



# Reimagining Funding and Service Delivery for Newcomers:

## Considerations for Relational Infrastructure

MAY 2024

**LIP** LOCAL IMMIGRATION  
PARTNERSHIP  
TORONTO SOUTH



**SOCIAL  
PLANNING  
TORONTO**

Prepared for the Community-Based Service Delivery and Funding: Centering Newcomer Experience Project, funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research project takes place on the ancestral and unceded territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit, who are a part of the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy of Six Nations, and many other Nations, recorded or unrecorded.

This land was first named Tkaranto which is Mohawk and means where the trees are standing in the water.

Long before contact, the Dish with One Spoon Covenant was an agreement between the Anishnabeg and Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

**The dish symbolizes the bounty this land has to offer.**

We are intended to share from this bounty with all the people, living creatures and the land itself. We are intended to do so in a peaceful way. We are intended to ensure that there is enough to go around.

This is an intention that we see as a profound way to reflect on our responsibilities as we propose a community-based funding model for the Newcomer-serving sector.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**This report is the culmination of a research and co-design project running from December 2021 to March 2024.**

In 2020, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada sought proposals from Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) across Canada to develop a community-based funding model for the newcomer-serving sector.

The Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership (TSLIP), Social Planning Toronto (SPT) and the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Affairs (DIA) together submitted a proposal to develop a community-based funding model that centres the voices of Newcomers and racialized Leaders within small and ethno-specific service provider organizations.

This research project was implemented using a participatory research approach using co-design principles, which resulted in a proposed community-based funding model informed by feedback from Newcomers, Grassroots Leaders, Service Providers (both front-line workers and leadership) and Funders within the newcomer-serving sector.

The research project showed that embedding equitable practices into understanding service delivery and systemic structures like funding and policies requires ongoing collective commitment. This commitment is crucial for advancing Newcomer wellbeing, inclusion and belonging.

The importance of this work is ever present as Canada continues to forecast increasing immigration numbers in the coming years. This final report is intended to catalyze further dialogue around what drivers are needed to build relational infrastructure within the newcomer-serving sector to increase coordinated service delivery.

A written summary of this report is available in English, Simplified Chinese, Tamil and Arabic, based on the highest self-identified home languages of Newcomer participants who contributed to the model-making phase of this proposed community-based funding models project.

## PROJECT PARTNERS

This research project is delivered through a collaboration of three project partners: the Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership, Social Planning Toronto and the Department of Imaginary Affairs.

The Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership (TSLIP) is a strategic community initiative focused on promoting welcoming communities and improving the social and economic outcomes of Newcomers through enhanced service delivery, collaboration, and the development of partnerships. TSLIP provided an administrative, coordination, and advisory role within the project and provided guidance around participant engagement and outreach as well as sector knowledge.

Social Planning Toronto (SPT) is a non-profit, charitable community organization that works to improve equity, social justice and quality of life in Toronto through community capacity building, community education and advocacy, policy research and analysis, and social reporting. Social Planning Toronto provided a primary research role within the project in order to compile and produce the Environmental Scan Report that was released May 2023.

The Department of Imaginary Affairs (DIA) are invested in seeking, centering, elevating and amplifying the voices, perspectives, ideas, stories and ideally decision-making practices of Newcomers, Immigrants and Refugees and Youth (especially those who self-identify as Black, Indigenous and People-of-Colour) in Canada, and their visions of alternative and equitable futures. They seek to change the under-representation and under-estimation of Newcomers and Youth in the design, development, and implementation of more empathetic policies, programs, and services. The Department of Imaginary Affairs provided a facilitation, design, research and evaluation role within the project in order to embed co-design principles with an equity lens.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This research would not be possible without the valuable contributions from every individual who attended our Learning Sessions, Model-Making Sessions and Town Hall during the model-making phase and from every individual who participated in focus groups and interviews before that. We heard each of your questions, comments, and ideas and they have truly influenced the outcomes of this work.

While it is not possible to extend individual acknowledgements to each person, there are a few special thanks that we would like to share to recognize significant contributions to this work.

To Badrunnesha Musammat, for her contributions as the first Project Coordinator of this research, including her ability to offer her personal Newcomer perspective and to invite so many others to do so too.

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To Alisha Griffith, Founder & Executive Director of Unified We Grow for her contributions to ensuring representation of grassroots leaders in the newcomer-serving space, including leading our final model-making session dedicated to bringing the voices of these individuals into the project.

To Ann Mathew, for her participation in the Co-Design Cohort, including being the first to bravely share her personal reconciliation story as part of one of our Learning Sessions and for always volunteering to support her peers and our team.

We thank the Project Advisory Committee who contributed their valuable and diverse insights to shape and improve the project throughout. We know that participating in this Project Advisory is an additional activity on top of your existing duties. We especially appreciate the Advisory Committee members who participated in co-designing, evolving the advisory, contributing to learning sessions and model-making days. Your commitment to imagining alternatives while existing in the present is truly valued.

We also acknowledge the speakers, Savannah Wilson from the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness, Jawad Shahabi from World Education Services, Shalini Konanur from South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO), Samya Hasan from Colour of Poverty and Sharma Queiser and Beth Wilson from Social Planning Toronto, for sharing your knowledge and real-world experience to support the development of our proposed community-based funding model.

We acknowledge the financial support of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

## GLOSSARY

### **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)**

IRCC is a department of the Government of Canada which is responsible for dealing with immigration to Canada, refugees, and Canadian citizenship, and the department which commissioned this project. In relation to the proposed model in this report, we reference IRCC in their role as the funder.

### **Racialized**

We use this term to describe an individual or group affected by racism or discrimination. The term "racialized" is commonly used to refer to any person who is considered non-white.

### **Newcomer**

We use this term broadly to refer to those who were born outside of Canada. It encompasses immigrants, migrants, and refugees regardless of citizenship status in Canada, acknowledging the shared experiences they face as individuals who have left their home countries in this context.

### **Im/migrant**

Encompasses both immigrants and migrants, recognizing the differences in experiences each face.

### **Service Provider**

A Service Provider refers to an individual who is working for an organization with experience serving im/migrants and refugees. This includes leadership, management, and frontline staff.

### **Service Provider Organization (SPO)**

These organizations deliver direct services to Newcomers, including language classes, employment support, needs assessment and referrals, interpretation, help with filling out forms and applications, housing, healthcare, financial literacy, citizenship, legal aid, family services, etc.

### **Ethno-specific organization**

This sub-set of Service Provider Organizations refer to those that are led by a specific ethnocultural group of Newcomers, immigrants and refugees and offer services and support targeted to the specific needs of those communities.



**Grassroots Organizations or Initiatives**

This term is used throughout the report to denote initiatives that are self-organized by the groups or communities seeking support. In general, they are primarily volunteer run, do not have set internal structures, and are less permanent as compared to Service Provider Organizations. They are often issue- or cause-based and built based on personal experiences or connections of the founders and those running it. Often, they are formed as a result of gaps or needs of a specific community which these communities feel are not being addressed effectively by government or established institutions. All grassroots organizations and initiatives that contributed to this project offered services to Newcomers.

**Grassroots Leaders**

In this report, Grassroots Leaders refers to an individual working in a leadership role or decision-making capacity within a grassroots group or organization. In the context of this project, these grassroots leaders are themselves Newcomers, or work closely with Newcomers.

**Small, Medium and Large Organization**

We prioritized “small” organizations in our research process in contrast to “medium” and “large” organizations. Within this report, these distinctions refer to incorporated nonprofit Service Provider Organizations based on their size, usually defined by their annual budget and staffing composition. Drawing from budget segments by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants’ (OCASI) membership survey (which represents the majority of organizations within the settlement sector in Ontario), we define small, medium and large based on the following sizes:

A small organization is defined as one that has an annual revenue of \$1 million or less (comprising 23 agencies or approximately 21% of OCASI membership).

Medium organizations encompass a wide range, of over \$1 million up to \$10 million in annual revenue (69 organizations or 63%).

A large organization may have an annual revenue of more than \$10 million (17 organizations or approximately 16%). This number includes 7 organizations within OCASI’s membership with revenue of over \$25 million.

**Newcomer Participant**

This term is used to describe a research participant with first-hand experience as a Newcomer in Canada. Those Newcomers who participated have varied experiences. Their length of time in Canada, their immigration status upon arrival and at present, and their countries or origin differ. They share an experience of migration and settlement in Canada.

**Participant**

Participants, including Newcomers, Service Providers, and experts, refers to individuals who contributed to the research and co-design elements of the project through interviews, focus groups, co-design training, learning sessions, model-making, and the town hall.

**Stakeholder**

Stakeholders refers to those individuals and/or groups (e.g. Newcomers, Service Providers at various organizational levels, Grassroots Leaders) who would be impacted in various ways by the proposed funding model.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

This research project is a collaborative effort between the Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership (TSLIP), Social Planning Toronto (SPT) and the Department of Imaginary Affairs (DIA) taking place between December 2021 - March 2024.

