

# Local Immigration Partnerships Handbook



Citizenship and Immigration Canada



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## Introduction

Since the mid-1990s, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has increasingly recognized the importance of engagement at the local level. Municipalities play a central role in delivering many services that impact the integration outcomes of newcomers; tremendous capacity and expertise exist at the local level.

Communities across Canada are recognizing the importance of newcomers, and are making immigration a main component of their plans for the future, both at the provincial and territorial level and increasingly, at the municipal level.

Municipalities are taking a greater role in planning for and guiding immigration and settlement. Critical gaps have been identified in the local labour force with corresponding attraction strategies being developed. Retention is a key concern for many communities, given the reality that entire families need to feel welcomed for workers to stay.

The Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) innovation is a means to systematize local engagement in settlement with resources available to hire individuals to coordinate the activities of the LIP, build on existing local initiatives, contribute to the enhanced planning envisioned in the 2008 modernized approach to settlement, and augment community engagement to support a two-way process of integration.

This Handbook is intended to assist communities and CIC staff in establishing Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) as a means of planning and coordination at the local level with municipal, provincial/territorial and federal involvement.



## Conceptualizing Community

*Community is a unified body of individuals who may be linked by a common location, shared interests, similar history, or a set of values and beliefs.*

*Welcoming Communities are places that have a strong desire to receive newcomers and where everyone works to create an environment within which newcomers feel at home.*

*Integration is a two-way process that encourages adjustments on the part of both newcomers and the host society. Ultimately, the goal is to support newcomers to become fully engaged in the economic, social, political and cultural life of Canada.*

## Characteristics of a Welcoming Community

As the destinations of newcomers have begun to diversify over the last decade and demographic change has made immigration a growing necessity, an emphasis on both attracting and retaining immigrants has resulted in an increased emphasis on the role of community. The result has been an increase in initiatives to build welcoming communities, including:

- British Columbia  
<http://www.welcomebc.ca/Communities-and-Service-Providers/Communities/communities-landing.aspx>
- Manitoba  
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/immigration/programs/communities.html>
- New Brunswick  
[http://canada.metropolis.net/events/metropolis\\_presents/Metropolis\\_presents\\_Welcoming\\_Seminar/Sheehan-E.pdf](http://canada.metropolis.net/events/metropolis_presents/Metropolis_presents_Welcoming_Seminar/Sheehan-E.pdf)
- Nova Scotia  
<http://novascotiaimmigration.ca/communities/getting-started>
- Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) is an alliance dedicated to fostering inclusive communities that promote the economic, social and civic integration of migrants and minorities in Canada. Main activities include: primary and secondary research, knowledge transfer, education, and mutual learning with a focus on comparative perspectives and best practices. <http://p2pcanada.ca/>

In March 2010, Victoria Esses, Leah Hamilton, Caroline Bennett-AbuAyyash and Meyer Burstein authored a study entitled *Characteristics of a Welcoming Community*, which highlighted the 17 factors which contribute to an open and inclusive environment. Their research was based on an extensive survey of the relevant scholarly literature, government (federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal) and community reports, descriptions of best practices, and case examples from the public and private sectors.

The rank ordered list includes:

- 1. Employment Opportunities**
- 2. Fostering of Social Capital**
- 3. Affordable and Suitable Housing**
- 4. Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community**
- 5. Presence of Newcomer-Serving Agencies that can Successfully Meet the Needs of Newcomers**
- 6. Links between Main Actors Working toward Welcoming Communities**
- 7. Municipal Features and Services Sensitive to the Presence and Needs of Newcomers**
- 8. Educational Opportunities**
- 9. Accessible and Suitable Health Care**
- 10. Available and Accessible Public Transit**
- 11. Presence of Diverse Religious Organizations**
- 12. Social Engagement Opportunities**
- 13. Political Participation Opportunities**
- 14. Positive Relationships with the Police and the Justice System**
- 15. Safety**
- 16. Opportunities for Use of Public Space and Recreation Facilities**
- 17. Favourable Media Coverage and Representation**



## Local Context: Building on Success

Municipalities, communities and neighbourhoods have been organizing and planning to address the needs and interests of newcomers for some time. The LIPs model is a complement to existing activities and can be implemented to leverage capacity.

