



Social Inclusion Working Group

Meeting Minutes

October 18th, 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, Fares Khouri Access Community Capital Fund, Natasha Rollings FCJ

AGENDA

1. Land Acknowledgement
2. Welcome & Introductions
3. Grassroots Support Update
4. Strategic Plan- Looking towards projects
5. Agency updates- reopening, Afghan resettlement, vaccine engagement, any other business
6. Program Updates and news
7. Closing

1. Land Acknowledgement

Working group member kindly read Land Acknowledgement

2. Welcome and introductions

Each member was welcomed by LIP staff, members were thanked for attending the meeting. Members introduced themselves

3. Grassroots Support Update

- Jassi Ranauta provided a summation of the Grassroots Network project to date.
- An environmental scan and outreach to local grassroots groups in Toronto south supporting their communities during COVID-19 began in the Fall of 2020
- A survey and follow ups to learn about groups needs relating to supporting newcomers were conducted and to date the network has engaged with 15 groups
- Will continue to connect groups with TSLIP partner organizations who can offer relevant support as needs arise
- As the TSLIP is shifting from a 1 year transitional plan to a new strategic plan, we will begin wrapping this up but it can be incorporated in the new plan if there is interest.

Specific ask:

- *Canadian Hazara Humanitarian Services (CHHS)*
- Is currently seeking help with capacity building and professional development for their volunteer interpreters
- Also looking for support on creating confidentiality agreements and policies for client safety when the volunteer interpreters are working with clients
- Possibly reach out to Access Alliance for support,
- confidentiality and cultural needs to be relayed, not just words- Welcome Home TO will follow up with existing contact at AA
- Agreements of confidentiality templates could be borrowed by Access Alliance, MCIS or IRB's agreement with existing interpreters
<https://irb.gc.ca/en/interpreters/Pages/SiscccCtcesi.aspx>
- For vulnerable sector screen Woodgreen offered to help facilitate vulnerable sector screening through their existing volunteer programs
- Group is also seeking furniture donatiosn for distributions
- Habitat for Humanity may be a possible avenue
- Furniture Bank was suggested but there is a fee for service
- New NGO <https://www.facebook.com/TheHumanFoundationCanada> was also suggested
 - Aga Khan Museum (foundation) may have some avenues for support and a group called Northern Lights is trying to get in touch.

4. Strategic Planning Update

- TSLIP has been able to identify strategic directions, purposely kept at high level to allow for flexibility.
- 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, however there is room for work in all three directions
- The Council will meet at the end of the month to ratify the plan and we will be able to present the sub-points afterwards
- Advised group to start with brainstorming on specific projects that we might think about rolling out after the details are ratified

Brainstorming

- Grassroots network ongoing?
- Newcomer spaces for dialogue, networking, entrepreneurship virtual or in-person
- Possibly a series of events, or course, series of videos – think of access, wii-fii-scale model of Samara Institute- pop up democracy , Scale Without Borders, Not for profit network for resources
- Food handling and other virtual opportunities, more professional development on tech tools, mailchimp etc. linkedin learning for newcomers or grassroots groups
- Ensure non-status participation in professional development, advocacy, awareness that partners have specific funding but what can we do to make spaces more accessible for both tech and professional skills
- Youth-increase access to education what does that look like?
- Mental health first aid for service providers, training is expensive but needed- how can we remove barriers

5. Program or Agency Updates

- FCJ has a fund from the City of Toronto for COVID 19 Isolation fund for undocumented folks <https://www.fcjrefugeecentre.org/temporary-covid-19-isolation-emergency-support-fund> correct contact person is acalleja@fcjrefugeecentre.org.
- Woodgreen Community Services concluded a Symposium on the Newcomer Wellbeing Project, a 3 year funding by IRCC. Goal was to examine quality of work and how newcomers can be serviced better. Community service coordination model developed which works on the premise that collaborative work produces better result. During the project there were the development of tools and processes and new software
- Early results have been yielded positive results and have created an increased attachment to programs.
- Funding and project will continue for foreseeable future
- Woodgreen also shared Afghan Settlement Hotline running Monday to Friday from 2pm to 4pm
- Members of Afghan community and settlement counsellors are on hand for information and referrals, settlement or general information for newcomers no ID is required

- Language Access Coalition of Canada would like providers to check in through this survey <https://forms.gle/WTyRYZKo8GsTD6HW7>
- Fares Khouri of Access Community Capital Fund updated the group he will be leaving his role for a new opportunity elsewhere, but a new representative will join us shortly

6. Closing

Next meeting will take place on Mon. Nov 8th at 2pm

Appendix- Notes from Chat

- <https://native-land.ca/>
- Scale Without Borders - tech entrepreneurship for newcomers
- Samara Institute - pop-up Democracy
- Language Access Coalition of Canada - I have some advocacy training material I have already put together.
- <https://socialinnovation.org/offering/everyoneeverydayto/>