The primary purpose of this research project was to develop a community-based funding model that is reflective of the Toronto South newcomer-serving sector. We conducted a participatory research project using co-design principles and methodologies to centre the voices of Newcomers and racialized leaders within the newcomer-serving sector.

This research project was an opportunity to use a co-design process which purposefully and intentionally focuses on building relationships between participants and works to address how power and resource distribution impacts the newcomer-serving sector.

Our research team has produced two reports to document the project as well as a recorded Town Hall of our proposed funding model.

In May 2023, the project team released a report called [\*Reimagining Funding and Service Delivery for Newcomers: Lessons from the Literature and participants\*](#). This report includes an environmental scan of settlement services and gaps in the Toronto South area based on a literature review, focus groups and interviews with Newcomers and Service Providers and a census data review.

This *Reimagining Funding and Service Delivery for Newcomers: Considerations for Relational Infrastructure* report includes the participatory research approach, methodology and findings of the model-making phase of the project, the proposed community-based funding and considerations.





## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**In this section, we aim to share a set of guiding principles that governed how we made decisions about the research process, activities, and reporting.**

This research project operated with the guiding principle of centering the voices of Newcomers and racialized leaders within the newcomer-serving sector within an equity and anti-oppression framework.

With this guiding principle, the project team was dedicated to prioritizing how we shared power between project partners and how we made time to invest in relationships with project participants. We were as transparent as possible with participants about the research process and outcomes, conducting ongoing evaluation of the project and the means of participation, evolving according to feedback, inviting participants to join the project team during data analysis and capacity building sessions, and documenting evolving practices throughout the project.

With every research activity we designed and implemented, we were constantly thinking about the varying levels of knowledge people were bringing with them, ways that they would feel most comfortable sharing, the responsibility we had to share decision-making wherever possible, the time we took to share stories and get to know each other, and how we create shared ownership of this process.

Through this implementation, we were able to document and learn from ongoing evaluation and reflections from participants regarding what would work and would not work based on their experiences in the sector both as Newcomers and Service Providers. As a result, the proposed model is rooted in equity and co-design, with a focus on what is needed to reinforce strong relational infrastructure.

The proposed model builds in specific mechanisms around shared decision-making, transparent and accessible evaluation data, and coordinated efforts to minimize system and service gaps. The model design seeks to address issues of inequity for marginalized participants, including Newcomers and racialized leaders of small and Grassroots organizations.

## A NOTE ON RESEARCHER PERSPECTIVES

**In this section, we aim to outline how our researcher perspectives evolved throughout the project as a result of implementing a participatory research approach with an equity lens.**

From the beginning, our project team aimed to centre the voices of Newcomers and racialized leaders within the newcomer-serving sector.

We strongly believed that these were the voices we needed to prioritize to elevate experiences and perspectives that are not typically centred. The combination of lived and professional experiences was strongly in alignment with the co-design principles we intended to utilize.

At the outset our focus was on integrating leadership voices from smaller service provider organizations. We did not realize that there was a further breakdown needed in order to understand the differences between leaders of small but established organizations and those who self-identify as grassroots leaders.

The distinction between small organizations and grassroots leaders emerged based on participant feedback within the model-making sessions and as a result, we were asked to conduct an additional model-making session specifically for grassroots leaders. This session suggested that grassroots leaders see themselves quite differently than leaders of small organizations and their critiques and ideas are reflected in the final proposed model.

This decision to respond to an emerging finding and request from participants is an example of one of many pivots our project team needed to make during this project in order to stay true to the power-sharing values underlying a co-design process. We want to highlight that implementing a participatory research project requires flexibility, responsiveness, and adaptability throughout a project.

We also want to explicitly acknowledge that administrative convenience and equity are not always compatible in the short-term – sometimes prioritizing equity and inclusion means sacrificing administrative efficiency in favor of consensus building. It is our belief that in the long run, the sacrifice is well worth it, resulting in more equitable communities and programming that is more responsive and effective overall.



## ABOUT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND CO-DESIGN COHORT

**In this section, we summarize the role and influence of the Advisory Committee and Co-Design Cohort on the research process, outcomes, and findings.**

The research team engaged an Advisory Committee and a Co-Design Cohort to integrate lived and professional experiences into the project design, model-making, and research implementation.

The Advisory Committee was made up of racialized leaders working within the newcomer-serving sector with priority representation given to small and grassroots organizations, both funded and not funded by IRCC. The initial Advisory Committee was established with the aim of keeping the project team grounded in sector knowledge and membership included 3 racialized organization Leaders and 2 Peer Leaders (Newcomers).

By the end of the project, the Advisory Committee was 6 racialized organization Leaders, one Funder and 2 Peer Leaders. The role of the Advisory Committee evolved throughout the project and the project team re-designed engagement strategies throughout to accommodate the needs of the Advisory membership. Throughout the research project, we utilized the expertise from the Advisory Committee on relationships with Funders, service provision, newcomer-serving sector trends and project level feedback.

While the Advisory Committee generously offered their input throughout the research project, we wanted to offer stakeholders a more hands-on role during the model-making phase of the research project and so we initiated the Co-Design Cohort. The aim of the Co-Design Cohort was to have a mix of participants, Newcomers, and Service Providers collaborating to co-design the proposed model. The Co-Design Cohort provided their lived experiences accessing and/or delivering settlement services and discussed how these should impact the service delivery model. Ultimately, the Co-Design Cohort was 9 Newcomers (including our existing Peer Leaders) and 1 service provider within the Toronto South catchment area.

To increase service provider input during the model-making phase, we opened up participation during our Learning Sessions and Model-Making Sessions to Service Providers not previously engaged with the project.



## CONTEXT: UPDATED TORONTO SOUTH DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

**This section, written by Social Planning Toronto, provides the 2021 Census Profile of Immigrant, Recent Immigrant and Non-Permanent Resident Populations in the Toronto South Area and is an update to the Census profile provided at the start of this project from the 2016 Census.**

In 2022, Social Planning Toronto produced a detailed socio-demographic profile of immigrants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area as part of the *Community Based Service Delivery and Funding: Centering Newcomer Experience* project.[1] The profile was produced using the 2016 Census of Population which provided the most recently available social and demographic data for the Toronto South area at the time. Since the publication of that profile, new data from the 2021 Census has been released. The following update provides a high-level socio-demographic profile of immigrants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents in Toronto South using this newly available data, along with a comparison of key indicators from the 2016 Census.

### **2021 Census Profile Update**

The Toronto South area is home to many immigrants and non-permanent residents. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of the Toronto South population by immigrant status. According to the 2021 Census, the Toronto South area has a population of 757,580 people including 267,450 immigrants[2], representing 35.3% of Toronto South's population (Statistics Canada, 2023a); 49,090 recent immigrants[3] live in the Toronto South area, comprising 18.4% of the immigrant population and 6.5% of the total population in the area. A total of 42,790 non-permanent residents lives in the Toronto South area, representing 5.6% of the population.

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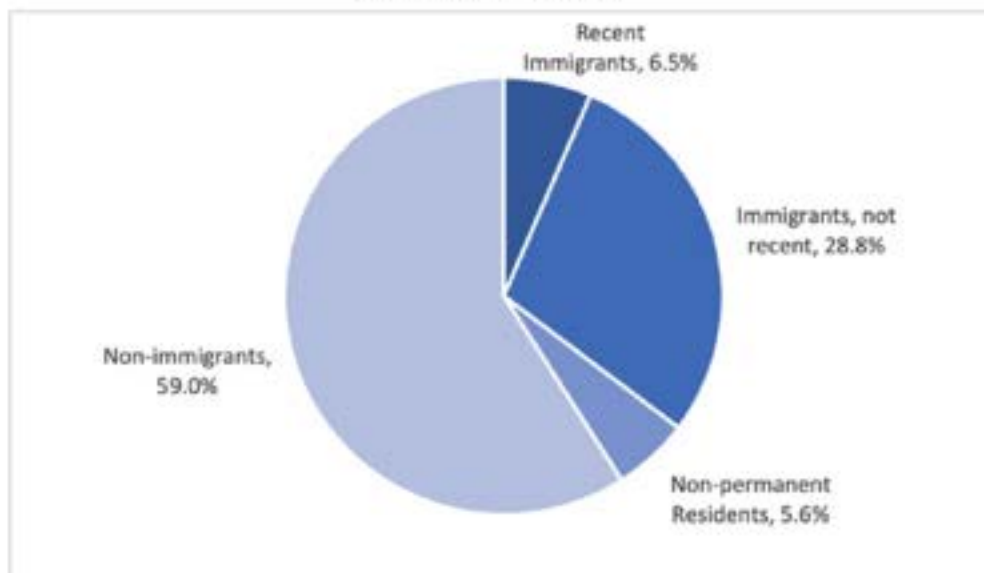
[1] Social Planning Toronto. (2023). Reimagining funding and service delivery for Newcomers. Retrieved from [https://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/reimagining\\_funding\\_and\\_service\\_delivery\\_for\\_Newcomers](https://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/reimagining_funding_and_service_delivery_for_Newcomers)

[2] Statistics Canada defines immigrant as "a person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. Such a person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this group." (Statistics Canada, 2023, July 7).

