



# WELCOMING IMMIGRANTS FOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

GLOBAL LOUISVILLE ACTION PLAN



**GREATER LOUISVILLE INC.**  
The Metro Chamber of Commerce

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## DEAR CITIZENS OF GREATER LOUISVILLE,

It is an exciting time for innovation, economic growth, and transformation in Greater Louisville. But, to sustain our momentum we need more people. Our current population numbers show measured growth and future projections continue this trend unless we take decisive action. Therefore, addressing the challenge to accelerate population growth is a top priority for both Metro Government and the business community.

One demographic group that holds great promise for growth is our foreign-born population. Foreign-born Louisville residents have been an increasingly strong source of our population growth since 1990. Current projections show that they represent a significant portion of our future growth—filling jobs, building businesses, and infusing our region with a vibrant and diverse culture attractive to others seeking a great place to live and work. But, we can't take this growth for granted. Cities across the country are putting in place deliberate strategies and initiatives to attract and welcome them. If we are to remain competitive, we must demonstrate that we are a welcoming community that offers tremendous opportunity!

In May 2015, Louisville Metro Government and Greater Louisville Inc., the Metro Chamber of Commerce, announced Global Louisville, an initiative to engage the community in creating a strategic and action-oriented framework to welcome immigrants into our community to advance economic, educational and cultural opportunities that benefit everyone. Working with partners from the social service, education, government and business sectors, Global Louisville convened meetings and interviews to learn how our immigrant communities arrive into the region, discover how they are supported as they integrate into the community, measure their impact on regional growth, and identify areas where additional support or new strategies are needed to enhance their development.

This Global Louisville Action Plan establishes a shared baseline of knowledge about our foreign-born residents and identifies recommended actions to accelerate the attraction of new foreign-born immigrants and streamlines resources and services that assist them with achieving their highest potential in our community. It puts 'welcome into action' with specific steps to jumpstart foreign-born entrepreneurship, assist job-seekers, inform communities, celebrate cultures, train community leaders, and get the word out to those seeking the great quality of life that Louisville provides. The plan strives to use available community resources and complements other initiatives that seek to improve the lives of all residents in the region.

Greater Louisville is advancing as a twenty-first century region as the community embraces a more global perspective, and Global Louisville is a tool to maintain our momentum. It is our community's response to this call that will ultimately determine our success. We encourage you to join the Global Louisville effort and become a champion for international growth by extending a welcoming hand to the world.



Greg Fischer  
Mayor, Louisville Metro



Kent Oyler  
President & CEO, Greater Louisville Inc.



# WHY IMMIGRANTS MATTER

Foreign-born immigrants are a demographic group that bears greater consideration for Louisville's strategic growth. We know from studying our own economy and that of peer cities that immigration is vital to not only increasing population, but contributing to workforce needs, business development, educational attainment and quality of place.

Regional peers like Nashville, Columbus and Charlotte have recognized the opportunities foreign-born bring to their communities and they are developing intentional strategies to attract and welcome immigrant workers, educators, students, artists, entrepreneurs and investors. So why is growing our foreign-born population important to Greater Louisville?

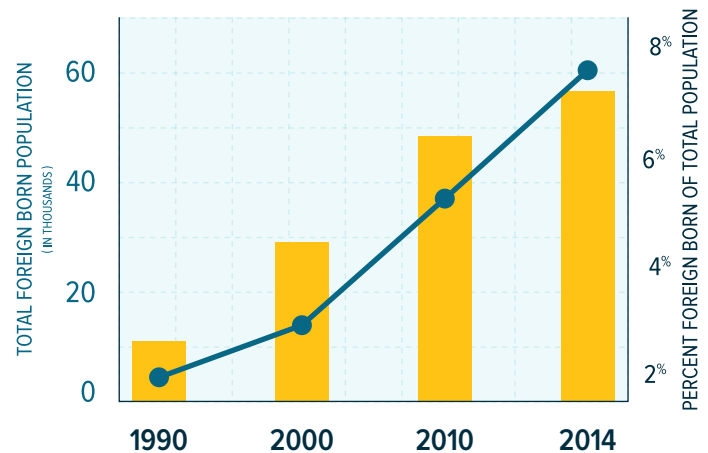
## SIGNIFICANT POPULATION GROWTH

Over the last 30 years, immigration has played an important role in Louisville's population growth. In fact, the foreign-born population in Louisville Metro has nearly doubled every decade since 1990. A current comparative study, by Governing magazine, puts Louisville's foreign born population growth rate percentage at 42% from 2009-14, ranking Louisville at the top for larger cities in the country.

