



National Cultural
Brokers Project 

November 2025

Investing in Canada's Shared Future: Pathways to Possibilities through Cultural Brokering

01



Land Acknowledgment

**Chief with a
headdress**

Roche Bonhomme
Jasper National
Park
Alberta



Buffalo

Tunnel Mountain
Banff National
Park
Alberta





What is cultural brokering

Cultural brokering is the practice of bridging between people of different cultural backgrounds to:

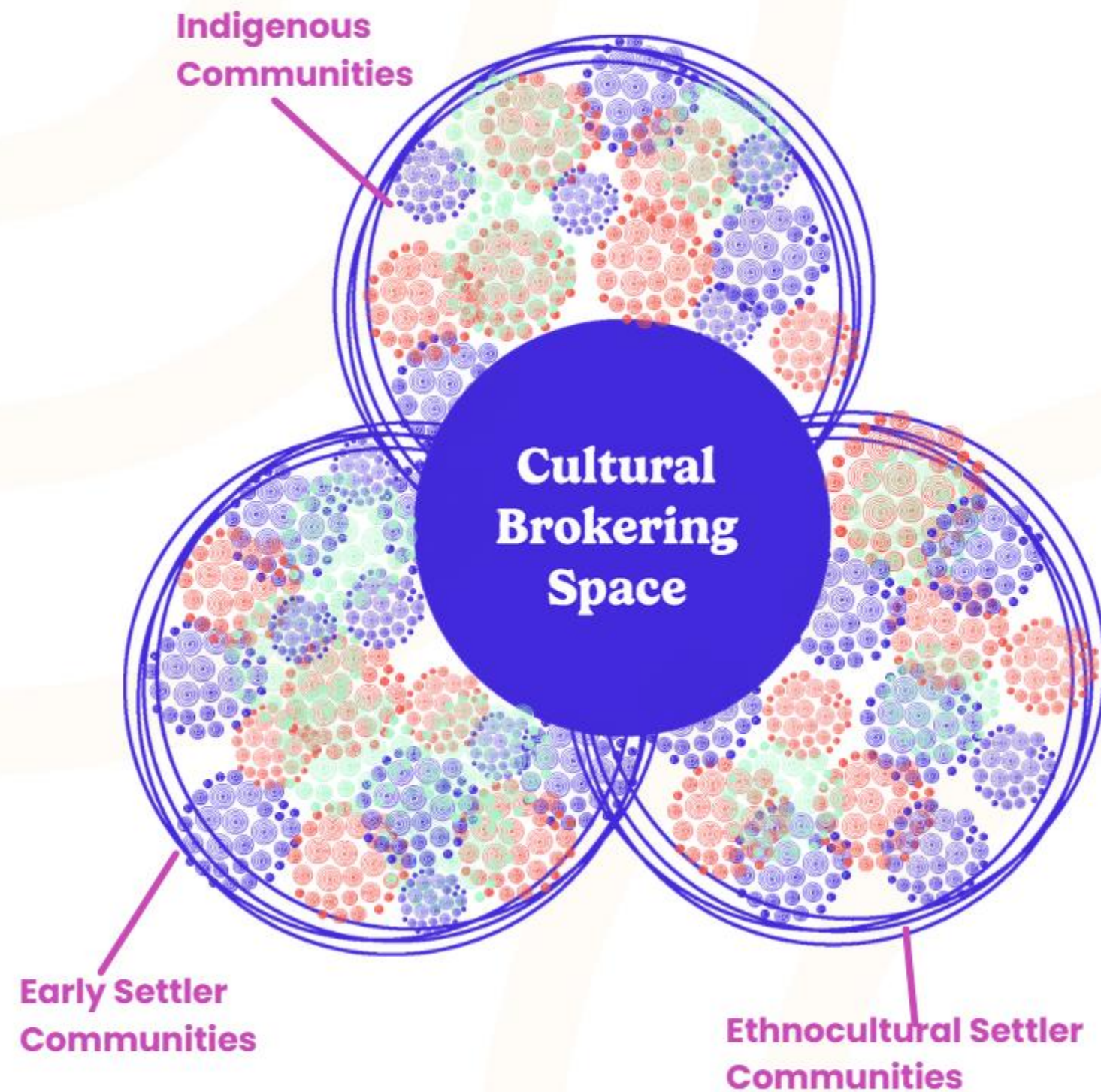
- enhance understanding,
- reduce conflict rooted in cultural misunderstanding, bias, and/or power imbalances, and
- collaboratively create a sense of belonging for all.

A Cultural Broker is a mediator who is familiar with multiple cultural contexts and is able to facilitate connection based on respect, dignity and equity for all involved. Forms of cultural brokering work can be found in different historical and cultural contexts around the world.

This role is vital in Canada, where newcomers from across the globe arrive on Indigenous land rich in cultural wealth, in a nation working to create equitable systems for all. Cultural brokering is a living, evolving practice of the question:

How can we live well together on this land?