[3] Statistics Canada defines recent immigrant as "a person who obtained landed immigrant or permanent resident status up to five years prior to a given census year. In the 2021 Census, this period is January 1, 2016, to May 11, 2021." (Statistics Canada, 2022, December 13). Recent immigrants are included in the immigrant population.

[4] Statistics Canada defines non-permanent residents as "a person from another country with a usual place of residence in Canada and who has a work or study permit or who has claimed refugee status (asylum claimant). Family members living with work or study permit holders are also included, unless these family members are already Canadian citizens or landed immigrants or permanent residents." (Statistics Canada, 2023, July 7). Non-permanent residents are not included in the immigrant population.

**FIGURE 1: TORONTO SOUTH POPULATION BY IMMIGRANT AND NON-PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS**



Source: Statistics Canada. (2023a). 2021 Census of population, catalogue no. E03722\_Local Immigration Partnership SCP. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

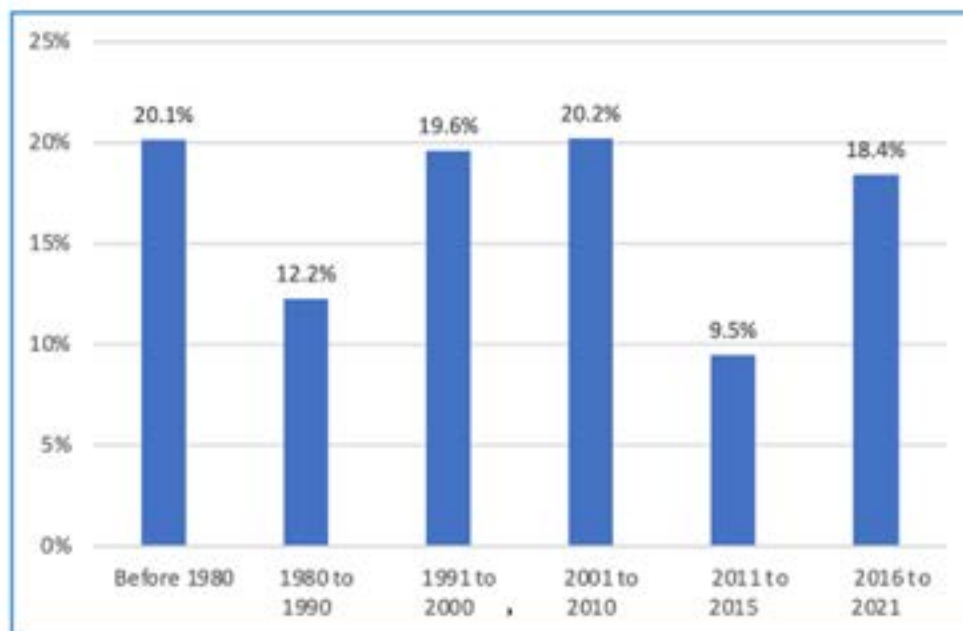
In the Toronto South area, 47.4% of immigrants are male+[5] and 52.6% are female+[6]; 50.1% of recent immigrants are male+ and 49.9% are female+ (Statistics Canada, 2023a). Among non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area, 50.9% are male+ and 49.1% are female+.

Figure 2 shows a breakdown of the immigrant population in the Toronto South area by period of immigration. Over half (52%) of the immigrant population in the area came to Canada before 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2023a). Therefore, not surprisingly, the average age of immigrants in the Toronto South area is higher than that of recent immigrants. The average age is 49.3 years for immigrants, 32.8 years for recent immigrants, and 29.3 years for non-permanent residents in the area (Statistics Canada, 2023b). The median age is 47.6 years for immigrants, 32.4 years for recent immigrants, and 27.8 years for non-permanent residents (Statistics Canada, 2023b).

[5] According to Statistics Canada, "Gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman, or non-binary person (a person who is not exclusively a man or a woman). Gender includes the following concepts: gender identity, which refers to the gender that a person feels internally and individually; gender expression, which refers to the way a person presents their gender, regardless of their gender identity, through body language, aesthetic choices, or accessories (e.g., clothes, hairstyle and makeup), which may have traditionally been associated with a specific gender. A person's gender may differ from their sex at birth, and from what is indicated on their current identification or legal documents such as their birth certificate, passport, or driver's license. A person's gender may change over time. Some people may not identify with a specific gender. Given that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses provided. In these cases, individuals in the category "non-binary persons" are distributed into the other two gender categories and are denoted by the "+" symbol." (Statistics Canada, 2023a).

[6] See footnote 4.



**FIGURE 2: PERIOD OF IMMIGRATION OF THE IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN THE TORONTO SOUTH AREA**

Source: Statistics Canada. (2023a). 2021 Census of population, catalogue no. E03722\_Local Immigration Partnership SCP. Accessed through the Community Data Program.

In the Toronto South area, racialized[7] individuals comprise 64.4% of the immigrant population, 74.3% of recent immigrants, and 74.1% of non-permanent residents. Among immigrants in the Toronto South area, the Chinese and South Asian populations are the largest racialized groups, representing 15.5% and 14.9% of all immigrants in the area, respectively (Statistics Canada, 2023b). The Black population is the third largest group, comprising 8.5% of all immigrants in the Toronto South area.

Among recent immigrants in the Toronto South area, the South Asian population is the largest racialized group, representing 29.9% of recent immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2023b). The Chinese and Black populations are the second and third largest, comprising 11.3% and 8.2% of recent immigrants in the Toronto South area, respectively. Among non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area, the largest racialized groups are the Chinese (19.7%), South Asian (18.9%), and Latin American (9.8%) populations (Statistics Canada, 2023b).

[7] Statistics Canada uses the term visible minority rather than racialized. Visible minority "refers to whether a person is a visible minority or not, as defined by the Employment Equity Act. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as 'persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.' The visible minority population consists mainly of the following groups: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Arab, Latin American, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean, and Japanese." (Statistics Canada, 2023, July 7). Racialized is preferred because it acknowledges the social process of racialization and the barriers that result from the historical and ongoing racial prejudice in our society.



More than nine out of ten immigrants, recent immigrants, and non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area report being able to have a conversation in English<sup>[8]</sup> (Statistics Canada, 2023b). A total of 8.9% of the immigrant population, 9.1% of recent immigrants, and 7.7% of non-permanent residents report being able to have a conversation in French.

In the Toronto South area, 79.3% of immigrants, 83.8% of recent immigrants, and 85.5% of non-permanent residents report being able to have a conversation in a non-official language (i.e. other than English or French) (Statistics Canada, 2023b). The top five non-official languages that immigrants in the Toronto South area can have a conversation in are Mandarin (9.7%), Spanish (8.4%), Cantonese (7.5%), Hindi (6.5%), and Portuguese (6.4%) (Statistics Canada, 2023b).

For recent immigrants in the Toronto South area, the top five non-official languages that individuals can have a conversation in are Hindi (20.4%), Mandarin (10.8%), Spanish (9.2%), Arabic (5.9%), and Portuguese (4.3%); for non-permanent residents, the top non-official languages are Mandarin (19.2%), Spanish (12.8%), Hindi (11.6%), Portuguese (7.2%), and Arabic (3.7%) (Statistics Canada, 2023b). A total of 15.4% of immigrants, 11.6% of recent immigrants, and 20.0% of non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area report being able to have a conversation in a Chinese language.

Poverty<sup>[9]</sup> is a significant challenge for immigrants and newcomers in the Toronto South area: 17.3% of immigrants, 16.3% of recent immigrants, and most strikingly, 34.2% of non-permanent residents live in low-income households (Statistics Canada, 2023b).

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[8] The Census includes data on knowledge of official and non-official languages. According to Statistics Canada, "knowledge of official languages refers to whether the person can conduct a conversation in English only, French only, in both or in neither language. For a child who has not yet learned to speak, this includes languages that the child is learning to speak at home." Knowledge of non-official languages "refers to whether the person can conduct a conversation in a language other than English or French. For a child who has not yet learned to speak, this includes languages that the child is learning to speak at home." (Statistics Canada, 2023, July 7).

[9] As measured by the Low-Income Measure, after-tax (LIM-AT) – a threshold calculated at 50 percent of the national after-tax household median income and adjusted for household size.

### Change Over Time: Comparing 2021 and 2016 Census Data

Table 2 (in Appendix A.) provides a comparison of social and demographic data for the immigrant, recent immigrant and non-permanent resident populations in the Toronto South area using the 2016 and 2021 Census.