Louisville's continued high level of foreign-born immigration is a distinct advantage for our community. Despite our past success, it is not a given that this trend will continue or grow without intentional coordination, smart investment, consistent communication and strategic outreach.

For Louisville, foreign-born immigration has played a significant role in maintaining positive overall population growth. Without immigrants, Louisville would have had 7,780 fewer residents at the end 2014.

JEFFERSON COUNTY FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION GROWTH CHART



SOURCE: DECENNIAL CENSUS 1990, 2000, 2010 AND 2014 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY

### 2011-2014 NET MIGRATION TOTALS

	INTERNATIONAL	DOMESTIC	TOTAL
CHARLOTTE	16,191	36,874	53,065
COLUMBUS	16,155	10,607	26,762
NASHVILLE	9,565	11,602	21,167
RICHMOND	2,937	4,622	7,559
NASHVILLE	9,565	11,602	21,167
LOUISVILLE	7,075	-705	6,367
INDIANAPOLIS	10,362	-8,907	1,455
BIRMINGHAM	3,002	-7,423	-4,421
DAYTON	2,937	-7,675	-4,738
CINCINNATI	5,859	-14,462	-8,603
MEMPHIS	6,572	-19,473	-12,901

SOURCE: 2011-2014 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 5 YEAR ESTIMATES



***“Louisville has emerged as one of the hottest urban centers for immigrants in recent years. Its foreign-born population rose an estimated 42 percent between 2009 and 2014, more than in any other jurisdiction with at least a half-million residents”***

***– Mike Maciag, Governing Magazine, March 2016***

2005-2009, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Data for Jefferson County, Kentucky  
<http://www.governing.com/topics/urban/gov-immigrant-friendly-cities.html>

## WORKFORCE

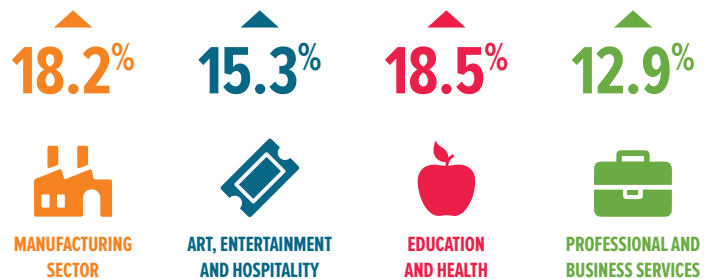
KentuckianaWorks estimates that regional employers today have 29,000 open positions and are struggling to meet their current workforce needs.<sup>1</sup> The demand will increase through the year 2024, as our region grows available jobs including key high wage positions, such as registered nurses (2,475 jobs) and software developers (1,137 jobs).<sup>2</sup>

Foreign-born students and workers represent another source of talent for local businesses. Current foreign-born residents are more likely to be active in the labor force than native born counterparts. Nearly three quarters of the foreign-born individuals above age 16 are in the labor force. Additionally, Louisville's share of foreign-born labor force is higher than the U.S. as a whole and is higher than our closest peer cities.

<sup>1</sup> KENTUCKIANAWORKS STATE OF THE LOUISVILLE REGIONAL LABOR MARKET REPORT, 1ST QUARTER 2016

<sup>2</sup> KENTUCKIANAWORKS KENTUCKIANA OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK, DECEMBER 2014 UPDATE

**AS A WORKFORCE, OUR REGIONAL FOREIGN BORN RESIDENTS FILL JOBS ACROSS KEY GROWTH INDUSTRIES IN EQUAL MEASURE.**  
(PERCENT OF TOTAL FOREIGN-BORN WORKFORCE PER INDUSTRY SECTOR)



MATTHEW RUTHER, "LOUISVILLE: IMMIGRATION REBIRTH," (INTERNAL MEMO, AMERICAS SOCIETY/COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS, 2015.)