Cultural Brokering

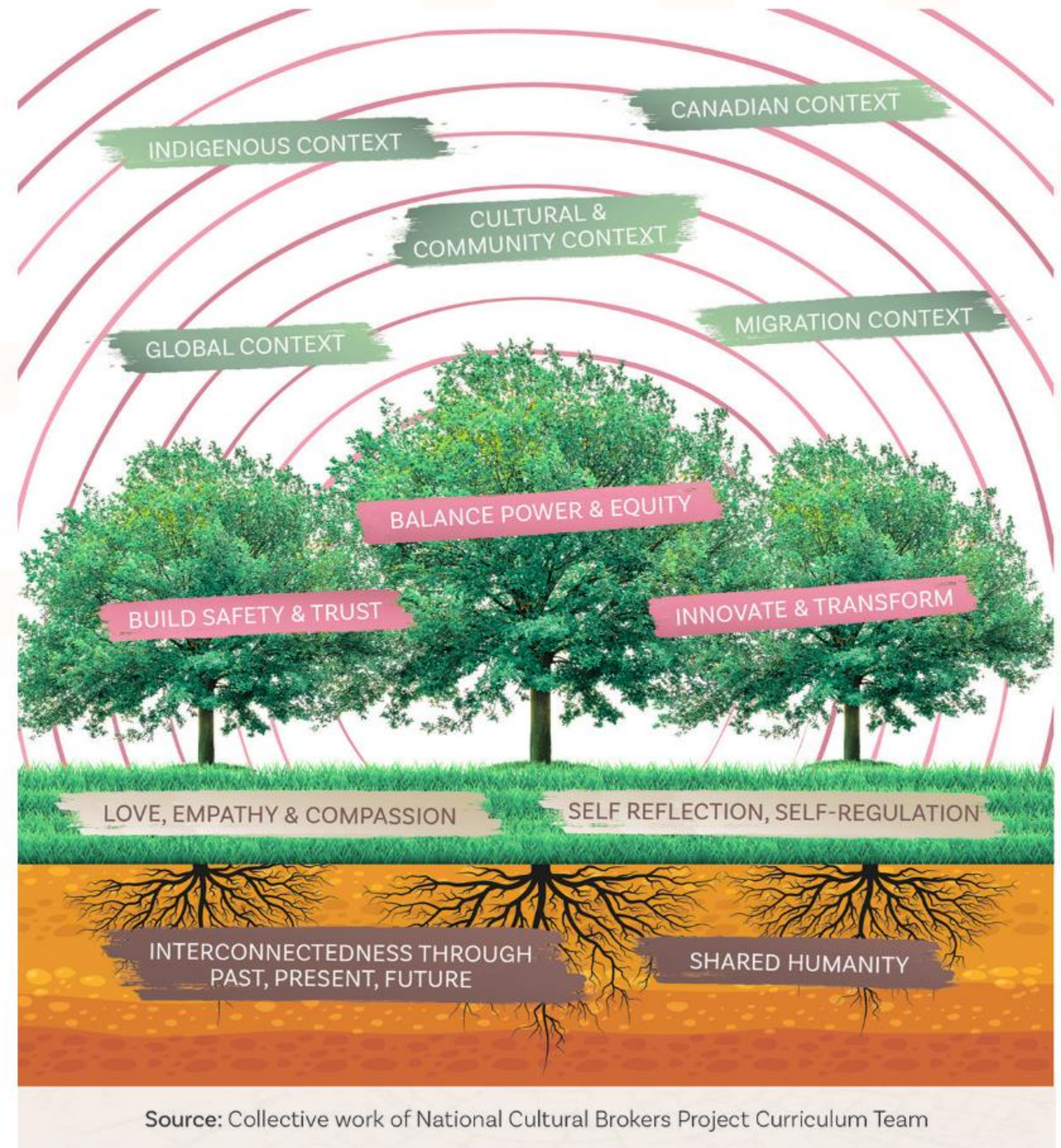


Source: National Cultural Brokers Project Curriculum Team

"As a cultural broker, I bridge cultural divides. Like a human bridge, I mediate between different perspectives, translating nuances and fostering understanding. My role creates a neutral space for diverse individuals/groups to connect, collaborate, and learn—breaking down barriers and promoting shared human experiences.

This graphic reflects our hope for the future of cultural brokering: a naturally occurring practice between early settler communities, ethnocultural settler communities (diverse ethnic groups from historical and new settler communities), and Indigenous communities.

Cultural Brokering Social Justice Practice



Ethical Commitments

GIVEN THE COMPLEX REALTIES faced by Immigrant and refugee communities and Indigenous people in Canada and the ongoing impacts of colonialism, the following ethical commitments guide the practice of Cultural Brokers.



Interconnectedness

We hold our shared humanity and the dignity and worth of all people at the heart of our work. We intentionally choose connection over separation, resisting the urge to “other”, even when it is challenging.