#### *Population Growth by Immigrant and Non-permanent Resident Status*

Between 2016 and 2021, the Toronto South area population grew by 37,200 people, an increase of 5.2% (Social Planning Toronto, 2022; Statistics Canada, 2023a). The following figures show the growth of the non-immigrant, immigrant, recent immigrant, and non-permanent resident populations<sup>[10]</sup> in the Toronto South area:

- Non-immigrants: +5,640 individuals, a 1.3% increase
- Immigrants: +20,270 individuals, an 8.2% increase
- Recent Immigrants: +13,595 individuals, a 38.3% increase
- Non-permanent Residents: +11,285 individuals, a 35.8% increase

As these figures show, the rise in immigrant and non-permanent resident populations comprise 84.8% of population growth in the Toronto South area. Further, recent immigrants and non-permanent residents make up two-thirds of Toronto South's population growth. The rise in the number of newcomers and non-permanent residents making their home in the Toronto South area has important implications for Service Providers and access to services.

#### *Demographic Change by Racial Status and Language Groups*

The number of racialized immigrants<sup>[11][12]</sup> living in the Toronto South area increased by 17.1% between 2016 and 2021, while the number of non-racialized immigrants living in the area decreased by 4.8% (Statistics Canada, 2023b; Statistics Canada, 2019). All racialized immigrant groups (e.g. South Asian, Chinese, Black) experienced a population increase over the five-year period.

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[10] Due to rounding, sum of population growth for immigrants, non-immigrants and non-permanent residents produces slightly different than overall population growth for the Toronto South area.

[11] 2016, number of racialized immigrants: 147,135; number of non-racialized immigrants: 100,050; number of racialized recent immigrants: 25,230; number of non-racialized recent immigrants: 10,265; number of racialized non-permanent residents: 20,975; number of non-racialized non-permanent residents: 10,535 (Statistics Canada, 2019; Statistics Canada, 2020a; Statistics Canada, 2020b)

[12] 2021, number of racialized immigrants: 172,230; number of non-racialized immigrants: 95,215; number of racialized recent immigrants: 36,455; number of non-racialized recent immigrants: 12,630; number of racialized non-permanent residents: 31,700; number of non-racialized non-permanent residents: 11,095 (Statistics Canada, 2023b)



The number of racialized recent immigrants in the Toronto South area increased by 44.5% between 2016 and 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2023b; Statistics Canada, 2020a). The number of non-racialized recent immigrants in the area also increased but by a lower rate at 23.0%. Most racialized recent immigrant groups experienced a population increase over the five-year period<sup>[13]</sup>, with the most significant rise among South Asian recent immigrants whose population nearly doubled. As a result, the South Asian population comprised 29.9% of the recent immigrant population in Toronto South in 2021, up from 20.9% in 2016.

The number of racialized non-permanent residents in the Toronto South area increased by 51.1% between 2016 and 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2023b; Statistics Canada, 2020b). In comparison, the number of non-racialized non-permanent residents increased by 5.3%. Most racialized non-permanent resident groups experienced a population increase over the five-year period<sup>[14]</sup>, with the extent of population change varying by group.

The great majority of immigrants, recent immigrants and non-permanent residents in Toronto South report being able to have a conversation in English, with a modest increase in the rates for all three groups from 2016 to 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2023b; Statistics Canada, 2020a; Statistics Canada, 2020b; Statistics Canada, 2019). Among recent immigrants in the Toronto South area, the number of Hindi speakers has nearly tripled in the five-year period, representing 20.4% of recent immigrants in the area in 2021, up from 9.7% in 2016.

Demographic change in the Toronto South area is important for service planning and provision to support settlement efforts, create welcoming communities, and protect against racial and linguistic inequities, injustice, and discrimination.



**The rise in the number of Newcomers making their home in the Toronto South Area - comprising 84.8% of population growth - has important implications for Service Providers and access to services.**

- Debby Mulling



[13] In the Toronto South area, the population size of recent immigrants with Filipino and South Asian backgrounds decreased between 2016 and 2021.

[14] The population size of non-permanent residents with the Filipino and Japanese backgrounds also decreased between 2016 and 2021. The number of non-permanent residents from the Arab population declined slightly (by 40 people).

*Falling Poverty Rates Likely Short-lived*

Poverty rates declined substantially for the immigrant, recent immigrant and non-permanent resident populations in the Toronto South area over the five-year period, with the most substantial decrease for recent immigrants where the rate of poverty dropped by more than 50% between 2015 and 2020<sup>[15]</sup> (Statistics Canada, 2023b; Statistics Canada, 2020a; Statistics Canada, 2020b; Statistics Canada, 2019). This trend in falling poverty rates is consistent with that found among the overall population, due in large part to the effectiveness of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), a federal pandemic income support program (Social Planning Toronto, 2022, July 21). Since the federal government cancelled CERB and other pandemic support benefits, poverty rates are on the rise in the general population (Sarangi, Barrie, & Srikantharajah, 2024). Immigrant and newcomer populations in the Toronto South area are likely experiencing a similar increase in poverty with the elimination of this important federal income support program.

Appendix A. contains a table depicting the social and demographic profile of the immigrant, recent immigrant and non-permanent resident populations in the Toronto South area using the 2016 and 2021 Census.

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[15] Poverty rates are based on household income in the year preceding the Census.



## RESEARCH APPROACH

**In this section of the report, we share the details of the participatory research approach used, the co-design principles, and the implementation of the principles.**

### USING PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

One of the unique features of this research project was our ability to utilize a participatory design process called co-design throughout the model-making phase in order to build on top of the research conducted in the environmental scan, focus groups and literature review.

This project is not the first to embed co-design principles and so we sought out others who had done so. Before building the co-design process, the project Co-Design Lead interviewed 11 different participants who had led co-design projects within the newcomer-serving sector or in Toronto in order to develop the framing for our model-making phase.

As we moved through the model-making phase, we prioritized participation from Newcomers and racialized leaders and Service Providers. The Co-Design Cohort created an avenue for sustained engagement and provided a role for a group of Newcomers, enabling them to inform the model.

Based on research conducted during the Environmental Scan phase, we knew we were going to need to build capacity in order to co-design our model and make the process accessible. Before going into the model-making phase, we wanted to build participants' capacity and confidence to fully participate in designing the model - including those Newcomer participants who did not have extensive sector knowledge and Service Providers who had not had prior Co-Design experience.

We held four Learning Sessions to foster shared learning and curiosity around the following topics: Data Collection, Participatory Funding, Policy and Public Education, and Collaborative Governance. In these sessions, we heard from the SPT researchers as well as subject matter experts in each area and offered time for a facilitated discussion for Newcomers and Service Providers to ask questions alongside our research team. This helped us to understand the current knowledge level of participants and to decide where to focus our attention during the model-making sessions.

Following the Learning Sessions, we held three model-making sessions in December, two in-person and the third one virtually. These model-making sessions built on the knowledge imparted to participants during the Learning Sessions as we focused discussions on two specific existing funding models - Collaborative Governance and Participatory Funding. This gave the research team, Co-Design Cohort members, and additional Service Providers a foundation to respond to for the proposed community-based funding model for Toronto South.

In short, participatory decision-making was both part of the research question and the mechanism for conducting the research for this project. We tested our model through a research creation process, whereby the development of the model used a participatory approach, incorporating findings from participants, as well as learnings from the process itself in its final form.





## CO-DESIGN PRINCIPLES

While there are many different approaches and principles to co-designing, we utilized co-design principles from the work of K.A. McKercher in their book *Beyond Sticky Notes. Doing co-design for Real: Mindsets, Methods, and Movements*.

*Beyond Sticky Notes* lists 4 principles:

### **Share Power**

When differences in power are unacknowledged and unaddressed, the people with the most power have the most influence over decisions. Co-design is about sharing power in planning, research (sometimes called discovery), designing and deciding what gets implemented.

### **Prioritize Relationships**

Co-design isn't possible without relationships and trust. Sometimes communities don't trust organizations or external consultants often for good reasons. Building that trust takes time. It can't be rushed. You can't buy trust; it can only be earned – the better the social connection, the better the co-design process and outputs.

### **Use Participatory Means**

Co-design is about people taking part. That means offering many ways for people to take part and express themselves, for example, through visual, kinesthetic and oral approaches. Co-design doesn't rely only on writing, slideshows, and reports. Participatory approaches facilitate self-discovery and move people from meeting participants to active partners.

### **Build Capability**

With enough time and care, co-design can build new knowledge and skills for everyone involved.