# 21%

**OF COLLEGE EDUCATED KENTUCKY FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS WORK BELOW THEIR EDUCATION AND SKILL LEVEL**

STATE IMMIGRATION DATA PROFILES, KENTUCKY, MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE,  
[HTTP://WWW.MIGRATIONPOLICY.ORG/DATA/STATE-PROFILES/STATE/WORKFORCE/KY](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/workforce/ky)

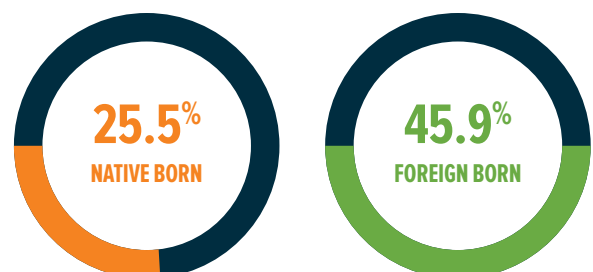
**IN CRITICAL INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY FIELD, 7.5% OF ALL STEM WORKERS ARE FOREIGN-BORN, A SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER RATE THAN THEIR OVERALL REPRESENTATION AS 5.9% OF THE EMPLOYED WORKFORCE.**



MATTHEW RUTHER, "LOUISVILLE: IMMIGRATION REBIRTH," (INTERNAL MEMO, AMERICAS SOCIETY/COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS, 2015.)

**A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS FALL INTO THE OPTIMAL WORKING AGE RANGE (25-44) COMPARED TO NATIVE-BORN RESIDENTS, AND FILL GAPS IN OUR OVERALL WORKFORCE POPULATION.**

**OPTIMAL WORKING AGE RANGE (25-44)**



(IMMIGRATION AND LOUISVILLE'S WORKFORCE: A KENTUCKIANAWORKS SPECIAL REPORT – MAY 2016)

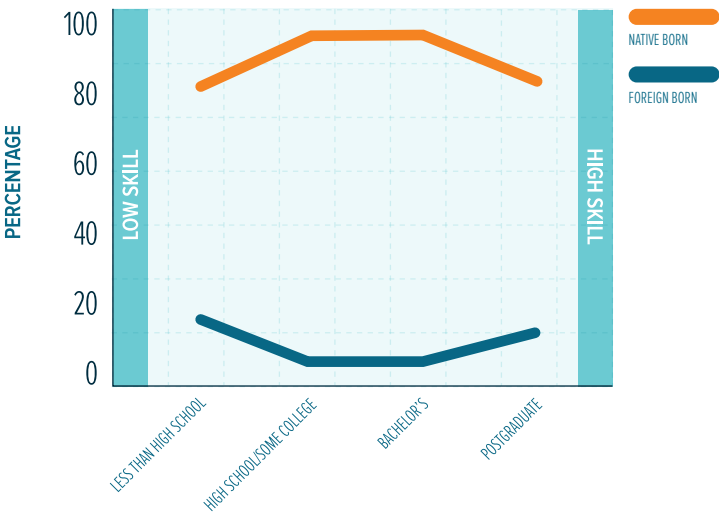
# EDUCATION

A corollary factor for workforce fulfillment is education. Foreign-born residents disproportionately fall into “less than high school” and “post graduate” education levels compared to native born residents, providing the opportunity to fill workforce needs in both low and high skill jobs where native-born candidates are in scarce supply.

Louisville’s foreign-born provide a potential boost for high-tech and scientific fields where international student populations are even more likely to study in STEM fields of study compared to their national peers (42% compared to 37% nationally).

International students also bring economic impact through payment of out-of-state tuition, rent and patronage of local businesses. In 2015, international students provided \$29 million in economic impact for the Louisville region, supporting 301 local jobs. As good as these figures are, Louisville ranks third to last compared to other regions in the state. Comparatively, the Nashville region has \$72 million in economic impact, supporting 1,068 jobs. (National Association of Foreign Student Advisors International Student Impact Tool, <http://www.nafsa.org>)

COMPARISON OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF NATIVE BORN VS FOREIGN BORN AGES 25 AND OVER IN LOUISVILLE



KENTUCKY STATE DATA CENTER ANALYSIS OF 2014 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY DATA FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY, KENTUCKY