LIPs not only complement existing activities, but also help to more fully integrate and optimize these activities. In addition, LIPs build on current successes in the community, and work with what is already in place, rather than supplanting other efforts or working in parallel. As LIPs mature, new practices, new partnerships and new ways of working will emerge.

LIPs systematize initiatives while supporting bridging between settlement service provider organizations (SPOs) and mainstream institutions. Further, the presence of LIPs provides structure and staff to ensure coherence and maintain momentum within a community.

## Purpose of the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs)

### What are the LIPs?

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are a mechanism through which CIC supports the development of community-based partnerships and planning around the needs of newcomers. LIPs seek to engage various stakeholders in a locally-driven strategic planning process including employers, school boards, health centres and networks, boards of trade, levels of government, professional associations, ethno-cultural and faith-based organizations, and the community and social services sectors.

Local Immigration Partnerships are steered by broad-based coordinating councils comprised of key community members, often representing important local organizations. The partnership councils are tasked with overall stewardship and management control over initiatives such as needs assessments and asset mapping of their community. The partnership council's main goal is to oversee the development of a local settlement strategy and targeted action plan to produce a more welcoming and inclusive community. A staffed secretariat facilitates this process for the council by coordinating and providing organizational support. Many partnership councils have formed sub-committees (Steering and Executive Committees) as well as working groups or sector tables focused on particular themes, such as health and employment.

Local Immigration Partnerships represent a new form of multi-level governance involving municipal, provincial and federal partners. The long-term vision for LIPs is to support the development of multi-sectoral partnerships at the local community level to:

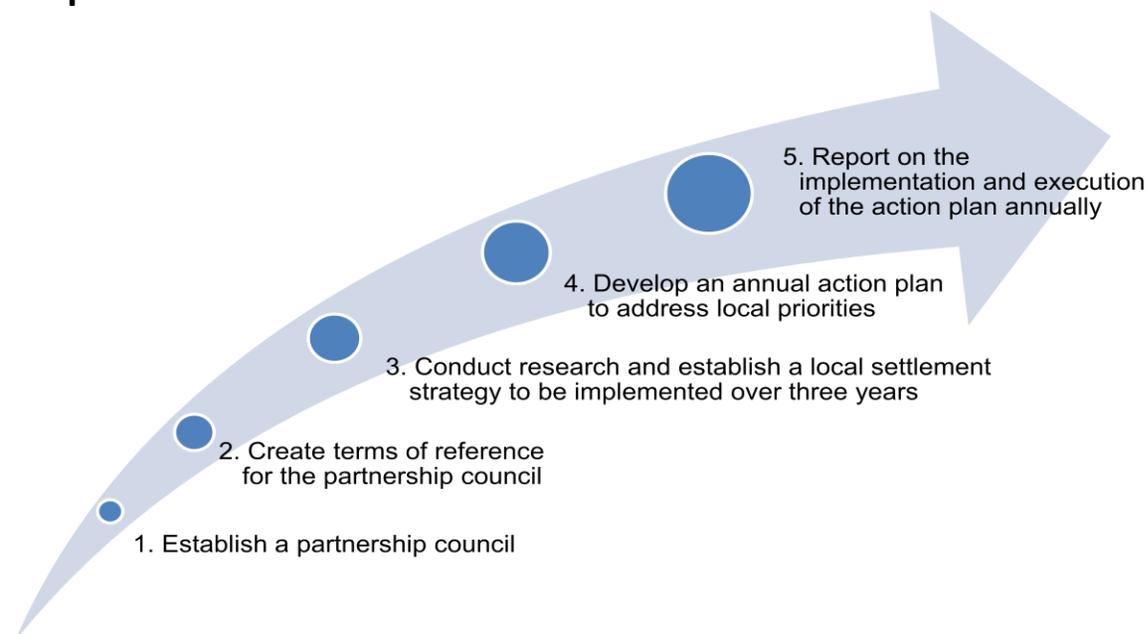
- Integrate newcomer needs into the community planning process.
- Identify community-specific strategic priorities.
- Implement a settlement strategy and action plans to improve newcomer outcomes.