Some people need support and encouragement to take on different ways of being and doing, to learn from others, and to have their voices heard. To support that, facilitators and designers can move from 'expert' to coach, enabler, or host. Everyone has something to teach and something to learn.[16]

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[16] McKercher, K. A. (2020). *Beyond Sticky Notes. Doing Co-design for real: mindsets, methods and movements*, 1st edition

Alongside the principles, we also took wisdom such as this table about how co-design requires us to shift our thinking[17]:

**TABLE 1: CO-DESIGN AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT**

From	To
Making decisions for people with lived experience	Making decisions with people with lived experience
Valuing professional expertise above all	Valuing professional and lived experience equally
Seeing marginalized people as a burden	Seeing marginalized people as resilient, creative and capable
Colonising, heteronormative and ableist systems	Compassionate systems that see and respond to dimensions of difference
Believing that resources are scarce to make change	Seeing an abundance of experience, ideas and energy for change
Focusing on 'consumer' councils and committees	Embedding participation in everyday practice
Rushing to solutions	Slowing down to listen, connect and learn

[17] McKercher, K. A. (2020). *Beyond Sticky Notes. Doing Co-design for real: mindsets, methods and movements*, 1st edition

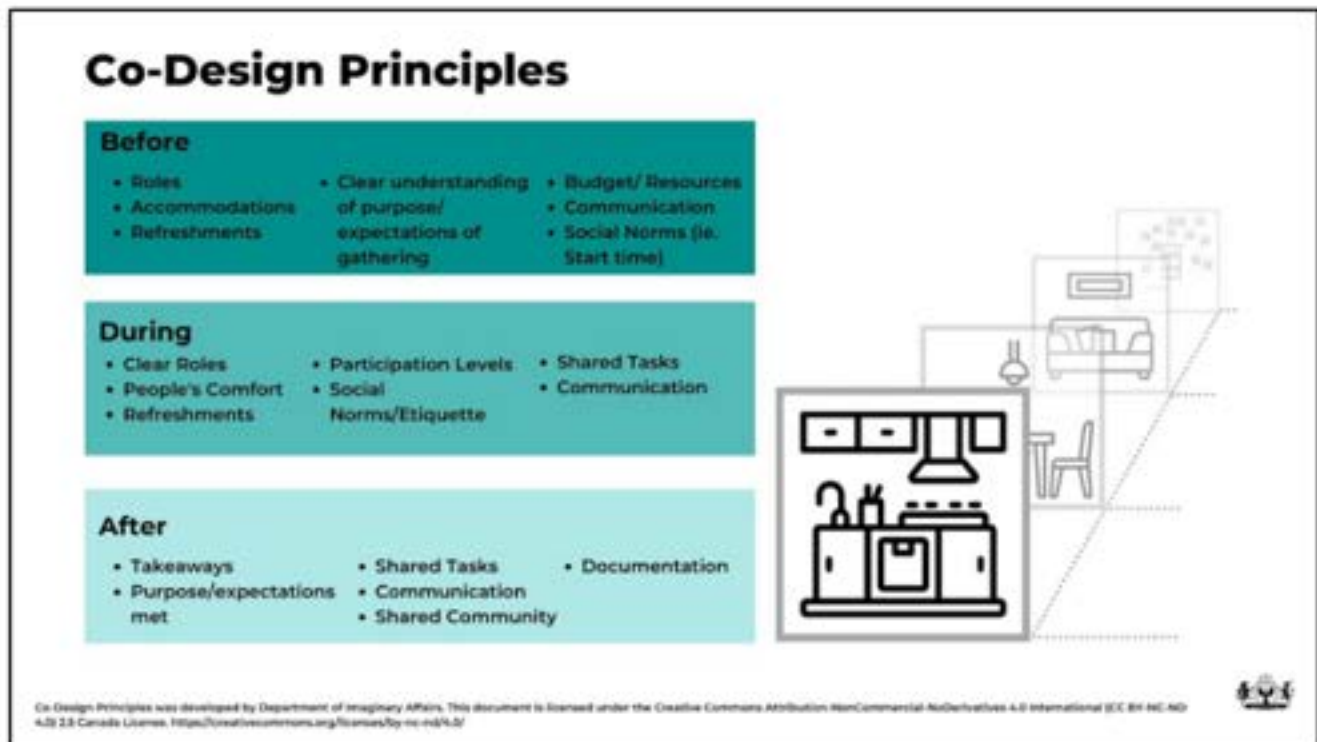


Prior to the model-making phase, we spent time building capacity with participants around co-design and facilitating conversations about what these co-design principles look like within a newcomer-serving context.

We introduced a way of thinking about co-design that is familiar to many - hosting a potluck dinner party in your home - and highlighted the different expectations between hosts and guests when conducting a co-design approach. We shared stories about good and bad guest and host experiences as a way to build connections about co-design principles. This allowed for more interactive discussions about the co-design principles.

This diagram was a design prompt used to invite participants and the research team to think about tasks before, during and after hosting an event as well as different considerations for how much of the hosting duties we might want to share with guests.

DIAGRAM 1: CO-DESIGN PRINCIPLES



By acknowledging how the co-design principles might be implemented in different settings by different participants, we were able to create a consistent invitation for participants to speak about sharing power, prioritizing relationships, using participatory means, and building capabilities. In particular, we witnessed how conversations about power varied throughout the research project and were influenced by who was in the room, what questions were asked and what examples were shared. These conversations included themes about power hoarding, power redistribution, power sharing, power extraction, and the understanding of power in the form of time, money, and knowledge. One of the goals of using a co-design approach is to mitigate and shift where power is assumed and how decisions are made.

## CO-DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing the co-design principles into the model-making process happened through tiers of research and knowledge sharing with participants prior to initiating the Co-Design Cohort.

To begin this implementation process, the project team conducted interviews with 11 co-design experts and used data from this research to inform the first external workshop, an *Introduction to Co-Design training* with 33 participants (20 Newcomers and 13 Service Providers). This served as a first opportunity to share info about the project's co-design process with Newcomers and Service Providers and supported recruitment for the co-design team (including 2 Newcomer Peer Leaders who played a key role on the Advisory Committee as well as supporting the larger Co-design Cohort which consisted of Newcomer Lived Experience Experts).

The second part of this phase took place between February and April 2023. This involved the *Co-Design Principles Lab* (February 2023) through which we were able to gather initial insights from 20 participants (13 Newcomers and 7 Service Providers) on their individual priorities for improving funding and delivery within the sector. However, the key purpose of this Lab was to provide an opportunity to test and develop the process of bringing together the various participants who would contribute to the model and to provide a template for how we would run subsequent *Design Labs*. As co-design is inherently an iterative process, it was important to test this process earlier in the project. The subsequent *Sensemaking Session* (April 2023) brought the selected Newcomer Peer Leaders and the project team together to collaborate on the analysis of the data from the *Design Lab* (to make sense of what participants shared.)



The third part of this phase took place between April and July 2023. We issued a call for a more integrated role within our research team to Newcomers and Service Providers who had previously participated in focus groups, co-design training sessions and design labs. From among this group there were 21 applications to participate in the Co-Design Cohort, 20 from Newcomers and 1 from a service provider. Following interviews, we invited 7 Newcomers and 1 service provider to join the Co-Design Cohort. The Co-Design Cohort was part of the core research team for the model-making phase of this research project. The aim of the Co-design Cohort was to expand perspectives integrated into the design of the model by recognizing the influence that the researcher has on the direction of the research. The Co-Design Cohort included participants with a mixture of lived and professional experiences - the cohort members were Newcomers themselves, Service Providers, and Newcomers with experience in the Newcomer-service sector.

The fourth part of this phase took place between August and December 2023. The Co-Design Cohort members as well as additional Service Providers took part in the 4 **Learning Sessions** (October to November 2023) to build their capacity about data analysis and integration, participatory funding models, public policy and education, and collaborative governance. Following this, the Co-Design Cohort members also joined one of two in-person **Model-Making Sessions** (November and December 2023) alongside Service Providers and attended the **Town Hall** in January 2024.

Co-design workshops combined in-person and virtual sessions with an online community to support continuous participation and reflection. Every design tool was aimed at surfacing individual and personal reflections that fed into the collective contributions. We witnessed many participants who at the start felt like they had limited knowledge to offer or were worried about only sharing the right answer, and we created the design tools hoping to encourage participants to share more freely.

Ultimately, implementing a co-design approach to this research project allowed our team to facilitate and document how participatory design impacts individuals' ability to engage and exchange ideas around sharing power between lived experience participants and professional experience participants, with a view to someday implementing co-design funding and governance within the existing newcomer-serving sector in Toronto South.

# METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

## MODEL-MAKING SUMMARY

We hosted 2 full-day in-person and 1 virtual model-making sessions in December 2023 to work collaboratively with members of the Co-Design Cohort, Service Providers and other participants from the newcomer-serving sector to surface final insights and recommendations for a proposed community-based funding model that was representative of the Toronto South community.

During the model-making day, we pulled in the following data:

- Interviews
- Environmental scan
- Learning session information
- Co-design process learnings

We engaged:

- Co-design Cohort
- Service Providers, front-line and management
- Grassroots and community-based Newcomer Service Providers
- Select speakers from the learning sessions

See Appendix C for a full list of questions.