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DIFFERENT LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN IN JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SOURCE: JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS - 2016



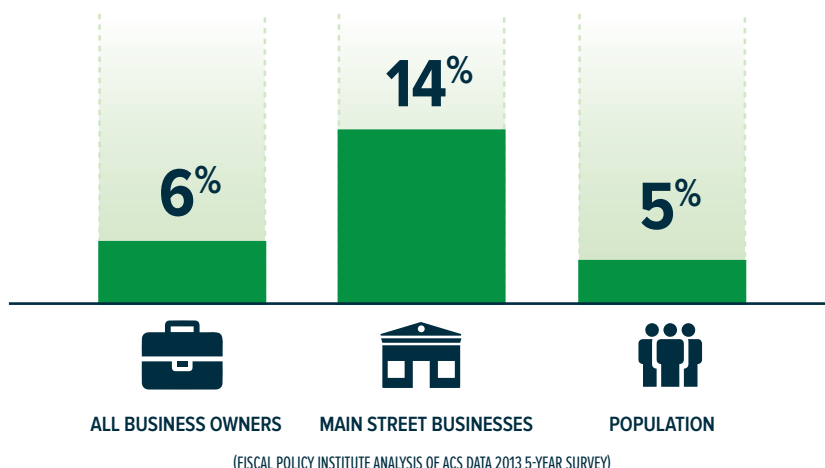
## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Immigrants are drivers of business startups and job creation. They are more likely to start a new business than native born residents and they have a strong business impact in Louisville compared to their population size.

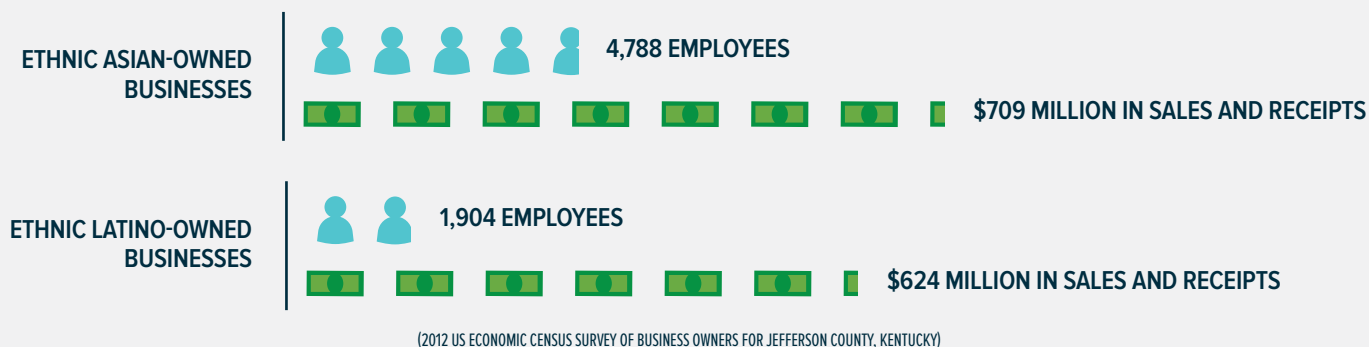
**SELF-EMPLOYED FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS IN LOUISVILLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO WORK IN STEM FIELDS THAN SELF-EMPLOYED NATIVE-BORN RESIDENTS (10% VS 3%)**

SOURCE NEEDED

**AS OF 2013 LOUISVILLE FOREIGN-BORN REPRESENTED 6% OF ALL BUSINESSES AND 14% OF MAIN STREET BUSINESSES DESPITE MAKING UP ONLY 5% OF THE POPULATION**



**AS OF 2012, LOUISVILLE'S 2,509 ETHNIC ASIAN-OWNED BUSINESSES EMPLOYED 4,788 PEOPLE AND THEY HAD \$709 MILLION IN SALES AND RECEIPTS. ETHNIC LATINO-OWNED BUSINESSES EMPLOYED 1,904 EMPLOYEES AND THEY HAD \$624 MILLION IN SALES AND RECEIPTS.**



## NEIGHBORHOODS

Research finds that immigrants help to revitalize distressed neighborhoods by buying houses, investing in improvements and creating mixed-income neighborhoods that attract others seeking home ownership opportunities. National studies show that homeownership rates increase over time and approach that of native-born among naturalized citizens. The positive potential impact of our recent foreign-born population growth on our housing market should only increase over time, particularly if we provide opportunities for community integration and encourage citizenship.