Stand in Solidarity

We recognize we live on the ancestral homeland of Indigenous peoples and commit to learning about their cultures, values, and teachings about how to live well here. We acknowledge our moral responsibility to understand our place in the ongoing impacts of settler colonialism and to engage in Truth and Reconciliation processes.

Acknowledge Complexity

We recognize the complex dynamics of migration and the intersectional struggles that immigrants and refugees face as they seek security, meaning, community and identity in a new land.

Embrace Change and Hope

We commit to fostering hope for meaningful change in ourselves, families, and systems. We work towards equity and justice for all.

Honor Diverse Perspectives

We seek to understand the cultural lenses that we and others bring to situations. We challenge the dominance of a singular perspective.

Cultivate Self-Awareness

We commit to reflection and personal growth to deepen our ability to connect across cultures.

Acknowledge the Deep Impact of Trauma

We recognize that trauma affects all communities, and choose to focus on resilience, strength, and cultural wealth.

Foster a Community of Practice for Cultural Brokering

We contribute to and participate in a community of support, mentorship, and shared accountability. We recognize cultural brokering as a distinct and essential field of practice to establish right relationships and respect fundamental human rights.



ORIENTATIONS & CAPACITIES FOR CULTURAL BROKERING

What
Does This
Practice
Ask of Us?

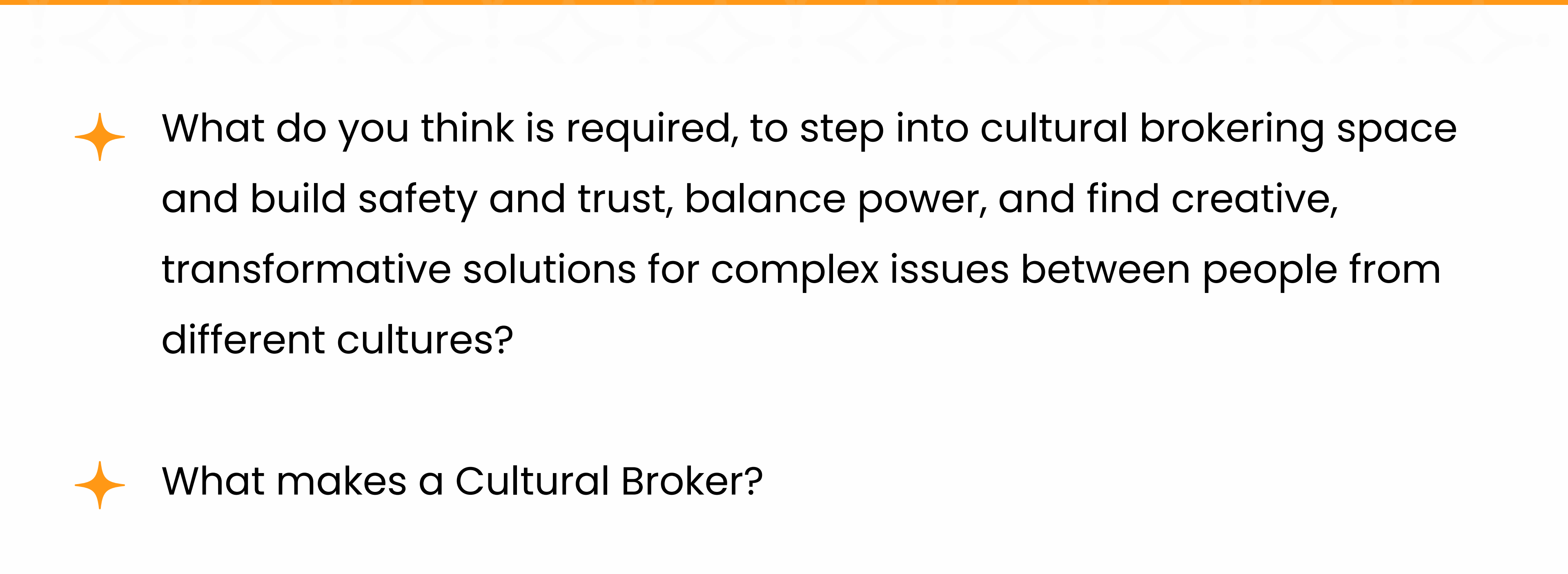
CULTURAL BROKERING IS a human-centered practice. The capacities and competencies for *doing* the work overlap with the capacities and competencies needed to *stay well* in the work.

The following are seven key orientations for the practice as well capacities related to each of the orientations. This is not an exhaustive list—it is meant to invite personal and collective reflection, discussion, and learning through engaged sharing, case studies, and natural mentorship.

Seven Orientations for Entering Cultural Brokering Space

1. Groundedness
2. Humility
3. Centering Relationship
4. Empowering Orientation
5. Bridging for Mutual Understanding
6. Balancing Power
7. Creative and Transformative Focus



- 
- 
- ✦ What do you think is required, to step into cultural brokering space and build safety and trust, balance power, and find creative, transformative solutions for complex issues between people from different cultures?
 - ✦ What makes a Cultural Broker?