The overall objective is to engage groups that will coordinate and enhance the current settlement and integration service delivery network, while avoiding duplication. Strategic partnerships between many stakeholders are encouraged to improve dialogue and information sharing between sectors, identify gaps, and align services.

LIPs emerged in Ontario as pilot projects through collaboration between CIC and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), in consultation with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the City of Toronto. Calls for Proposals issued by CIC led to the establishment of 45 LIPs in Ontario between 2008 and 2011. As these projects evolved, they were reorganized into 36 LIPs, including one city-wide and 4 'quadrant' LIPs in Toronto.

## Steps in the LIPs Process



It is also important to note the essential organizational steps that build trust among stakeholders and commitment to the partnership. The role of community engagement, retention of a LIP coordinator, and the formation of working groups should not be overlooked.

## What did we expect?

In issuing the Calls for Proposals, CIC intended to:

1. Strengthen local and regional awareness and capacity to integrate immigrants.
2. Establish or enhance partnerships and participation of multiple stakeholders in planning, and coordinating the delivery of integration services.
3. Improve access to, and coordination of, effective services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration.
4. Improve access to the labour market for immigrants.

## Who should hold the Contribution Agreement (CA)?

The LIPs in Ontario have developed in a variety of ways. Assigning responsibility for the CA needs to take the local context into account. Based on detailed analysis of existing LIPs, there are many examples of different models that have worked in Ontario.

For example, the London-Middlesex LIP is headed by the City and United Way as partners; in Ottawa, the Catholic Centre for Immigrants was delegated as the lead representative by executive directors of LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants); and in Northern communities, including North Bay, the LIP has been embedded with municipal economic development entities.

## What does success look like?

In March 2010, The Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration recognized LIPs as a best practice and recommended that CIC continue to support and expand LIPs in Ontario and explore the potential for pilot projects in other interested provinces. In 2012, the first LIP outside of Ontario was created in Calgary and pilot projects were initiated in Halifax and St. John's. CIC will evaluate applications for new LIPs received through its Call for Proposals (CFP) processes, including the recent British Columbia CFP in 2013.

LIPs present an exceptional opportunity to reform the settlement landscape in Canada and broaden responsibility for the integration of newcomers:

- LIPs provide a holistic assessment of the barriers to newcomer integration as they relate both to settlement services and mainstream public services;
- Municipalities and communities, including stakeholders who are new to the settlement table (such as public institutions and employers), are induced to play a greater role;
- LIPs enhance the coordination of services in areas such as housing, employment, education and health and ensure that public services are leveraged to advance the social and economic wellbeing of newcomers;
- By focusing community actions and energy toward common goals, LIPs create a culture of collaboration which results in more value for money as service providers work together to pool resources and reduce duplication;
- LIPs have established strong relationships with Francophone Immigration Networks to support the vitality of official languages minority communities.

The 2008 Ontario CFP for LIPs was deliberately broad to encourage innovation. Based on analysis, feedback and unanticipated outcomes, it was clear that CIC needed to revisit its definition of success for the LIPs. Best practices have been identified in the following areas to guide expansion in other regions.