## MODEL-MAKING PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic information, and the intersections of identity which contribute to how people experience settlement services, is an important factor in research. We requested that participants who were part of the Co-Design and Model-Making Phase complete a demographic survey. Below are demographic summaries of the 51 unique individuals involved in model-making, not counting duplicate attendees<sup>[18]</sup>:

- Of 51 unique participants involved in the co-design process, about 65% identified as Newcomers, defined as being born outside of Canada.
- About 77% identified as women.
- Over 82% identified as being Racialized and/or Visible Minority.
- About 16% identified as having a disability.
- Newcomers who participated originated from 19 countries (India, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Korea, China, United Kingdom, Nepal, Colombia, Romania, Cuba, North Macedonia, Philippines, Panama, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Peru, Grenada, Iran and Pakistan)
- Participants spoke 18 different languages at home (Nepali, Amharic, Spanish, Romanian, Albanian, Macedonian, Arabic, Dari, Tagalog, Bengali, Sinhalese, Tamil, Hindi, Gujarati, Farsi, Portuguese, Urdu and French)

## DISCUSSION SUMMARY

During our model-making sessions, we spoke with three distinct participant groups: Newcomers, Service Providers and Grassroots Leaders. We invited participants to reflect on elements of a participatory funding model and a collaborative governance funding model to surface their insights on what they would like to see replicated and what they would want to be avoided. While each of the three participant groups brought forward distinct positions, perspectives and considerations, we also heard intersecting themes between them.

We identified seven key themes:

- Transparency, Equity and Meaningful Consultation
- Acknowledgement of Grassroots Work
- Tailored Approach and Flexible Funding
- Responsive Feedback Mechanisms and Relevance of Metrics
- Accessible Applications and Simplified Reporting
- Investing in Training and Relationship-Building
- Addressing Competition and Supporting Collaboration

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[18] Note, this data is from participants who volunteered to complete a demographic survey prior to joining the sessions and cannot account for all participants.

**Transparency, Equity and Meaningful Consultation**

Several participants expressed concerns about the potential lack of transparency, equity and meaningful consultation in the funding process and the selection process of the Intermediary. Participants recommended that engagement with this proposed funding model be intentional in understanding diverse participant needs and centered on increasing effective service delivery while minimizing competition between funding recipients and addressing inequities when dealing with conflicts. While many participants noted that administrative challenges have been a barrier to trusting Intermediaries in the past, they did acknowledge that with more transparency, equity, and meaningful consultation this could be mitigated.

**Acknowledgement of Grassroots Work**

Self-identified Grassroots Leaders see themselves as distinct from other Service Providers within the newcomer-serving sector and have felt like their previous contributions to the sector have been to a degree extractive, in terms of grassroots leaders providing their insights, expertise, or volunteer labour to supporting governments and larger organizations, while receiving inadequate funding or facing barriers to accessing funding altogether when doing valued community work. Grassroots leaders observed that proper acknowledgement and value assigned to their input and contributions would go a long way in mending this relationship.

**Tailored Approach and Flexible Funding**

Generally, participants agreed that they wanted tailored approaches and flexible funding to accommodate the specific and varied needs of Newcomer groups and Service Providers that emerge outside of the typical funding timelines and requirements. Participants recommended creating more responsive funding streams to allow for more nimble service delivery.

**Responsive Feedback Mechanisms and Relevance of Metrics**

Participants from each of the three groups asked for feedback mechanisms between the Funder and funding recipients to be responsive and relevant to service delivery and aimed at strengthening the funding relationship. These feedback mechanisms included a request for shared data and learnings between fund recipients and from the Funder to identify larger service delivery gaps and to improve the funding process on an ongoing basis. Participants suggested that with a strong Intermediary in place that feedback could be collected and aggregated by the Intermediary to minimize administrative load on funding recipients and concerns about providing negative feedback to the Funder.



**Accessible Applications and Simplified Reporting**

In general, participants agreed that applying for funding needs to be more accessible and reporting needs to be simplified in order to minimize administrative stress and allow for smaller and grassroots organizations to share the field with larger Service Providers. Another suggestion was to have specific funding streams available where only smaller and grassroots organizations would be eligible to apply. Participants expressed that the current application process and reporting are intended to make the funding decision process easier by keeping all the applications the same, but that this might ultimately cause grassroots and smaller organizations to not apply at all.

**Investing in Training and Relationship-Building**

Participants requested more training and capacity building opportunities consistently and not just in the months leading up to the funding application deadline, and also requested some of those opportunities be accessible offline. They wanted the training and capacity building opportunities to focus more on building stronger relationships between the Funder (including the project officers) and fund recipients in order to foster improved understanding of projects, project reporting and to ultimately build a stronger trusted communication pathway between the Funder and fund recipients.

**Addressing Competition and Supporting Collaboration**

Participants stated that competition between Service Providers was impacted by target-based funding requirements which decreased the incentive for Service Providers to invest in coordinated service delivery and collaboration. Participants felt that with clearer support from the Funder to collaborate, experiment, and innovate, they could envision addressing competition within the newcomer-serving sector. Participants also agreed that an Intermediary focused on addressing inequities and conflicts, with a specific mandate to increase collaboration, could facilitate stronger coordinated service delivery.

## Key Considerations for Implementing an Intermediary

As the role and responsibilities of the Intermediary would be one of the most significant changes to the current structure that we proposed through the two sample models, we solicited much specific feedback about their potential role.

During the model-making phase, we heard from 3 distinct participant groups: Newcomers, Grassroots Leaders, and Service Providers. There were members in each participant group that had previous experience working with Intermediary-type organizations, which had most commonly been in contexts where the Intermediary had been the financial or administrative trustees to their organizations. Participants wanted to ensure that if an Intermediary were to be used in this model, priority would be given to ensuring fund recipients (especially grassroots and smaller organizations) would have a voice in designing the criteria for selecting the Intermediary.

From self-identified Grassroots Leaders we heard that they had previously had some negative experiences, whether related to an added administrative burden, lack of transparency, or misunderstanding of their work by the Intermediary. This critique amplified participant feedback we had previously heard around Grassroots Leaders feeling extracted from and taken advantage of by larger organizations when it comes to doing tasks like outreach or advisory committees on a voluntary basis without proper recognition or compensation.

Acknowledging that the selection of the Intermediary is a crucial element of this funding model, here are some key considerations:

### **Trust and Accountability**

Participants stressed the extreme importance of the Intermediary being able to ensure trust and accountability between the Funder, the fund recipients, Newcomers, and members of the Advisory Bodies. The aim is for the Intermediary to maintain a healthy relationship between all participants in order to address inequities, conflicts, and existing power dynamics. It was noted that the Intermediary should not evaluate the outputs and outcomes of specific projects, as this could erode trust.

### **Equity and Transparency in Selection**

Participants expressed considerable interest in how the Intermediary would be selected and felt that the Funder would need to work alongside Newcomers, Grassroots Leaders, Service Providers, Local Immigration Partnerships, and umbrella organizations to develop a set of shared criteria and to be transparent about how the selection was made and why. This selection process would need to be led by the Funder and the responsibility for the decision would remain with the Funder.



**Share Power**

Participants expressed concerns regarding the role the Intermediary would play in acknowledging and directly addressing existing power dynamics within the newcomer-serving sector, who the Intermediary would prioritize in conflicts, and how they would decide to use their power. As long as decision making power is held by those with greatest access to money and information, this will continue to be an area of tension and conflict within this work.

**Capacity and Skills**

Based on what we heard from participants, the Intermediary would need a range of skills, knowledge and connections to be successful in building trust and effectiveness within their role.

This is an extended list of potential skills of the Intermediary:

- Experience facilitating multi-participant conversations and centering marginalized voices.
- Experience with conflict mediation, resolution and addressing inequities.
- Knowledge of the newcomer-serving sector.
- Experience being a service provider within the newcomer-serving sector.
- Experience being a Funder or informing funding processes.
- Capable of maintaining an arms-length relationship with the Funder and fund recipients.
- Experience with program and process evaluation.
- Experience with data collection and making information accessible.
- Experience designing evaluation tools and processes.

This list does not assume that the Intermediary would need to have all the skills, but they should be capable of pulling in outside expertise as needed. The Intermediary's primary responsibility would be to ensure more equitable, transparent, and accessible funding processes and to increase coordinated service delivery and collaboration so that the newcomer-serving sector may improve Newcomer wellbeing, sense of belonging and relationship to Canada. The role of the Intermediary in our proposed model is both central to the model's success and highly complex – it is therefore important for the funder to choose the Intermediary very carefully and to properly compensate their work.

## FEEDBACK FROM DIFFERENT PARTICIPANT GROUPS

### NEWCOMERS

In this section, we have highlighted shared comments, concerns and recommendations made specifically by Newcomer participants during the model-making phase.

Throughout this research project, we have consistently engaged with Newcomers to understand their perspectives on service delivery. By understanding their experiences with services, we were able to compare the experiences that Service Providers shared and to extrapolate where funding mechanisms were directly impacting service delivery. This initial research in our environmental scan was done through focus groups and interviews.

In the model-making phase, we engaged with 7 Newcomers from the Co-Design Cohort to increase recurring input on the proposed community-based funding model.



**Roles can change.**

**Newcomers have power too. They have rights and capacity. In the first moment, they are at a disadvantage. But the system has to be built to change this situation. If not, the system does not work.**

**They are not burdens. When they are sitting at that table, they should be equal.**

- Newcomer Participant





From Newcomer participants we heard:

**Participatory Engagement**

A continued request to listen to Newcomers directly about service gaps and needs by designing multiple ways to make participating in offering feedback accessible - such as focus groups, interviews, surveys, and consultations designed to meet Newcomers where they are at. It is also important to compensate Newcomer participants for their contributions and to acknowledge them in any final products.