02

CANADA'S SHARED FUTURE: INVESTING IN CULTURAL BROKERS IN CANADA to advance equity and inclusion for newcomers and racialized populations in Canada

Key results from the study on Cultural Brokers: Agents for Health and Wellness Equity for Newcomers, Along the Full Continuum of Settlement, Integration and Social Inclusion" (Phase I, 2022–2025)

RESEARCH TEAM: ✨

Phase 1

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Partnership
Organizations
Phase 1:



Funded by:

Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVE ✨

"How does investing in cultural brokers advance equity and inclusion for newcomers and racialized populations in Canada?"

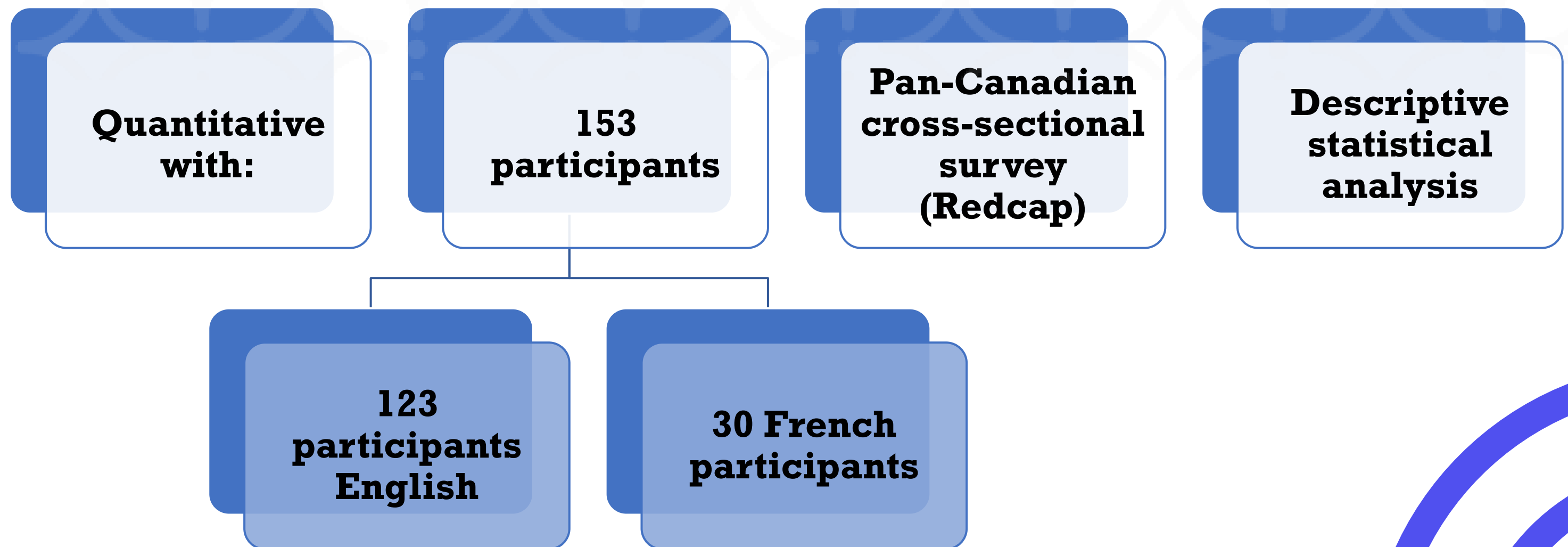
Research Objectives:

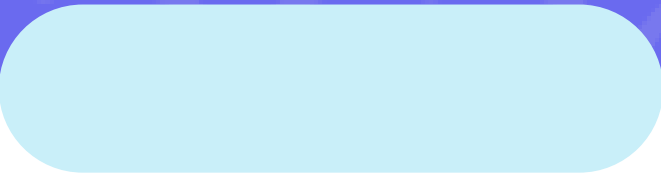
1. To identify the practices and capacity-building strategies for cultural brokers
2. To discuss policy options that enable sustained and impactful roles for cultural brokers within Canada's evolving multicultural context and landscape.

WHO ARE CULTURAL BROKERS? ✨

- Definition: Building bridges between cultures
- Roles: Settlement agents, liaison officers, bridge women/men
- Services: language support, health/social services, community connections

