



Social Inclusion Working Group

Meeting Minutes

September 13th, 2021

2:00pm – 3:30pm

Zoom

Attendance

Nadia Umadat -TSLIP, Jassi Ranauta- TSLIP, Nadjib Alamyar- Woodgreen Community Services, Craig Carter- Edwards- Welcome Home TO, Shakira Quraishi- Culturelink, Alisha Griffith-East York/Don Valley Cluster, Rosa Riberio Parkdale Community Health Centre, Angelica Hernandez Salvation Army

AGENDA

1. Land Acknowledgement
2. Welcome & Introductions
3. Strategic Plan
4. Grassroots Support Update
5. Update on Member Reopening Plans
6. Vaccine Engagement
7. Afghan Refugee Member News and Initiatives
8. Program Update
9. Closing

1. Land Acknowledgement

TSLIP staff read Land Acknowledgement

2. Welcome and introductions

Each member was welcomed by LIP staff, members were thanked for attending the meeting. Members introduced themselves and gave small updates on their organizations.

3. Strategic Planning Update

- TSLIP has been able to identify strategic directions, purposely kept at high level to allow for flexibility. Reviewed the process to date to remind working group of brainstorming, needs assessments, focus groups, and other working groups discussions
- Overall, entire plan will focus on a just covid-19 recovery for newcomers by working to overcome social inequalities such as racism and poverty
- Three strategic directions will be developed: policy and research, supporting newcomer success and strengthening the newcomer-serving sector
- Social Inclusion Working Group will fall under second direction of supporting newcomer success

4. Grassroots Support Update

- Recapped the previous meeting, that an electronic survey was shared with grassroots groups to learn about the supports they require for improved engagement.
- 8 groups participated through survey monkey with the help of Don Valley/East York cluster
- A few follow- up calls were held with some of the groups who wanted to connect further and had very specific needs for their groups
- Challenge will be to connect concrete support in geographical locations
- Some groups have no physical location and some needs are not ongoing, but need by need
- Aim is to speak with more of the groups before next meeting in order to have a full report
- As we define our strategic plan we will think of how this project will fit in with our new work plans and deliverables
- Specifics asks to date:
 - *Unified We Grow*, a food security group in in Parma Court requires support and consultation with organizational policies, and training packages for volunteers, liability releases as they work with food and help with translation
 - Work group member provided some online resources for connection with non-profit/corporate documents to provide examples and more information
 - *E- Heroes* is looking for help with digital literacy skills ie. Mailchimp, outreach, CPR and food handlers' training for newcomer women
 - City of Toronto, Skills for Change and Parkdale Queen West Community Center have options to potentially support food handlers
 - CPR has been put on hold due to covid and does not have an adaptable virtual format at this time.

4. Update on Member Reopening Plans

- *Salvation Army*: They have been open to the public, no visitors allowed in the residential programs, staff is going to office but meet with client virtually
- *Parkdale Community Health Centre*: running groups outdoors and hybrid appointments very similar to other health clinics.
- *Culturelink*: They are still working from home

5. Vaccine Engagement

- *Salvation Army*: As of the 31st of October employees are expected to be fully vaccinated or submit weekly testing. Does not have a general policy on vaccines for service users as the programs are run by different ministries and levels of government and subject to that particular ministry's mandate
- *Parkdale Community Health Centre*: Staff are expected to be vaccinated as a health facility
- *Culturelink*: encouraging everyone to complete vaccination and working to dispel persistent rumors and misinformation in newcomer populations regarding its side effects

7. Afghan Refugee Member News and Initiatives

- *Refugee 613*: is putting together translated resources, concerned there is not enough cultural support available, lots of frustration and practical challenges
- Private sponsors and refugee networks do not have clear pathways and a lot of red tape.
- Lots of on the ground frustration with the resettlement efforts, miscommunication and lack of coordination
- *Salvation Army*: Only seeing inland refugees in their location, but aware of ongoing talks for a more coordinated effort
- *Parkdale Community Health Centre*: no updates as yet

8. Program Updates

- New communications staff member has been hired at TSLIP and any updates that members need to get out can be sent to her at communications@torontolip.com
- TSLIP will have a Back to the Workplace Panel for senior leadership on September 17th at 10 am
- TSLIP's newcomer council is looking for new members. Anyone who was born outside Canada and now lives in TSLIP's catchment area is welcome to apply
- Also working on resource listing for Dari and Pashto settlement workers in Toronto

9. Closing

Next meeting will take place on Mon. October 18 at 2pm