**Direct Roles in Decision-Making**

A desire for designated roles and access to decision-making for Newcomers wanting to engage with settlement services directly that goes beyond Service Providers hiring newcomer staff. It is important to recognize that once a Newcomer becomes a Service Provider their perspective and understanding of the newcomer-serving sector changes from that of Newcomers who have only engaged with services from the client side. This is especially true the longer they have been in the role, as their own lived experience of migration might differ significantly from that of later arrivals.

**Diversity of Newcomer Needs**

A need to recognize a multiplicity of newcomer needs. We heard that service delivery, improvements and changes impact Newcomers differently depending on their needs and therefore it is important to intentionally integrate a diversity of Newcomers with different experiences into decision-making. It is also important to acknowledge how systemic inequities may limit levels of participation and engagement from Newcomers and allow for more time and resources to ensure meaningful consultation.

**Mindset Shift**

A desire for Newcomer perspectives to be given weight and value in program design and for Service Providers to acknowledge the commitments, skills, knowledge, and specific experiences, including pre-arrival capacities, that Newcomers can bring to service provision. Newcomer participants are seeking a reciprocal dynamic between Newcomers and the newcomer-serving sector.

## GRASSROOTS LEADERS

**In this section, we have highlighted shared comments, concerns and recommendations made by self-identified Grassroots Leaders within the newcomer-serving sector in Toronto South.**

Throughout this research project, we have prioritized the perspectives of racialized leaders within the newcomer-serving sector and especially those of smaller ethno-specific organizations. As we did this work, another sub-group within this cohort emerged as self-identified Grassroots Leaders. The distinction shared with us during this research project is that there are different scales of institutional infrastructure, funding and impact of systemic inequities that influence how Grassroots Leaders see themselves within the newcomer-serving sector, and which influence their access to sustainable service delivery.

Grassroots Leaders see themselves as more deeply connected to “the community” than other Service Providers. We recognize that this is a connection that is contextual and subjective. In this report, when we refer to “the community”, we mean those individuals who are directly impacted by the challenges that make services within the newcomer-serving sector necessary.

“

**We create our organizations because of failings of our current laws, policies and structures. Then we need access to financial resources because the need for our organization is apparent and real. But we face barriers to access and are expected to change the work we do.**

**Communities should decide for ourselves where our money goes.**

- Grassroots Leader Participant

”

From Grassroots Leaders we heard:

### **Consultation and Two-way Communication**

A strong desire for community members to be consulted on decisions about prospective projects, especially those to be delivered in their own geographic or ethno-specific communities before final funding decisions are made. In addition, Grassroots Leaders expressed a desire for transparent and two-way communication after they have been asked for their input on service delivery or possible changes to the newcomer-serving sector. It is important to reduce instances where Grassroots Leaders are consulted but are never told what input was used or not used and why.

### **Valuing of Grassroots Work**

The need to acknowledge the immense amount of labour performed by individual leaders and the value of their existing relational networks. This social capital needs to be properly compensated by Funders and by service provider organizations relying on this labour for advisory support, consultation input and outreach.

### **Sharing Power in Decision-Making**

A request to increase access to decision-making around funding eligibility, processes, and selection especially around what kind of service delivery will have the greatest impact on the cultural and geographic communities they work with most closely.

### **Beyond Capacity Building**

A recognition that existing investments and capacity building directed at Grassroots Leaders are limited. Many shared that the professional development workshops offered by larger service provider organizations assume that Grassroots Leaders want to be trained to deliver services in the same way and don't acknowledge the unique value that their responsive and relational approaches bring. Grassroots Leaders who had participated in community-based research indicated that while participating in research can be meaningful in and of itself, they often go unrecognized in the final research, don't feel represented in the research findings, and are unclear if the research is implemented. In addition, Grassroots Leaders shared that accessing capacity building opportunities should be compensated and give them access to larger funding opportunities.

### **Fostering innovation**

A need to foster innovation and experimentation opportunities at the grassroots level and to see a funding model that leaves space for flexibility and responsive funding requests that occur outside of the typical funding time frames. It is important to build a culture across the newcomer-serving sector that values learning from innovation.



## SERVICE PROVIDERS

**In this section, we have highlighted shared comments, concerns and recommendations made by Service Providers within the newcomer-serving sector in Toronto South.**

Through the project, we sought to engage a range of Service Providers to gain different perspectives related to challenges, needs and areas of improvement towards effective and equitable service delivery.

In particular, we wanted to ensure that racialized Service Providers, including those working in front-line positions, were given a voice in this research. These individuals bring needed insights and lived experiences for shaping equitable decision-making within the newcomer-serving sector.

In the context of funding, many Service Providers expressed administrative challenges that impacted their overall work and effectiveness, including the need for stronger communication and trust between their organizations and the Funder, as well as the need for financial resources to support collaboration and improvements within service delivery.

In addition, it was also evident that many front-line Service Providers did not feel that they had access to decision-making processes about funding and service delivery. Their contribution is important for equitable decision-making, but also a critical part of ensuring sustainability and relevance of services offered to diverse Newcomer populations.

“

**If front-line Service Providers were consulted from the beginning, there would not have been these gaps in the first place.**

-Service Provider participant

”

From Service Providers we heard:

**Transparency and trust**

A desire for increased transparency and trust when communicating with Funders about funding priorities and requirements. Specifically, Service Providers want more communication from Funders about funding priorities and requirements and more flexibility in how their funding can be used. We heard that fear of losing funding drives evaluation and hinders innovation in program and service delivery.

**Outcomes-focused measurement**

A need for outcomes-focused measurements to ensure reporting metrics that are more relevant and flexible and allow for responsiveness around service changes and on-the-ground implementation.

**Simplified application and reporting processes**

A desire to eliminate the heavy administrative burden throughout the funding process, from application to reporting.

**Resources for collaboration**

A need for increased resources and mechanisms to support collaboration and a recognition that collaboration is valuable but may require more funds and time to implement effectively. Service Providers emphasized that collaboration had value that was independent of whether or not it resulted in efficiencies.

**Opportunities for Innovation**

A desire for more opportunities to innovate and calculated risk-taking aimed at service improvements while creating a culture for shared learning and feedback.

## THE MODEL

**In this section of the report, we outline the proposed community-based funding model co-designed by Newcomers, Grassroots Leaders, and Service Providers within the Toronto South.**

In this section:

1. Purpose
2. Scope
3. Structure and Roles
4. Timeline and Activities

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the proposed community-based funding model is to reimagine the funding processes, rules, and procedures in order to centre equity. We are proposing a model of relational infrastructure to create a more effective and equitable process for decision-making pre-grant, during the granting process, and post-grant. This model recognizes that the current funding structure prioritizes efficient and economical service delivery to eligible immigrants. It also acknowledges existing power dynamics between participants. Finally, this model recognizes the importance of understanding and addressing historical systems of oppression and racism that perpetuate harm within the newcomer-serving sector.

It encourages investing in building trust and reciprocity while recognizing that this can feel counterproductive in our current system which prioritizes efficient and economical service delivery. These shifts aim to build a culture of learning and collaboration that is often implicitly valued by communities but does not currently have the proper structural and financial supports.

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[19] Nonprofit Quarterly. (n.d.). Imagining relational infrastructures. Retrieved from <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/imagining-relational-infrastructures/>



**“We think communities are essential infrastructures. Infrastructures can be relational; they can be about improving the ways in which communities work and play together to improve quality of public life. We think new infrastructures can be co-designed, built, and managed by communities. Infrastructure can even be rules and or procedures for how things go together.”**

- Kenneth Bailey

This model emphasizes building ongoing, formalized relationships between a range of participants within the newcomer-serving sector including Newcomers, Grassroots Leaders, Service Providers and the Funder, in contrast to transactional one-off contributions in the form of interviews, consultations or information sessions with limited transparency. The model requires significant financial investment in strengthening and healing relationships between participants and centering the contributions of Newcomers, front-line workers, racialized- and Newcomer-led organizations, and grassroots organizations as core actors in decision-making processes.

#### **The Model:**

1. Involves Newcomer, Grassroots Leaders', and Service Providers' (front-line workers and management) input through each stage of the process with intentional outreach to and engagement of participants historically excluded or limited in participation.
2. Defaults towards transparent and open communication throughout the funding process and clearly outlines who is responsible for responding to questions and concerns.
3. Ensures capacity building and knowledge translation is done in partnership and in consultation with Newcomers, Service Providers and Grassroots Leaders in order to increase systems knowledge and maximize value of input and decisions.
4. Integrates a participatory decision-making process that incorporates various opportunities and levels of participation for participants to opt-in and out depending on interest and capacity.
5. Creates a shared declaration between participants to prioritize collaboration and coordinate service delivery outcomes.
6. Optimizes communication and procedures between participants to build trust, reciprocity, and meaningful engagement.
7. Invests in building relational infrastructure that fosters collaboration and equity.