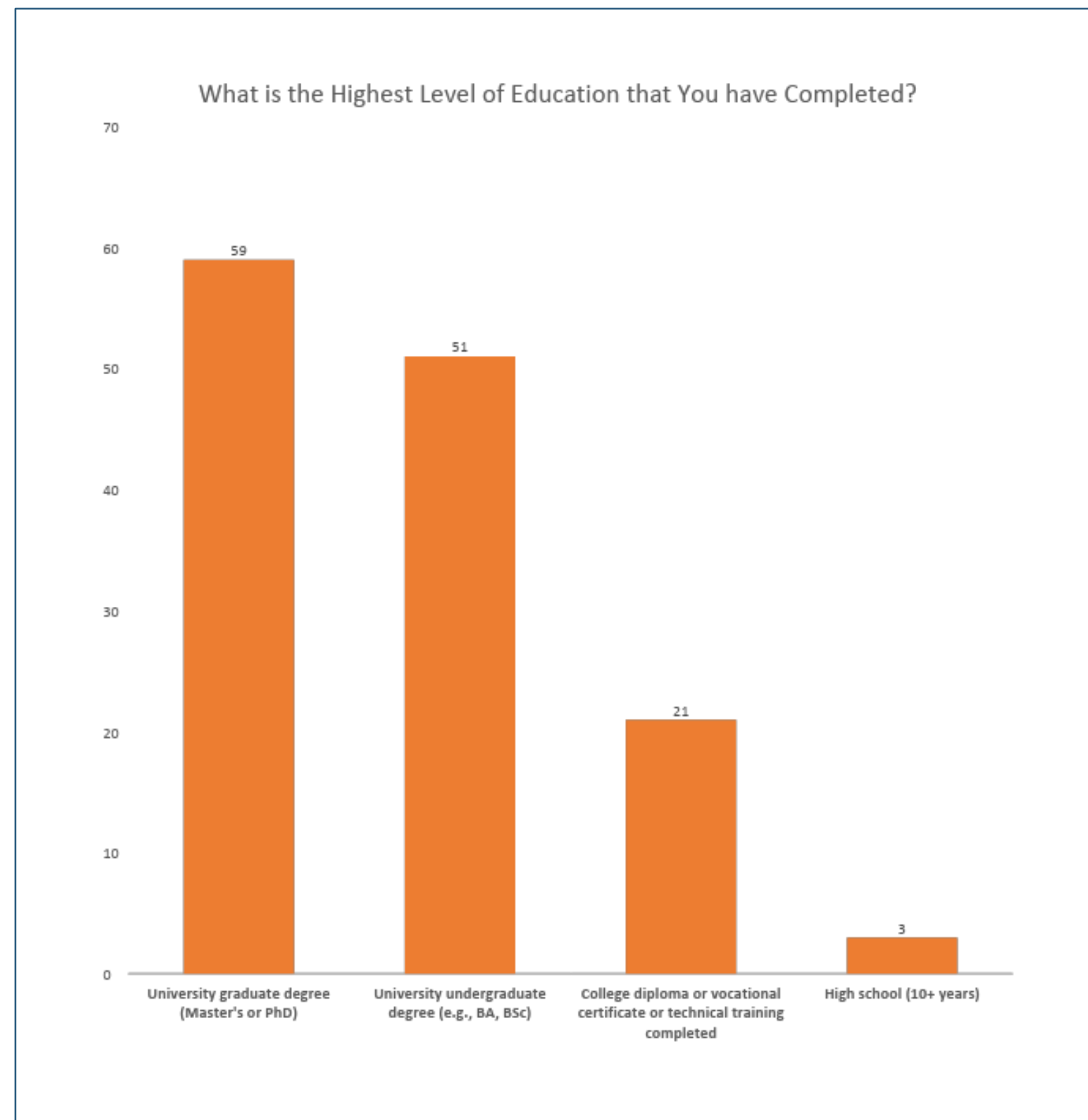
METHODOLOGY ✨





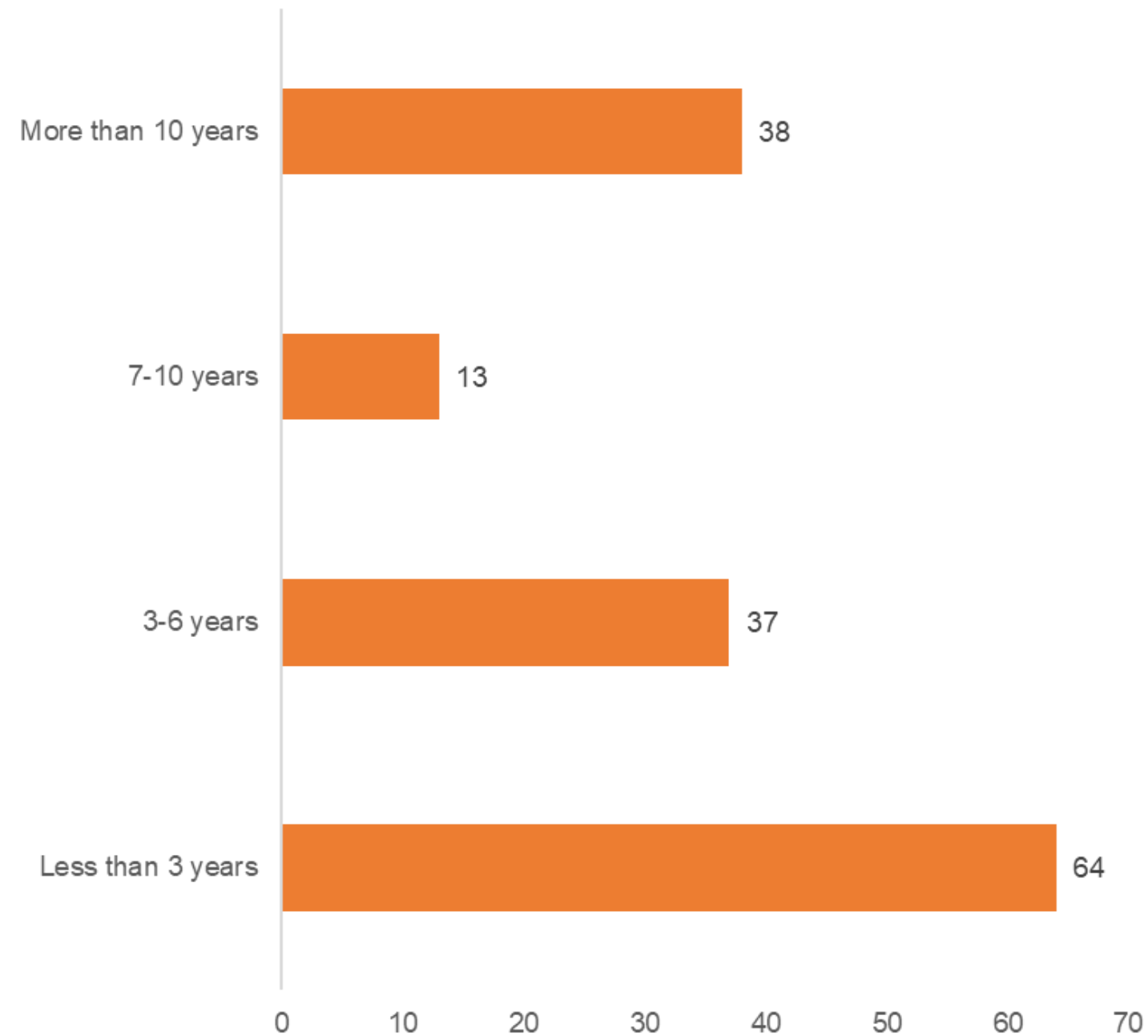
FINDINGS

*Key results from the study on Cultural Brokers:
Agents for Health and Wellness Equity for
Newcomers, Along the Full Continuum of Settlement,
