



TORONTO NORTH  
Local Immigration  
Partnership

**TNLIP Health & Wellbeing Work Group**

**Monday, Sept 18, 2023 at 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Ansuya Chetty (Working Skills Centre), Melanie Watt (WWCC), Judy Man (Ontario Securities Commission), Alin Moayed (New Circles), Laura Gold (JIAS), Nataliia Marushchak, Raluca Costea (YMCA NIC), Nelson Chang (The People’s Church), Tanya Yousufi (CICS), Wendy Hernandez (TNO), Maxine McKoy (North York Community House), Pallavi Mauji (TDSB), Danavan Samuels (Eva’s Initiative for Youth)

**Facilitated by TNLIP team:** Astha Priya (WWC), Rachele Molto (JVS), Srna Stambuk (JVS)

Agenda Item	Facilitated by	Discussion
Welcome, Land Acknowledgment & Introductions	Astha	Attendees introduced themselves and shared their favourite memory of the summer. The land acknowledgement was read.
Skills Training Programs Presentation	Alin Moayed, New Circles	<p>Alin Moayed from Settlement New Circles introduced four pre-employment training programs. The programs are offered in partnership with Centennial College and funded by IRCC, with no cost to participants.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Business Office Skills – this program is a hybrid of virtual and in-person, a Centennial College certificate is given afterwards. A Language Level 6 or higher is required and participants must interview for spot. There are 25-30 spots for program, with priority given to women and protected person or convention refugees.</li><li>2) Retail and Customer Service skills – This program includes a placement in GLOW store (paid by the hour), is hybrid for virtual learning. A language level 5 or higher is required and participants must interview for spots, preference given to women and protected person or convention refugees.</li><li>3) Home Support Worker – This program is 6 week full time and is hybrid. It includes First Aid and CPR training and digital fluency training. There are employment opportunities with this program. The program begins in April and September. A language level of 5 is required as well as an interview. Priority is given to women and protected person or convention refugees.</li><li>4) Entrepreneurship Training Program – This program provides materials, coaching, and tools to start a business. It is a full-time program with a blended modality. The program begins in June. A language level 6 or higher is required as well as an interview. Priority is given to women and protected person or convention refugees.</li></ol> <p>All those participants in the programs are entitled to resume writing, job search, interview preparation, and employment support through partner agencies.</p>

		<p>Those who are not accepted to the programs are communicated with to find other programs.  For more info, contact <a href="mailto:skillstraining@newcircles.ca">skillstraining@newcircles.ca</a>  Located at 161 Bartley Drive</p> <p><i>An Entrepreneur Directory is available on the TNLIP site:</i>  <a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10coEFC-J8iFqaWbofBVIDpl5hJVrCywM/edit?usp=sharing&amp;oid=112184229299534952163&amp;rtpof=true&amp;sd=true">https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10coEFC-J8iFqaWbofBVIDpl5hJVrCywM/edit?usp=sharing&amp;oid=112184229299534952163&amp;rtpof=true&amp;sd=true</a></p>
Settlement and Language Task Group Updates from Last Quarter	Astha	<p>Astha discussed the Language SPO group and the Newcomer Community Action table. The Language SPO has been working with the CISC working group at the South LIP to integrate Indigenous curriculum within LINC programs, however this has been put on hold. Currently the group is focusing on helping LINC across Toronto connect on pressing issues that the LINC community is facing to learn and build from one another's knowledge. They have a meeting Sept 19<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>The NCAT Newcomer Community Action Table has grown to 12 people and advises on important Toronto North Clip initiatives. They have additional opportunities for PD training. Most recently, the NCAT advised the TNLIP on research dissemination of the final report for the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (Hidden Talent: Unlocking the Employment Potential of Newcomer Youth in the Toronto Region) as well as the on the NewTO app. Feedback on the app was taken back to the developers and supported the improvement and efficacy of the app.  <i>The YESS report can be viewed here: <a href="https://triec.ca/research-and-insights/yess/">https://triec.ca/research-and-insights/yess/</a></i></p> <p>Astha also announced that the launch date for the app will be pushed back to the end of September to ensure it is effective for newcomers. The app is currently searchable and available to download on the App Stores, however it is not yet being advertised to the public. Astha encouraged members to download the app and send her any feedback related to bugs or issues they may encounter. She proposed the creation of a working group to maintain and promote the app, specifically for tech-savvy members. The Community Consultation session provided great feedback. Astha will call for tech-minded members to provide feedback and also help with promoting the app. are looking to Recruit a small working group of members to provide ongoing feedback on the app and input into a successful launch, maintenance issues, data present and monitoring use from the community</p> <p>Melanie suggested practicing using the app as a lesson plan with LINC students for computer menus.</p> <p>Pallavi suggested a City Hall promotion booth, to tag along City (3-5 providers) to have people give it a try, and service providers can also promote their services.</p> <p>Astha updated the meeting on the success of the Faith and Welcoming Communities Forum, which aimed to improve collaboration between the newcomer and faith communities. This year, a contact sharing form was created to allow for greater connection and collaboration after the event.</p>
Discussion on Emerging Trends and Pressing	Srna	<p>Srna spoke about the refugees claimant crisis which is very closely related to the work of settlement members. There are several streams of refugees: Afghan (36, 690 have been brought in to Canada), Ukrainian emergency travel visas in response (875,000 of these visas have been issued).</p>