## What does success look like?

	Where we are...	Where we hope to be...
<b><i>Newcomer needs assessed.</i></b>	No standardized approaches or tools for newcomer needs assessment, or a method to derive a baseline.	Universal needs assessment (UNA) with baseline data entered into iCAMs. LIPs facilitate UNA and provide further insight into specific local needs and context.
<b><i>Expanded number and diversity of stakeholders.</i></b>	19 percent of SPOs using referrals; missing stakeholders from some partnership councils (e.g. media, police services, chambers of commerce).	Double the number of SPOs using referrals; augment representation on partnership councils to include media, police services and chambers of commerce.
<b><i>Partnerships developed for planning and setting priorities.</i></b>	Limited interactions between various levels of government, mainstream organizations and community stakeholders.	Strengthen relationship between CIC and provincial ministries; participation by wide cross-section of departments and municipal involvement.
<b><i>Services coordinated at the community level and improved accessibility to mainstream institutions.</i></b>	Partial coordination; duplication of some services; limited mechanisms for sharing information.	Every community has a common front door to access settlement services (e.g. welcome centre, hub, newcomer information centre, lead SPO). Improved specialization and coordination.
<b><i>Increased awareness of settlement services and thereby enhanced uptake.</i></b>	Approximately 25 percent of newcomers use CIC language training services.	Increase uptake rate of 40 percent.
<b><i>Improved reporting of outcomes for newcomers.</i></b>	No standardized approaches or tools for newcomer outcomes analysis; no info on intermediate outcomes at community level.	Reporting on intermediate outcomes by community.



## Refined Purpose of the LIPs

Based on the performance and potential of LIPs we are better able to articulate what success looks like to guide the evolution of LIPs.

- 1. Improved outcomes for newcomers.**
- 2. Newcomer needs assessed in a coordinated manner and enhanced awareness of needs among a wider array of community actors.**
- 3. Expanded number and diversity of cross-sectoral stakeholders.**
- 4. Broad-based partnerships developed for planning and setting priorities.**
- 5. Services better coordinated at the community level and improved accessibility to (and coordination with) mainstream institutions.**
- 6. Funding leveraged from alternate (more or other than CIC) sources.**
- 7. Increased awareness of settlement services by newcomers and thereby enhanced uptake.**
- 8. Improved “host” community attitudes and receptivity to newcomers in support of the two-way street model of integration.**

## Ideal Partnership Council Membership

The process of encouraging diverse groups of people to organize themselves, articulate a community vision and develop a comprehensive plan can be challenging. Strategies to promote engagement can facilitate this process.

### Community Engagement

The process of developing a vision is an opportunity for people to come together, take a realistic look at their community, and work cooperatively to describe desired outcomes. This requires a willingness to collaborate and to contribute in pursuit of common objectives.

A community vision is a positive and practical outcome for the group – the vision is shared by all participants to instill a sense of ownership and commitment to seeing the vision realized. This clear and focused statement can help to build interest and momentum, while defining next steps and how to proceed.

A convening group requires influential, well networked leaders – staff, volunteers and partners – who are passionate and committed to the initiative. It is essential to bring together the right mix of people who can contribute to the success of the community. LIPs actively engage many stakeholders to encourage a locally-driven strategic planning process to assess needs,



coordinate services and improve outcomes for immigrants and refugees. Membership should be representative of the community and open to any organization or agency serving the area.

Representatives on existing partnership councils include: school boards, health centres, police services, libraries, employers and business councils, social services, various levels of government, and newcomers themselves.

In practice, the recruitment process for partnership councils tends to be rather organic and reliant on networks. Establishing a partnership council may also include:

- Conducting research to identify potential council members.
- Conducting outreach to identified organizations to invite staff to a LIP information session.
- Presenting overall concept and objectives of the LIP to information session attendees.
- Distributing feedback survey forms to receive suggestions from interested parties.

Please note: the following is not an exhaustive list of who needs to be involved, but merely a guide. These council members are regarded as central to the process:

#### **Local Civil Society Organizations**

- *SPOs, ethnocultural/religious organizations, issue specific organizations (women's and labour market organizations) and community leaders*

#### **Municipal Representatives**

- *Elected city officials or bureaucratic representatives involved with economic development, social planning or public services (transit, housing, libraries, recreation and culture, police, social services)*

#### **Provincial/Territorial Representatives**

- *Immigration, health, justice, education and training, housing, school boards, regional economic development agencies*

#### **Federal Representatives**

- *CIC, HRSDC, Service Canada, PHAC, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (Rural and Co-operatives Secretariat), economic development agencies*

#### **Labour Market Actors**

- *Employers, training boards, business councils/associations, chambers of commerce and unions*

#### **Umbrella Organizations**

- *United Way, YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs*

#### **Media**

- *Mainstream and Ethnic*

#### **Local and Regional Research Bodies**



## Comprehensive Community Consultation and Research

Ample community-based analysis is essential to developing a settlement strategy. A companion document for the LIPs has been developed by CIC Ontario Region. It is a *Resource Guide for LIPs* to use as they begin to organize and work on their local settlement strategies.