Integration and Social Inclusion” (Phase I, 2022-
2025)



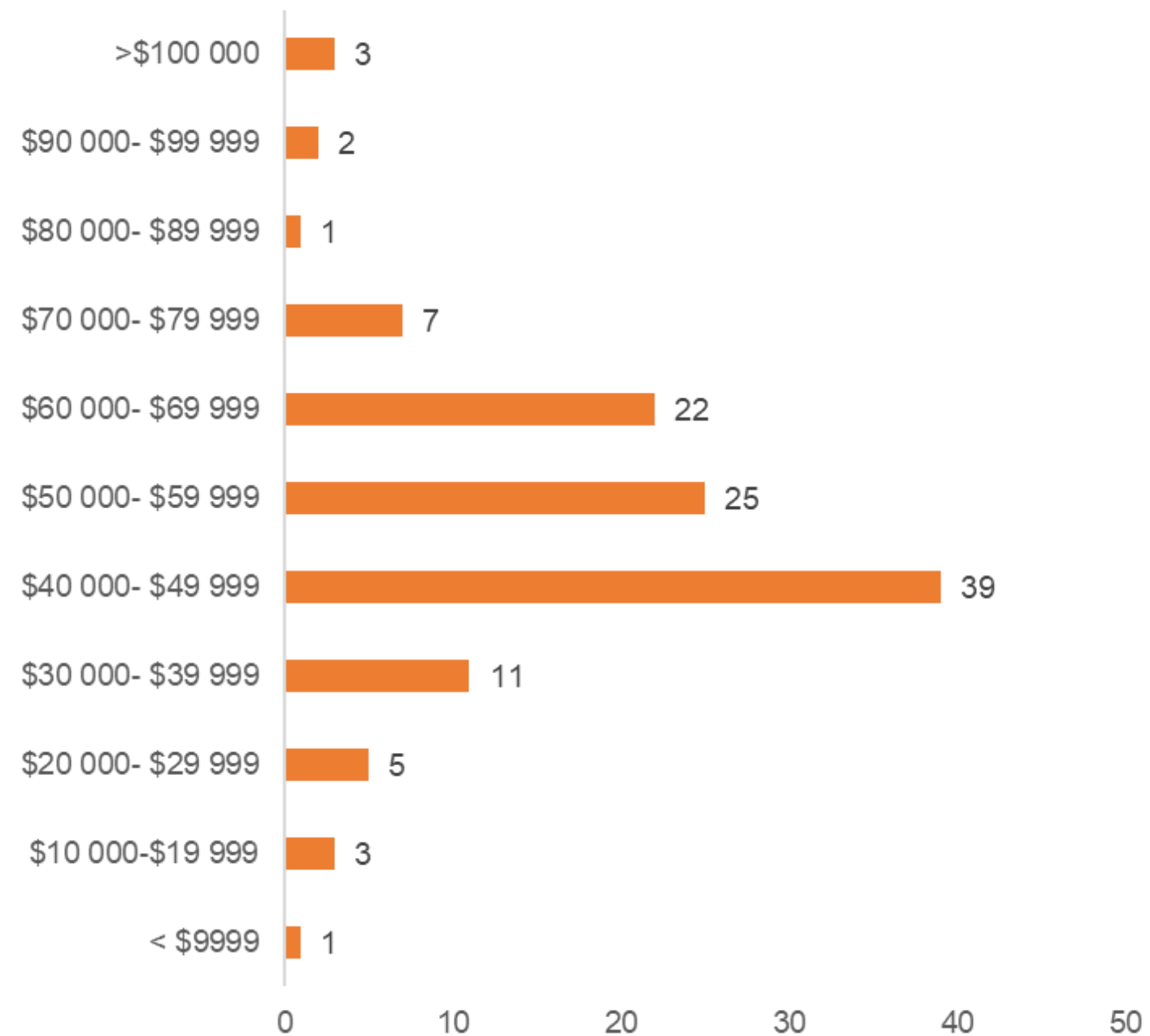
- **Total N size = 153 (English and French dataset)**
- *2 Preferred to not answer
- *17 Did not select any response
- Source: National survey of Cultural Brokers 2024-25