<p>Issues - Housing Crisis Updates and More</p>		<p>The refugee crisis in the world impacts Canada. The EU recently introduced an asylum seeker pact allowing nations to more quickly send back some migrants. Britain's government is pushing forward on a law to send asylum seekers to Rwanda, while U.S. has introduced a rule making it harder for migrants to receive asylum if they cross U.S. borders illegally. Canada has signed a Safe Third country agreement with the United States, which means that if people are coming from the US they are denied entry into Canada because the US is considered a safe country for refugees. This has stemmed the flow of refugees into Canada through irregular border crossing. After this signing, refugees coming into Canada has actually increased.</p> <p>3400 refugee claimants are in City of Toronto shelters (30% of all shelter spaces), and another 1300 are in other temporary housing. Ontario works is receiving a huge number of refugee claimants. The crisis is in housing primarily. Temporary or any other type of housing is not able to be provided for claimants arriving in Toronto.</p> <p>Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) is provincially administered and pays the difference between 30% of the household's income and the average market rent in the area OR the difference between OW shelter allowance and rent and utilities costs. Toronto exhausted its 2023/2024 COHB funding in May. In August, the city and province are jointly added \$13.4 million into the COHB which is expected to house 13,500 people. These are not open to the public, 120 referring agencies, must be on Centralized Waiting List for Social Housing, must have 3+ months of homelessness, priority to refugee claimants.</p> <p>Food insecurity and the food crisis cannot be separated from the housing crisis - people are going hungry because of the cost of housing, which was heard at Food Leaders and Faith Forum. Faith leaders have methods of addressing food concerns within the resources that they have.</p>
<p>Member Agency Programming Updates and Thoughts - Upcoming initiatives for 2024</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>The discussion on emerging trends was engaging. Astha asked the group how they want to steer the WG initiatives in the coming year. There is some flexibility to build capacity and <b>members are encouraged to send Astha their feedback for what is needed for upcoming initiatives for 2024</b>. What would you like to see more of or what would you like the settlement WG to focus more on?</p>
<p>Work Group Leadership Update</p>	<p>Astha</p>	<p>TNLIP is pleased to welcome back Isabella Yan to her role as Coordinator of the TNLIP Settlement and Language Workgroup. Astha will be staying on with TNLIP in a new role as the Technology and Community Development Coordinator.</p>
<p>Closing Remarks and Next Meeting Info/ Agenda Items</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Astha thanked all members for attending and encouraged members to send their updates to be included in the minutes.</p>