

Minutes: SISC Working Group

Thursday, April 22, 2021 - 11:00 am to 12:00 pm (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)

Present: Acel Clemente (YMCA), Cyril Ayeobore (TDSB), Isobel Goddard (Warden Woods), Merona Abbas Estiphanos (Toronto Newcomer Office), Timothy Maxwell (Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services), Rakesh Bhardwaj (CultureLink), Adriana Pena (TSLIP – WoodGreen Community Services), Jane Guan (WoodGreen Community Services), Pam Cardwell (TWLIP-Job Start), Jassi Ranauta (TSLIP – The Neighbourhood Group)

Minutes: Adriana Pena (TSLIP – WoodGreen Community Services)

I= Information Di=Discussion Dc=Decision A=Action

| | Agenda Item |
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| I | <p>Digital access panel series</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update: Ryerson University’s leadership lab has agreed to mention our work and report on access to technology for newcomers and service providers during the public access panel discussion on June 2nd. They will mention and credit our team during the event will share our findings in the opening remarks. Click here to find more details on this digital divides series. |
| I | <p>Affordable Internet Day of Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn more on how you can take action. |
| I- DI | <p>TSLIP Strategic Direction 2021-2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TSLIP will start to work on its next Strategic Plan in May/June 2021. • This plan is intended to support our partners in the newcomer-serving sector to ensure the successful integration of newcomers in Toronto. Over the last year TSLIP focused its efforts on a transitional strategic plan and two strategic directions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporting newcomer serving sectors to ensure a “just recovery” from Covid-19 ○ Addressing Emerging Newcomer Needs (specifically those related to employment, mental health, and access to services/access to technology) • Strategic Planning Process (previous year): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Council Meeting and subsequent focus groups. ○ The focus groups were based on the top priorities identified by TSLIP Members during the Council Meeting. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The purpose of these meetings was to determine the top priorities for newcomer communities and the sector and decide which issues the TSLIP should be focusing on. ● Systemic Issues and Social Change Working Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We are a city wide WG focused on addressing systemic barriers that hinder newcomer success and integration. Last year we worked on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Researching the changing technology needs of service providers and newcomers. ▪ Creating a repository of return to work resources for settlement service employers. ▪ Compiling a repository of legal and policy resources for newcomers heading back to work and concerned about unsafe working conditions due to COVID-19. |
| DI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brainstorming: Which issues should the SISC WG take on or have an impact on over the next 3 to 5 years? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mental health: policies that address equitable access to mental health supports; social isolation; language isolation; pandemic fatigue; family related stress and vaccine related anxiety. The group can focus on policy issues (not to duplicate the work of the Mental Health Working Group). ○ Equity issues: access to employment; access to healthcare; barriers to accessing immigration process; barriers for undocumented newcomers; language barriers and barriers to navigating available supports. ○ Loss of Learning: much greater in vulnerable newcomer communities. ○ Digital Literacy: need for collaboration and enhanced service delivery among agencies. ○ Access to supports and services: for newcomers with no literacy and lower language skills. ○ Advocacy campaigns: race analysis and impact of discrimination on different areas, e.g. access to mental health and/or employment for racialized/black newcomers. ○ TSLIP should conduct another newcomer needs assessment. ○ Supports for newcomers that have been left behind: newcomers with no access to technology and unable to connect with their religious communities and other supports groups. ○ Sector readiness to support influx of new immigrants. ○ NOTE: TSLIP's strategic directions should be flexible as the sector continues to address the recovery process. |
| I | <p><u>Next Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Next meeting: Thursday, May 20th – 11:00 am |