How many years of experience do you have as a Cultural Broker?



- **Total N size = 153 (English and French dataset)**
- Source: National survey of Cultural Brokers 2024-25

What is your yearly income range for your Cultural Brokering job?



- **Total N size = 153 (English and French dataset)**
- *16 Preferred to not answer
- *18 Did not select any response
- Source: National survey of Cultural Brokers 2024-25

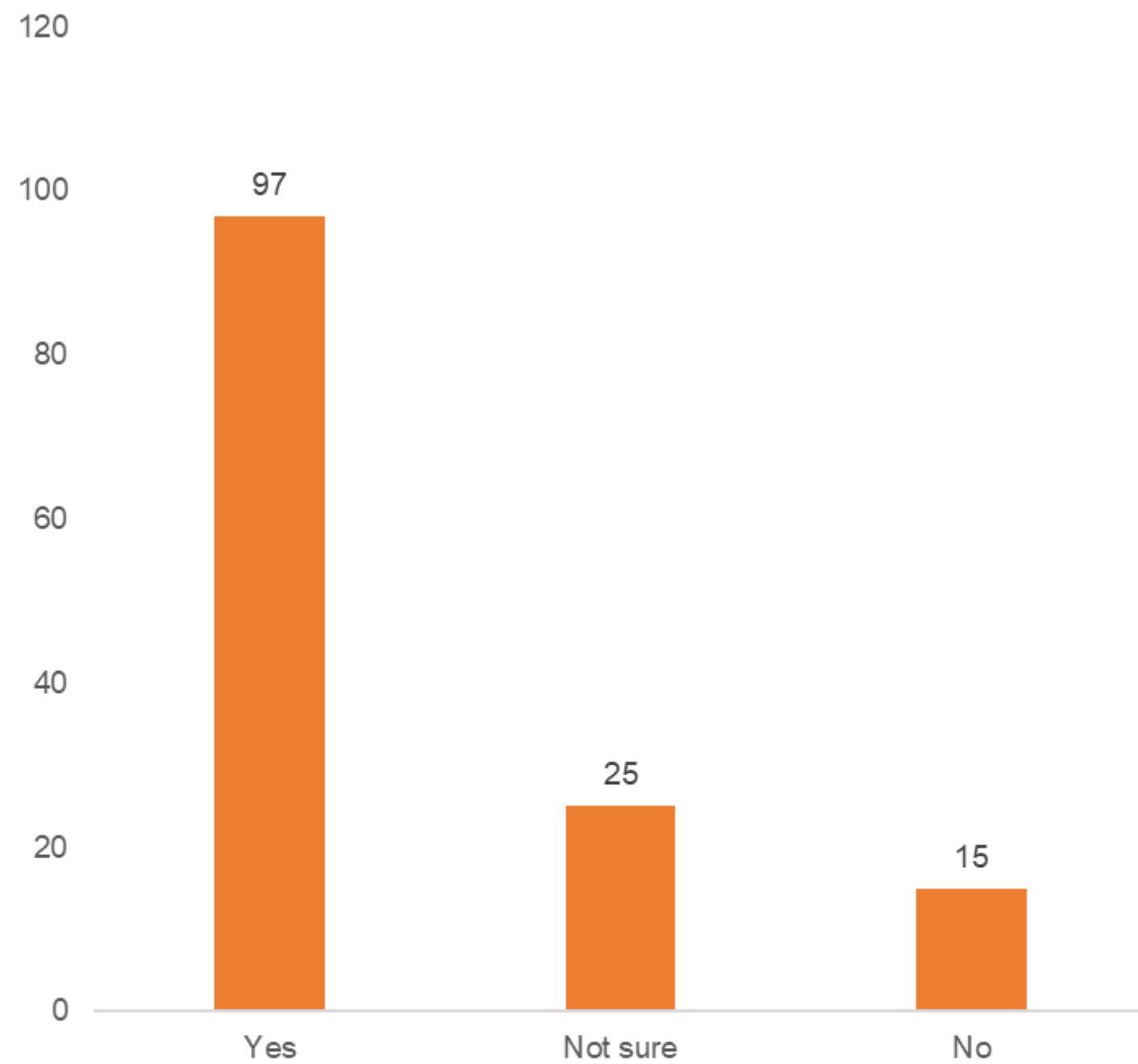
What types of modules did you complete in your training?
Please select all that apply:



• **Total N size = 153 (English and French dataset)**

• Source: National survey of Cultural Brokers 2024-25

Are you interested in having professional accreditation for Cultural Brokering work?

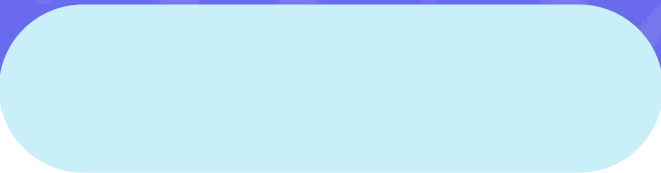


- **Total N size = 153 (English and French dataset)**
- *16 Did not select any response
- Source: National survey of Cultural Brokers 2024-25

Housing (e.g., temporary, permanent, shelter)	Count
High level of support	45
Some level of support	67
Minimal level of support	20
No level of support	14
(blank)	7
Food banks	Count
High level of support	44
Some level of support	61
Minimal level of support	28
No level of support	11
(blank)	9
Employment	Count
High level of support	67
Some level of support	54
Minimal level of support	16
No level of support	4
(blank)	7
Healthcare	Count
High level of support	52
Some level of support	56
Minimal level of support	32
No level of support	5
(blank)	8
Public safety (e.g., police, prison)	Count
High level of support	28
Some level of support	62
Minimal level of support	31
No level of support	24
(blank)	8

Level of support provided to families by CBs

- **Total N size = 153 (English and French dataset)**
- **Source: National survey of Cultural Brokers 2024-25**



DISCUSSION

*Key results from the study on Cultural Brokers: Agents for Health and Wellness Equity for Newcomers, Along the Full Continuum of Settlement, Integration and Social Inclusion”
(Phase I, 2022–2025)

Perspectives from families and policy-makers

Reception and basic needs

Administrative assistance
Housing and accessibility
services

Support for children

Professional advice

Cultural and Values
Adaptation

Vital intermediaries

Facilitate access to healthcare,
education, employment, and social
services

Help newcomers navigate complex
bureaucratic systems, decode
cultural norms, and advocate for
their rights, ensuring a smoother
transition into Canadian society.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Segmented Labour Market Theory → CBs stuck in unstable jobs
- Social Capital Theory → bonding/bridging networks but little linking capital
- GBA Plus → intersectional discrimination (gender, race, migration status)

Source: Bourdieu (1986); Doeringer & Piore (1971); Government of Canada (2022); Putnam (2000)

RESEARCH CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Investments in bonding and bridging opportunities such as partnerships can enhance linkages to mainstream institutions.
- Create pathways for CBs to transition from precarious income to better wages and better recognized roles within mainstream and community-based institutions, and invest in training.
- Adopt policies that recognize and address the compound barriers faced by women and racialized CBs by addressing institutional racism within and across systems.

Thank you

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Telephone: 1-888-679-4404 or 514-581-9067

**What possibilities you will
see to face this challenges
for cultural broker?**

03

What is NCBP?





- NCBP is a national initiative that uplifts Cultural Brokering as essential work in building inclusive communities.
- Our purpose is to support Cultural Brokers and promote the practice of cultural brokering nationally, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive Canada.

Partnership organizations:

Manitoba
Possible.

Laurentian University
Université Laurentienne

Umbrella Multicultural
Health Co-op

**Cultural Brokers
Network of Canada**
Building bridges across communities

 Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Funded by

Funded by:

Financé par :

Ways to Get Involved ✨



Workshops & Training for Cultural Brokers

Support capacity-building for
frontline workers



Community of Practice for Employers

Co-create an inclusive
curriculum and share best
practices.



Gatherings & Networking Events

Foster cross-sector
dialogue and
partnerships



Research about Cultural Brokering

Share real-world insights
to strengthen cultural
brokering.

Stay Connected with the NCBP



National Cultural
Brokers Project



ncbp_canada



National Cultural
Brokers Project

Your engagement helps build stronger, more
inclusive communities.

<https://culturalbrokers.ca/>

Thank You



<https://culturalbrokers.ca/>