In Ontario:

1. LIPs engaged a wide cross section of newcomers including those who had not visited a SPO.
2. Multilingual engagement was undertaken where necessary/appropriate.
3. Many councils formed working groups in thematic areas to capitalize on the expertise of people working in the sector and to tap into pre-existing networks. For example, health, education and labour market organizations are often already tightly networked, even if immigration is not always a key component, or if the crosswalks between areas are not well developed.
4. Councils need to prioritize the many recommendations from working groups into manageable lists for immediate action.
5. Strategies go far beyond CIC's mandate. Where possible, partnership councils need to identify who has the levers to tackle specific issues. Working to engage a variety of federal departments can help to address this.
6. The consultations and research process is integral to developing the settlement strategy. Involving key players throughout the process is essential to eventual success in implementation of the action plan.

The work of the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) has supported the LIPs across communities in conducting audits and needs assessments, developing outcome measures, examining promising practices, etc. This has included work at the local level as well as work at the program level across LIPs. It is expensive and sub-optimal for each LIP to develop its own methodology and conduct its own research; there are savings and benefits to using similar methodologies across LIPs and in doing comparative work.

LIPs have employed a variety of research methods. For example, The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) Secretariat undertook the following activities:

- Analytic projects including a literature review to understand newcomers and the challenges faced during the integration process.
- Detailed local audit to catalogue key services for new immigrants, identify the types of organizations that deliver those services and note the existence of specialized municipal structures that focus on integration and offer support to new immigrants.
- Study to examine the role of immigration in Ottawa and the city's shifting demographic makeup.