**FOREIGN-BORN HOME OWNERSHIP RAISED THE MEDIAN HOME VALUE IN LOUISVILLE \$2,086 PER UNIT AND RAISED THE HOUSING WEALTH NEARLY \$625 MILLION BETWEEN 2000-2010**

2010 U.S. CENSUS AND THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION ON THE HOUSING MARKET, AMERICAS SOCIETY/COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS AND THE PARTNERSHIP FOR A NEW AMERICAN ECONOMY, RETRIEVED FROM [WWW.RENEWOURECONOMY.ORG/HOUSINGMAP](http://WWW.RENEWOURECONOMY.ORG/HOUSINGMAP)

## WELCOMING PLAN

Louisville's foreign-born population growth comes primarily from three distinct segments:

- **REFUGEES:** Immigrants who are forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster who arrive through the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services relocation program.
- **SECONDARY MIGRANTS:** Foreign-born residents who move to Louisville after initial settlement in other U.S. locations
- **VISA SPONSORED:** Recruited professionals, international students and scholars, or those whose presence in the U.S. is validated through specific visa programs, for a defined period of time.

Refugees will continue to be the most significant source of growth, but other factors are needed to retain current foreign-born residents while attracting a greater number of secondary and immigrants sponsored for specialty visas.

Continuing to realize the benefits that immigrants bring to Louisville requires the continued growth of their numbers in the region. Current population growth projections put Louisville on track to almost double 2015 foreign-born population by 2025. In order to meet growth goals the Louisville region is looking to accelerate attraction of native and foreign-born migrants to our area by increasing annual growth of inbound migration from 1% to 2%.

## PROJECTED GROWTH OF FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION

LOUISVILLE IS ON TRACK TO JOIN THE TOP 50 CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES FOR FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENT POPULATION. BY 2025 WE PROJECT 90,400 RESIDENTS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY (10.4% OF TOTAL POPULATION) AND 114,000 RESIDENTS IN THE LOUISVILLE METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (7.3% OF TOTAL POPULATION). BY 2040, WE EXPECT TO MORE THAN DOUBLE OUR FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION TO 172,000 FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY (17.2% OF TOTAL POPULATION) AND 212,000 FOR THE LOUISVILLE MSA (10.6% OF TOTAL POPULATION).

	JEFFERSON COUNTY 2015	LOUISVILLE MSA 2015	JEFFERSON COUNTY 2025	LOUISVILLE MSA 2025	JEFFERSON COUNTY 2040	LOUISVILLE MSA 2040
TOTAL POPULATION	763,323	1,279,335	856,500	1,559,000	1,000,400	2,000,800
FOREIGN BORN	51,393	63,687	90,400	114,000	172,000	212,000
FOREIGN BORN % OF TOTAL	6.7%	4.9%	10.4%	7.3%	17.2%	10.6%

FIGURES ASSUME THAT FACTORS SUCH AS FEDERAL IMMIGRATION POLICY, STATUS OF OUR MAJOR COMPANIES, STATE POLICIES AND RULES, AND THE CAPACITY OF OUR CURRENT REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT REMAIN INTACT, STABLE AND CONSISTENT. FOREIGN-BORN CONTRIBUTION TO TOTAL POPULATION GROWTH: FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY PROJECTED GROWTH, 74% OF 2025 TOTAL GROWTH AND 51% THROUGH 2040 • LOUISVILLE MSA PROJECTED GROWTH, 41% OF TOTAL GROWTH AND 21% THROUGH 2040



# STRUCTURING OUR WELCOME

Like immigrants throughout history, today's immigrants seek an opportunity for a new life. Jobs are a major driver of foreign-born migration. Although Louisville's job market offers numerous attractive options for immigrant job seekers, so do other cities. Increasingly, immigrants look for other factors when making a decision to settle and stay. Affordable housing, good schools, strong resident foreign-born communities, and community engagement opportunities are features that weigh heavily in selecting a new city and making it a permanent home. Louisville offers programs, resources and infrastructure to support a growing foreign-born community. To continue our historically robust growth, Louisville's efforts require effective coordination and communication with

organizations to connect foreign-born residents to existing programs and resources and, when needed, to advocate for additional programming to address specific needs that will help them succeed.

