

BACKGROUND

As collective outrage at the unjust treatment of Black people, other racialized groups, and Indigenous peoples in our society grew in the wake of the George Floyd killing and the discovery of unmarked graves at residential schools, pressure built on the federal government to address systemic racism within its institutions and ranks. The Clerk’s Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service directs specific and meaningful actions to tackle racism and to advance reconciliation, accessibility, equity, and inclusion within our organizations.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada’s (IRCC) Settlement, Integration and Francophone Affairs (SIFA) alongside non-governmental organizations working in the areas of resettlement assistance, settlement and (re)settlement are committed to undertaking concrete actions within their power and mandates to address racism and all forms of oppression.

The creation of the Collaborative Table on Anti-Racism and Equity for (Re)Settlement Organizations (CTAR) embeds an anti-racism lens to help ensure IRCC funds organizations whose leadership, policies, practices, and programs reflect the diversity of the populations they are mandated to serve and that these organizations advance equity objectives in their program delivery.

CONSIDERATIONS

- IRCC is deliberately aiming to support organizations who are taking concrete and genuine actions to implement (re)settlement programming while concurrently counteracting racism and other barriers to equity.
- IRCC recognizes that different organizations may be at different stages of maturity in promoting equity through their leadership, policies, practices, and programming, but expects that all funded organizations will make genuine efforts to do so.
- Undertaking (re)settlement programming that advances anti-oppression objectives by no means supplants key programming in areas such as language training, employment related services, etc.; instead it seeks to improve the effectiveness and appropriateness of service delivery to meet the diverse needs of a diverse range of clients.

STRUCTURE

1) Purpose

- The Collaborative Table on Anti-Racism and Equity for (Re)Settlement Organizations (CTAR) is a working group to bring together Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and representatives of funded settlement organizations under the Settlement and Resettlement Assistance Programs.
- CTAR promotes a consistent understanding and application of key concepts in the field of Anti-Racism (A-R) and other social equity areas related to (re)settlement and integration.
- CTAR will provide input to help define the expectations that IRCC has for recipients of grants and contributions (Gs&Cs) funding in terms of recipient organizations' leadership, policies, practices, and programming to support equity.
- CTAR serves as a collaborative forum for discussing ideas, sharing information and seeking consensus between the (re)settlement sector and IRCC on A-R and other equity issues.
- It promotes shared ownership, accountability, and transparency within and between the (re)settlement sector and IRCC for working towards more equitable and anti-racist (re)settlement leadership, policies, practices, and program implementation.
- CTAR reports directly to the Settlement and Integration Policy and Program Committee (SIPPC). It is not a decision-making body for the overall administration of federal Settlement and Resettlement Programs or the SIPPC.

2) Objectives

- Facilitate discussion on policy objectives for A-R and equity for IRCC-funded recipients of (re)settlement funding;
- Define key terminology in relation to funded organizations;
- Help inform IRCC expectations of the intended policy directions on A-R and equity toward which all funding recipients should be headed;
- Identify data collection mechanisms to build knowledge on the profile of organizations that IRCC is funding and the extent to which these organizations reflect/represent the races, cultures, genders, and other characteristics of the populations they are mandated to serve;
- Identify within IRCC policies that affect Gs&Cs any provisions that have a negative differential impact on equity-seeking groups;

- Identify any negative differential impacts on equity-seeking groups stemming from the way in which IRCC policies are applied to Gs&Cs recipient organizations.

3) Deliverables

All working group deliverables will be formulated and finalized in alignment with the objectives mentioned above, in addition to IRCC Grant and Contribution Agreement requirements and directions:

- Definitions of key terminology for concepts related to A-R and anti-oppression in the context of (re)settlement leadership, policies, practices, and programming;
- A data collection plan including definitions and data collection mechanism(s) by which organizations applying for IRCC funding and organizations who receive such funding can document the existence of and measure improvements to their A-R and other anti-oppression leadership, policies, practices, and programming efforts over time, including major milestones and achievements;
- A set of possible options to foster the capacity of the (re)settlement sector to deliver (re)settlement programming in ways that promote greater equity; and
- Written advice on IRCC documents and policies as requested.

ROLES

4) Structure and Membership Rationale

Tenure

The SIPPC CTAR working group will be co-chaired by one representative from IRCC (currently the SIFA Anti-racism Lead) and by one representative of SIPPC (currently the Executive Director of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants or OCASI), as determined by SIPPC Co-Chairs.

The term of the Sector working group co-chairperson and working group is limited to three (3) years, aligned with the tenure of SIPPC, or until the group completes its work, whichever is earlier.

In the event that the mandate of the working group extends beyond the three year timeline, the working group co-chairpersons will propose an approach to SIPPC including an overview of work yet to be completed.

Membership

CTAR membership will reflect CTAR's purpose of working towards more equitable and anti-racist (re)settlement leadership, policies, practices, and program implementation. Members will

be selected from diverse backgrounds, with a central focus on race and intersectional characteristics.

CTAR members participate as subject matter experts (SMEs). While each member brings experience and knowledge that they have gained as members of the respective organizations by whom they are employed, their life experience is equally as valuable.