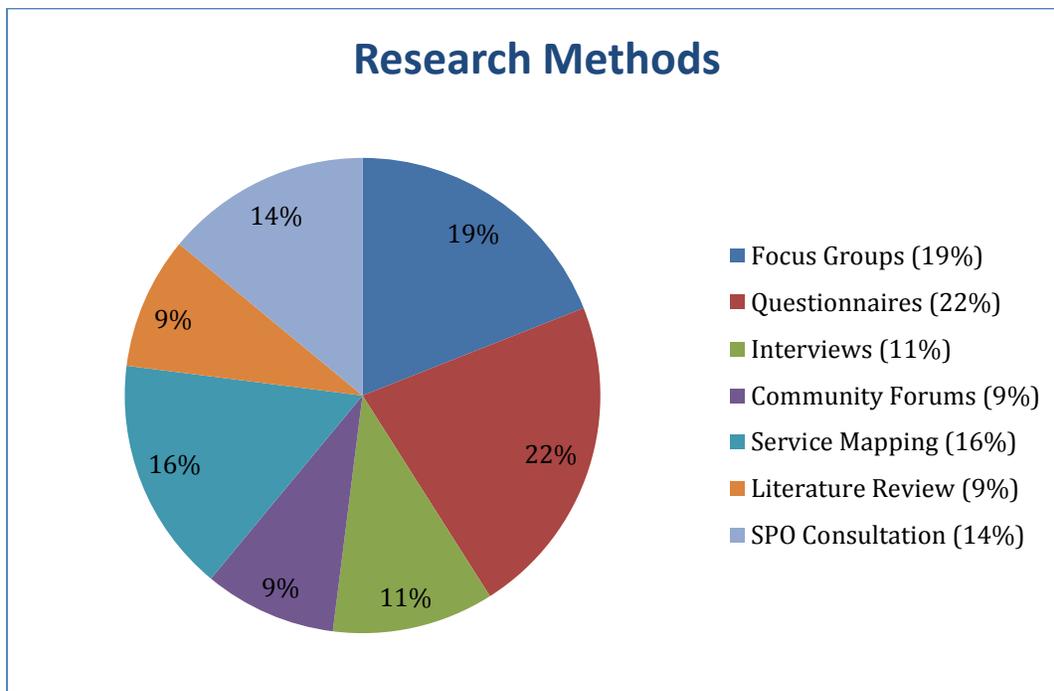


- Stakeholder consultations (focus groups) to gather information about the personal and organizational challenges related to immigrant integration. The consultations included:
  - Individual immigrants (including two focus groups in French and two targeting newcomer women)
  - Employers and those involved in economic development
  - Settlement service providers
  - Social, health and education service providers
  - Immigrant civic associations

Based on the results of OLIP’s research and analysis, the Secretariat created six sector planning tables: (1) Economic Integration; (2) Integration Capacity Development; (3) Settlement; (4) Education; (5) Language; and (6) Health and Wellbeing. In addition, a horizontal strategy was developed by the Secretariat to focus on targeted and crosscutting themes. The sector planning tables varied in size from eight members to nearly 20. Members were selected based on their institutional affiliations and personal expertise.

Each sector table received a background paper based on the Secretariat’s initial consultations and research. Workshops were convened for each sector, chaired by a sector representative and moderated by the Secretariat. Following these workshops, the Secretariat produced a short paper outlining priorities and proposed actions. After further discussion and a feedback process, the papers were updated and later approved by the OLIP Council. The six sector strategies and the horizontal strategy comprise the new Ottawa Immigration Strategy.

In general, the LIPs in Ontario employed the following research methods:



## Key Components of a Strategic Plan

In addition to a community vision, it may be helpful to articulate a Theory of Change (TOC) in preparing a settlement plan. A TOC details the short, intermediate and long-term outcomes of an initiative and the capacities required by the group. It requires the group to provide a solid rationale for approaching an issue in a given way, and also provides a framework for the selection of indicators and a basis for performance measurement. A TOC provides an explanation that links processes to expected outcomes. These links need to be tested to ensure they are real and to support attribution claims linking actions to results.

Based on analysis of the strategies received and consultation with community experts, practitioners, researchers, and officials from HRSDC, Public Safety, INAC and other federal departments, early suggestions for elements that contribute to success are noted below.

While the plan itself is important, adequate emphasis must be placed on *planning* and building/maintaining relationships. Sustainability is central to the success of this process. The main components of a comprehensive strategic plan include:

### A. Community Context

- Demographics
- Mapping of assets/capacities and gaps/challenges
- Geo-mapping of newcomers' residence in comparison to location of SPOs

### B. Vision for the Community

### C. Priorities

### D. Targeted Action Plan (with a manageable number of objectives)

### E. Key activities, partners and funders

### F. Definition of Success and Implementation

### G. Outcomes, Monitoring and Evaluation

### H. Promotion and Outreach



## Common Themes and Priorities Identified by Ontario LIPs

The importance of cross-cutting themes and structural elements such as partnering of various types should also be noted.

Common Themes	Priorities
Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer orientation sessions early in the settlement phase</li> </ul>
Accessibility and Coordination of Settlement Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Welcome Centres</li> <li>• Develop common referral systems - “no wrong door”</li> <li>• Promote “one-stop shop” approach</li> <li>• Create multi-lingual materials and services</li> </ul>
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage employers</li> <li>• Offer training and resources</li> <li>• Assist with occupation-specific language training</li> <li>• Encourage mentoring, bridging and job shadowing for employment</li> </ul>
Host Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage community</li> <li>• Develop public awareness campaigns</li> </ul>
Language Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate local language training programs</li> <li>• Explore alternative models of language training</li> <li>• Enhance availability of childcare and review timing and location of classes</li> </ul>
Mainstream Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Housing</i> – Locate suitable housing; increase availability of affordable housing; offer training regarding tenant/landlord issues</li> <li>• <i>Healthcare</i> – Assist newcomers in understanding the system; increase accessibility; address mental health needs</li> <li>• <i>Transportation</i> – Provide orientation to systems; decrease barriers to usage</li> <li>• <i>Education</i> – Collaborate with school boards</li> <li>• <i>Public Services</i> – Provide translation and interpretation</li> </ul>