Global Louisville provides a cross-sector cooperative platform to bring together key community partners to meet the needs of foreign-born residents.

**NEWLY NATURALIZED CITIZENS SEE A  
RISE IN INCOME OF 8-12% WITHIN  
THREE YEARS OF ACHIEVING  
CITIZENSHIP STATUS IN THE U.S.**

CITIES FOR CITIZENSHIP, CITIZENSHIP: A WISE INVESTMENT FOR CITIES, SUMMER 2014

## COORDINATE & SHARE DATA TO DRIVE STRATEGY & MEASURE IMPACT



# GLOBAL LOUISVILLE ACTION PLAN

## THE GLOBAL LOUISVILLE ACTION PLAN ADDRESSES SEVERAL AREAS OF EFFORT:

- ☐ ALIGN REGIONAL POPULATION DENSITY OF FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS WITH THAT OF THE TOP 50 METRO AREAS
- ☐ ACCELERATE FOREIGN TALENT ATTRACTION AND JOB GROWTH
- ☐ LEVERAGE THE REGION'S GROWING GLOBAL DIVERSITY TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION'S HUMAN CAPITAL
- ☐ ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES AND RESOURCES
- ☐ EXPAND NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND PROMOTE ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- ☐ ENRICH THE CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC DIVERSITY OF OUR REGION
- ☐ INCREASE THE REGION'S GLOBAL FLUENCY
- ☐ RAISE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT LEVELS AND ATTRACT & RETAIN MORE FOREIGN STUDENTS
- ☐ INTEGRATE NEWCOMERS INTO THE FABRIC OF THE COMMUNITY
- ☐ EMPOWER NEW IMMIGRANTS TO ENGAGE IN THE COMMUNITY AND BUILD LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

Global Louisville has identified three core categories of action for welcoming immigrants:

**INTEGRATE, EMPOWER AND ATTRACT.**

Each category identifies areas for focused improvement with specific strategies to address factors that impact our community's attractiveness to foreign-born talent and ability to successfully integrate newcomers. These were determined through a series of community focus sessions, small group interviews and stakeholder meetings that included immigrants, educators, service providers, business people, students and government representatives.

# INTEGRATE

**Equitable and efficient access to quality employment, good housing, safe neighborhoods, pathways to education, entrepreneurship, and career advancement. Their success attracts more skilled, ambitious immigrants**

STRATEGY	Build systems necessary to support population growth & integrate newcomers	Provide equitable access to services and resources	Enhance access to career pathways and successful professional outcomes for foreign born workers	Jumpstart foreign-born entrepreneurship
ACTION	<p>Support and enhance the capacity of refugee and immigrant service agencies</p> <p>Conduct multi-agency, cross-functional review of available affordable housing to increase available units</p> <p>Connect city services and refugee/immigrant service agencies</p> <p>Connect refugee/immigrant agencies with employers to expand hiring opportunities</p> <p>Work with realtors, and front line service providers to provide accurate and culturally appropriate information</p>	<p>Build a streamlined resource directory with multi-language accessibility</p> <p>Provide cross-cultural training to front-line staff in public service roles across all community sectors in order to provide accurate information and referrals.</p> <p>Reward and celebrate individual and organizational efforts to improve foreign-born inclusion</p>	<p>Connect new foreign-born residents to key resources and networks through community on-boarding programs</p> <p>Increase job-centered English language programs for foreign-born workforce</p> <p>Help skilled foreign-born workers attain credential verification, job retraining or skill realignment to fill workforce needs in high-skilled jobs</p> <p>Build stronger connections, on-ramps, “next opportunity” jobs, professional training and progressive career paths for skilled foreign-born workers</p>	<p>Connect foreign-born entrepreneurs to business development resources and networks</p> <p>Support the development of foreign born business associations and mentorship programs to assist new business start-ups</p> <p>Strengthen ties to minority business resources and networks</p> <p>Ensure equitable access to business networks and capital</p>