Membership consists of:

- Representatives of the (re)settlement sector selected by that sector with a view to reflecting diverse:
 - Racial and cultural backgrounds;
 - Geographic coverage, including regions, rural and urban;
 - Genders and sexes; and
 - Organizations, including (re)settlement umbrella organizations, Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs), and Réseaux en immigration Francophone (RIFs).
- Representatives of SIFA, selected by SIFA, with knowledge in areas including:
 - Policy and program development, implementation, and evaluation; and
 - Data collection, interpretation, and application.

In addition to its existing membership, this working group may include a Francophone member who would act as a liaison between CTAR and Francophone governance on issues such as data collection and data aggregation. Each member will specify one alternate to cover absences.

Core members may invite other SMEs to attend meetings as a designate or as a supplementary member on topics where SMEs have specific expertise to offer.

Group size is generally not to exceed 12 persons (including members and SMEs) in attendance at any single meeting of CTAR to allow active participation.

Quorum shall constitute 50% + 1 of core CTAR members.

5) Co-Chairpersons and Member Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Co-Chairpersons

In collaboration with SIPPCC Co-chairs, working group Co-chairpersons are responsible for:

- i) finalizing a work plan with immediate to short-term strategic objectives that align with priorities of the SIPPCC;
- ii) leading in the implementation and tracking of progress according to work plan milestones;
- iii) setting and following the agenda for working group meetings in alignment with the work plan;

- iv) ensuring the interests and experiences of various and diverse populations are considered in deliberations, including, for example, women, racialized persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous people, linguistic minorities, sexual orientation and gender diverse groups including 2SLGBTQI+, remote, rural and northern communities;
- v) providing working group updates, in writing, on the implementation of the work plan at quarterly SIPPC meetings; and
- vi) upon completion of the working group's objective(s), Co-chairpersons will submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the SIPPC.

Member Responsibilities

Working group members will fairly represent the diverse voices of government and non-government settlement and integration colleagues.

Working group members will demonstrate a commitment to the success of the group by consistently attending meetings, participating in discussions, providing meaningful contributions to support the deliverables laid out in the work plan, submitting deliverables to the working group as outlined in the work plan and assigned by Co-chairpersons, and working collegially. If a member is unable to fulfil their responsibility, the SIPPC Co-chairs may ask them to step down from the working group. When a position becomes vacant, a call for participation will be advertised.

PROCESS

6) Meetings

Meeting Frequency

Meetings will be generally sixty (60) minutes in duration and will occur bimonthly virtually, resuming in Fall 2024.

Budget

Subject to Departmental approvals and in accordance with the Treasury Board (TB) guidelines, IRCC will fund logistical support (including securing a location, hospitality and interpretation service costs for in-person meeting participation) for SIPPC working groups. SIPPC Co-chairs to determine, if an annual in-person working group meeting is deemed necessary.

IRCC currently funds the NSE Secretariat through AMSSA to coordinate and support the sector to fully participate in the SIPPC and its working groups, including canvassing members on their views and other sector-based analyses of issues, to coordinate the costs associated with in-person Sector participation (including travel, accommodation and incidental costs), and to liaise and coordinate with the SIFA Secretariat.

National Sector Engagement (NSE) Secretariat

The secretariat and coordination function to the SIPPC working groups will be provided by the NSE Secretariat. The NSE will convene CTAR working group meetings and provide

organizational, analytical and technical support to the Co-chairpersons of this working group. The NSE Secretariat will make arrangements for interpretation services, as required. In accordance with TB guidelines, the NSE Secretariat will coordinate the meeting location/hospitality, if working group Co-chairpersons or members are asked to attend an annual in-person meeting.

In support of SIPPC Co-chairs, the NSE Secretariat will organize and disseminate all SIPPC CTAR working group meeting agendas, documents, minutes and other relevant materials to meeting participants, SIPPC and SIFA Secretariat in a timely manner.

Settlement, Integration and Francophone Affairs (SIFA) Secretariat Function

The monitoring and tracking function to the SIPPC working groups will be provided by Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, IRCC. The SIFA Secretariat will track work plans, outputs and outcomes, identify opportunities for alignment between working groups, and flag challenges and risks. Secretariat functions are provided in Annex A of the SIPPC terms of reference.

Renewal of Terms of Reference

CTAR members will review the terms of reference of CTAR on an annual basis with a view to assessing progress to date on its deliverables and the continued need for the working group going forward.

At the end of the working group mandate, and as determined in the work plan, the SIFA Secretariat will review the Terms of Reference for CTAR, in consultation with SIPPC, and adopt any changes at that time.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Agendas, key documents and other material will be made available in both official languages (OL). The in-person and virtual meetings will be conducted in both official languages.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Members are committed to ensure that discussions about program and operational priorities do not provide an advantage with respect to funding any SIPPC working group member, as per the “Conflict of Interest Guidelines” document presented in Annex B of the SIPPC Terms of Reference.

DATE OF ADOPTION

August 23, 2024