## Further Information

### Pathways to Prosperity

Local Immigration Partnership Research, Resources, and Strategic Plans

<http://p2pcanada.ca/lip/>

### Key Readings

Recent CIC briefing for settlement organizations in British Columbia outlines basic information about LIPs and similarities between LIPs and the Welcoming Communities projects extant in British Columbia (<http://www.amssa.org/files/2013%20Spring%20-%20Handout%20-%20CIC%20-%20LIPs.pdf>)

Edmonton Settlement Plan

[http://canada.metropolis.net/publications/Diversity/our\\_diverse\\_cities\\_vol2\\_en.pdf](http://canada.metropolis.net/publications/Diversity/our_diverse_cities_vol2_en.pdf) (Derwing, Tracey and Harvey Krahn p.9)

Saskatoon Immigrant Strategy

[http://canada.metropolis.net/publications/Diversity/our\\_diverse\\_cities\\_vol2\\_en.pdf](http://canada.metropolis.net/publications/Diversity/our_diverse_cities_vol2_en.pdf) (Garcea, Joe p. 14)

Cabaj, Mark. [The Convening Organization](#). Tamarack, 2004.

Good, Kristin. [Municipalities and Multiculturalism: The Politics of Immigration in Toronto and Vancouver](#).

Rimok and Rouzier chapter in [Ontario Immigration, Integration, and Inclusion in Ontario Cities](#) edited by Caroline Andrew, John Biles, Meyer Burstein, Victoria Esses and Erin Tolley  
<http://mqup.mcgill.ca/book.php?bookid=2545>

Tolley and Young eds. "Immigrant Settlement Policy in Canadian Municipalities" (MQUP 2011).

Andrew et. al. "Immigration, Integration and Inclusion in Ontario Cities" (MQUP 2012).

Local Immigration Partnerships: Building Welcoming and Inclusive Communities through Multi-Level Governance. [http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca/page.asp?pagenm=2011\\_0061\\_Burr&langcd=E](http://www.policyresearch.gc.ca/page.asp?pagenm=2011_0061_Burr&langcd=E)



## **Job Description: LIP Program Coordinator**

### **Duties:**

- Consult, guide and supervise the implementing partner organizations in developing all of the project deliverables to ensure that the project meets and exceeds the set targets;
- Develop the cash flow, prepare monthly expense claims, financial and narrative reports;
- Conduct evaluation utilizing the measures outlined and collect stories attesting to the project impact;
- Facilitate monthly meetings to catalyze development of innovative and collaborative solutions for newcomer attraction and integration; act as the liaison between Working Groups and the Steering Committee to enhance synergies and collaboration among the respective action plans;
- Research the best practices and suggest project ideas to enhance the newcomers' cultural and community integration that will feed into LIP strategic planning;
- Recruit and train volunteers to assist with the project, provide development for volunteers;
- Focus on extensive outreach to train municipal ambassadors in delivering project tools and becoming a focal point for settlement initiatives;
- Liaise with organizations in major newcomer hubs to develop partnerships for marketing purposes and organize outreach for promotional presentations;
- Organize and participate in Immigration Expos and trade-shows;
- Research streams for further funding and work closely with the Program Coordinator – Economic Integration to develop grant proposals based on strategic needs;
- Work closely with the Program Coordinator – Economic Integration to ensure coordinated progress between all components of the project.

### **Experience and Qualifications:**

- Advanced degree in business administration or non-profit management
- Excellent organizational and project management skills
- Proven skills of developing and implementing media campaign on sensitive public issues
- Keen understanding of diversity issues, experience of working in multicultural settings
- Ability to work with volunteers
- Proven track record of working with multiple stakeholders to catalyze collaboration
- Effective communication and public speaking skills
- Bilingual – English/French is a definite asset, knowledge of other languages is strongly preferred