# EMPOWER

**Long-term engagement and participation by immigrants as fully-integrated members of the larger Louisville community will activate their full potential to contribute to Louisville's prosperity.**

STRATEGY	Foster citizenship	Increase financial capacity & participation	Develop strong community leadership	Encourage deep roots in the community
ACTION	<p>Assist eligible foreign-born residents in completing the naturalization process</p> <p>Increase access and availability of information about naturalization</p> <p>Educate employers and the broader community on the benefits of citizenship</p> <p>Work with lenders to provide citizenship loans</p>	<p>Increase financial literacy workshops &amp; resources in foreign-born communities</p> <p>Increase foreign born banking participation</p> <p>Increase foreign born home ownership rates</p> <p>Increase access and awareness to lending opportunities</p>	<p>Build a network of cross-sector global champions to build awareness and action</p> <p>Build systems to consistently connect foreign-born residents with the larger community</p> <p>Form an International Council representing local foreign-born communities</p> <p>Increase foreign-born representation on local commissions and boards</p>	<p>Connect foreign-born communities with the local arts and cultural heritage organizations to share and preserve their native cultures</p> <p>Support &amp; promote independent community activities and events</p> <p>Increase foreign born participation and representation at all levels of planning and community life</p>



# ATTRACT

**Inviting immigrants and extending a warm welcome is just a first step in attracting them to Louisville. Attraction requires a well-developed message and outreach plan.**

STRATEGY	Tell the powerful stories of immigrant success	Build and support smart global talent recruitment strategies	Attract and support foreign-born entrepreneurs	Celebrate Louisville's global diversity
ACTION	<p>Market to international and national media outlets that serve global audiences</p> <p>Communicate Louisville's benefits through the national and international networks of our Cuban, Indian, Nigerian, Mexican, Bhutanese, Arab and other foreign born resident communities</p> <p>Communicate data on foreign born community and impact of Global Louisville efforts through presentations and reports to the community</p> <p>Promote profiles of successful immigrant residents</p>	<p>Work with local recruiters and HR professionals to create a plan to attract and retain global talent</p> <p>Provide tailored recruiting information for targeted ethnic groups</p> <p>Assist and support trailing spouses</p> <p>Convene working group to optimize attainment of professional visas</p> <p>Work with local Human Resource community &amp; workforce organizations to provide training for HR managers &amp; career events</p> <p>Work with regional universities to increase attraction &amp; retention of international students</p>	<p>Convene stakeholder conversation around new USCIS proposal for entrepreneur visas</p> <p>Create a task force to focus on attracting foreign-born entrepreneurs</p> <p>Research best national practices for promoting foreign-born entrepreneurship success</p> <p>Model an H1B entrepreneur project with regional universities</p>	<p>Coordinate and promote World Fest &amp; global events as part of a larger annual community welcoming celebration</p> <p>Expand efforts to showcase international community activities through a shared calendar of globally-focused events and resources</p> <p>Promote global education programs throughout the community</p>

# THANK YOU!

Hundreds of community members were involved in building this plan, but a few deserve particular recognition.

The Global Louisville Steering Committee helped to set the agenda and define our plan of action.

**Co-Chair: Mayor Greg Fischer**

**Co-Chair: Kent Oyler**

**Co-Chair: Suhas Kulkarni**

Phanida Bradley - Brown-Forman Corporation

Diana DeHonney - US Census Bureau

Ingrid Johnson

John Koehlinger - Kentucky Refugee Ministries

Nima Kulkarni - INDUS Law Firm

Monica Lakhwani - JCPS

Kevin Lynch - ARGI Financial Group

Felicia Mabuza - Flex

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Yung Nguyen - IVS, LLC

Ben Ruiz - Adhawks Advertising & PR

Mordean Taylor-Archer - University of Louisville

Mary Ellen Wiederwohl - Louisville Metro Government

Mehdi Yazdanpanah - Nauga Needles

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**Special thanks to:**

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Matt Ruther, Kentucky State Data Center

Eric Burnette, KentuckianaWorks

**Contributing Interns:**

Emily Reinwald, Patrick Griffo, Leah Kelly, Parker Lawson

**Design:**

Don Hansen, AREA71

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