy is a core need for linguistic, civic, and economic integration. Adult learners who are developing academic literacy skills in a second language require a multifaceted program design that incorporates basic literacy and language skills alongside workforce preparation, financial, and digital literacy.

<sup>11</sup> Larry Condelli and Heidi Spruck Wrigley, "Instruction, Language, and Literacy: What Works Study for Adult ESL Literacy Students" in *Low-Educated Second Language and Literacy Acquisition (LESLLA): Proceedings of the Inaugural Symposium*, eds. Ineke van de Craats, Jeanne Kurvers, and Martha Young-Scholten (2006), 111–133.

<sup>12</sup> Jeanne Kurvers, Ineke van de Craats, and Roeland van Hout, "Footprints for the Future: Cognition, Literacy and Second Language Acquisition by Adults," in *Adult Literacy, Second Language and Cognition*, eds. Jeanne Kurvers, Ineke van de Craats, and Roeland van Hout (Centre for Language Studies, 2015), 7–32.

<sup>13</sup> Marguerite Lukes, "I understand English but I Can't Write It': The Power of Native Language Instruction for Adult English Learners," *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 5 (2011): 19–38.



Strategies for serving learners with emerging literacy include

- using a multilingual approach to support understanding;
- using contextualized instruction to support literacy and relevant language development;
- incorporating basic math, numeracy, and financial literacy into instruction;
- incorporating digital literacy skills and activities into instruction;
- incorporating workplace culture and readiness content and activities into the curriculum;
- partnering with organizations that can offer first language support and development; and
- incorporating opportunities to interact with native speakers in a structured environment.

### Take Action: Learners with Emerging Literacy

- Read EARN's spotlight: [Supporting the Economic Integration of Adult Learners with Emerging Literacy Skills](#).
  - Review the section on economic integration activities to identify what you can implement with learners.
  - Choose relevant integration and instructional resources to review and use.
- Read EARN's spotlight: [Valuing Diverse Cultural Assets in Adult Education](#).
  - Consider which of the Five Essential Elements of Cultural Competence could be strengthened in your program to support learners with beginning literacy.
- Read EARN's spotlight: [Using Multilingual Approaches to Support English Language Acquisition](#).
  - Use the IELCE Activities: Multilingual Approach Checklist to identify opportunities for instruction or program design.
- Explore [Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults](#) (LESLLA) resources to expand your knowledge and find ideas that work.

### Reflect and Apply: Learners with Emerging Literacy

How does providing resources and support for learners with emerging literacy align with your program's immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen services for learners with emerging literacy in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen services for learners with emerging literacy in your program?



**Refugees** are immigrants who have left their countries either by force or to escape persecution.<sup>14</sup> Immigrants with refugee status may have experienced traumatic life circumstances, such as surviving civil war or strenuous travel to the United States. Refugee populations have varied educational backgrounds and levels, from those who have had little opportunity to attend formal schooling to those with high levels of education and professional experience (such as ITPs). Additional supports for refugees may be available through local agencies, such as programs funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). IET or IELCE instruction offered through adult education programs play an important role in helping to provide refugees with English language and literacy instruction and access to training.

Strategies for serving refugees through IELCE activities include:

- Actively reaching out and partnering with refugee serving organizations so that they are aware of the educational opportunities and benefits that your program can provide for their clients.
- Using an intentional intake or navigator process to identify the educational, civic, training, workforce preparation, and other services (e.g., mental health, family resettlement) that are needed.
- Exploring opportunities to offer connections to employment, training, and other educational programming.
- Creating explicit and transparent pathways that connect IELCE activities to education or employment.
- Including civics content in the classroom to support understanding of the United States and local political and social contexts.
- Offering career navigation services provided by skilled individuals who can help refugees navigate local systems and provide career and education training.

<sup>14</sup> The legal definition of “refugee” is defined in section (101)(a)(42) of the [Immigration and Nationality Act](#).

## Take Action: Refugees

- Read EARN’s spotlight: [Serving Refugees in IELCE Activities](#).
  - Review the resources on trauma-informed practices, K-12 resources, and Ukrainian- and Afghani-specific resources.
- Explore federal supports for refugee integration and inclusion:
  - [Model UN Refugee Challenge Background Guide: Countering Toxic Narratives about Refugees and Migrants](#)
  - [Office of Refugee Resettlement fact sheets](#)

## Reflect and Apply: Refugees

How does providing refugee-specific resources and supports align with your program’s immigrant integration (linguistic, civic, and economic) goals?

What assets can you build on to strengthen services for refugees in your program?

What resources would you need to strengthen services for refugees in your program?



## Conclusion

IELCE and IELCE/IET are effective vehicles for helping multilingual adults meet their linguistic, civic, and economic goals. When the program components of IELCE/IET are integrated into a comprehensive program, adult education services can offer holistic support for learners to meet their language and employment goals, integrate into their communities, and function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. When supported by programmatic practices, such as building partnerships to expand the ecosystem of services provided to multilingual adults, identifying regional options to expand access to programming, and applying a culturally competent approach, the program components of IELCE/IET can effectively expand services, access, and opportunities for multilingual adults. Furthermore, multilingual adults can progress toward multiple goals simultaneously when instructional approaches like contextualization to an occupational area, the strategic use of online resources to build digital skills, and activities to build student leadership and civic engagement are employed.

Through this guide and the resources linked within, IELCE/IET providers can reflect on how to apply an immigrant integration approach to IELCE/IET programming. Providers can build on their existing strengths, assets, and practices to increase the intentional use of an immigrant integration approach by identifying further partnerships and connecting learners to available services in the community, while also strengthening services related to the three pillars of integration within the adult education program.