## SCOPE

The proposed community-based funding model is designed to be implemented with the following considerations around scope:

- It is intended for a specific and narrowly defined funding priority (for example, a call for mental health services for newcomer youth)
- It is limited to service delivery within a specific geographic region (for example, within Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership catchment)
- The majority of financial investment and responsibility for funding decisions and learning will continue to be held within one Funder (for example, IRCC)
- It is centered around a timeline that is compatible with the existing 5-year funding cycle offered within the newcomer-serving sector by IRCC

These considerations are not intended to create an ideal environment or to limit pieces of the proposed model being implemented, however they are responsive to the existing funding processes and dynamics within the newcomer-serving sector and acknowledge that the majority of service delivery is funded primarily by IRCC. Within the proposed community-based funding model, we have chosen to align with the existing 5-year funding cycle for the previously researched benefits of decreasing stress on Service Providers caused by more frequent funding applications. However, the Intermediary and CAB may wish to revisit this timeline for the funding cycle and explore having shorter and more nimble timelines in order to be responsive to emergent needs.

Many of these considerations still surfaced potential challenges and each one would need further research prior to implementation.

**“Making real connections that contribute to a relational infrastructure is achieved through a diverse, engaged network, and across a multitude of events that contribute to building trust, mutual understanding, and recognizing everyone’s contribution to the network, whatever role they play.”**

- Debby Mulling



## STRUCTURE AND ROLES

The proposed community-based funding model is reliant on the effective implementation of relational infrastructure in order to structurally shift participation and ownership of the funding processes and decisions. It necessitates the introduction of several new participant roles and responsibilities, foremost among those being the Intermediary.

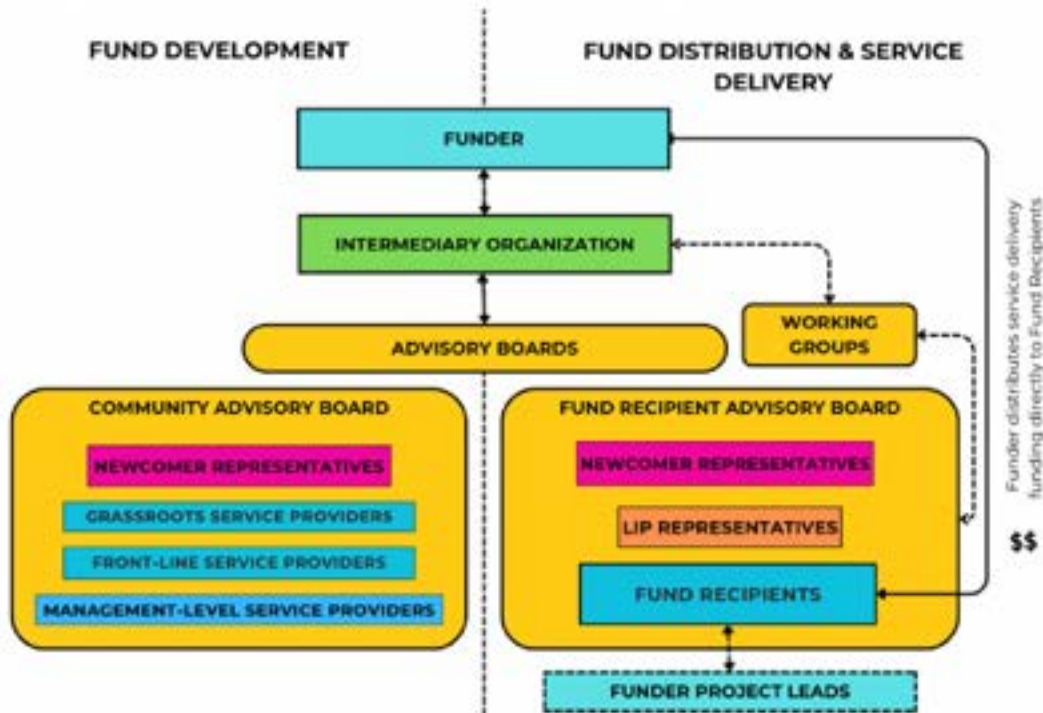
In many ways, the role of the Intermediary replicates parts of existing roles within the newcomer-serving sector that are already played by the Local Immigration Partnerships, umbrella organizations, and directly by Service Providers who are invited to engage with the Funder. Unlike each of these stakeholders, however, the Intermediary in our model will focus its convening, advocacy, and coordination efforts on a gathering of service providers in receipt of one specific pot of funding that meets the geographic and other scope limitations listed above.

The Intermediary role within this model could be played by one of the existing stakeholders listed above or could be an entirely new entity that is responsible for managing relationships with and between existing participants. In addition, the Intermediary would be responsible for relationship management with and between participants in two new entities: the Community Advisory Board (CAB) and the Fund-Recipient Advisory Board (FAB). The proposed model envisions that participants will recognize the value of relational infrastructure by redistributing and sharing decision-making and increasing two-way communication.

The Funder will continue to have a great deal of power and responsibility with regards to how this proposed model is implemented and will be responsible for consulting with relevant participants within the newcomer-serving sector, including but not limited to Newcomers, Grassroots Leaders, Service Providers, consultants, academic institutions, local immigration partnerships, and umbrellas in order to inform the overall funding priority and criteria for selecting the Intermediary.



DIAGRAM 2: FUNDING MODEL STAKEHOLDERS



This diagram represents the relationships between stakeholders within this funding model. Starting at the top, this diagram shows that the Funder provides funding directly to fund recipients. It maintains two-way communication with the Intermediary organization and the Intermediary, providing information to be shared with the two Advisories and receiving input from the Advisories via the Intermediary. In turn, the Intermediary coordinates the Advisories and the Working Groups.

The diagram shows two phases: the Fund Development Phase, in which the Community Advisory Board convenes; and the Fund Distribution and Delivery Phase, in which the Fund Recipients, along with other representatives, convene.

## Intermediary

The Intermediary operates as a partner to the Funder and to Service Providers but is not embedded entirely within either entity/group in order to maintain external perspectives and processes. The Intermediary works independently from the Funder and from Service Providers in order to remain critical of operational processes and policies that influence power dynamics and limitations to service delivery. The primary responsibility of the Intermediary is to hold together the relational infrastructure of this proposed community-based funding model. The Intermediary oversees the payment of honoraria to Community Advisory Board members, Newcomers within the Fund-Recipient Advisory Board and coordinates and compensates external consultants within the scope of implementing the funding model.

The Intermediary will be accountable to the Funder and to the wider newcomer-serving sector. The Intermediary will be skilled in process design, facilitation, conflict mediation and resolution, research, evaluation, and communication, and will have experience with the newcomer serving sector, or will be able to pull on external parties for some of these elements. The Intermediary should have experience with anti-oppression, anti-racism, and equity-based frameworks. The Intermediary will value lived and professional experiences and will be capable of navigating conversations from service delivery implementation to systems and policy change.

The Intermediary may not apply for funding within this funding model and may not be in direct competition with CAB members. The role is the Intermediary is paid by the Funder as part of the cost of implementation of the model.

### **Community Advisory Board (CAB)**

The Community Advisory Board should be intentionally designed to include a mix of participants such as Newcomers, Grassroots Leaders, Service Providers (including front-line workers and leadership) from ethno-specific, small, medium and large organizations. The CAB may also include membership from Local Immigration Partnerships, umbrellas, consultants, and academic institutions. The purpose of the CAB is to work with the Intermediary and Funder to design an equitable funding application process, timelines, including funding criteria, delivery guidelines, expected outcomes and other parameters. The primary responsibility of the Community Advisory Board is to ensure the relevance and grounding of the proposed funding model in relation to emergent needs and service delivery. The Community Advisory Board members would be responsible for co-designing funding eligibility, the application process and reporting requirements, as well as for determining the selection criteria and rubric for the funding.

The Community Advisory Board would be required to develop conflict of interest protocols and ways to respond to the conflict. The Community Advisory Board members should be properly compensated for their contributions in order to enable less well-resourced stakeholders to take part. The Community Advisory Board membership should include grassroots organizations and Service Providers who have not previously been funded by IRCC. The Community Advisory Board members recruitment criteria and selection would be managed by the Intermediary in partnership with the Funder. The Community Advisory Board members are eligible for applying for funding.

## **Fund Recipient Advisory Board (FAB)**

The Fund-Recipient Advisory Board would be convened after the Community Advisory Board's role is completed and funding decisions have been made. Once the FAB is convened, the CAB would be discontinued.

The primary responsibility of the Fund-Recipient Advisory Board is to contribute to the evaluation of the proposed funding model implementation, identify the gaps within the funding model, and to support coordinated service delivery. The Fund-Recipient Advisory Board meetings will be facilitated by the Intermediary and focus on sharing learnings about service delivery in order to minimize competition between Service Providers and to address potential service and systemic gaps caused by the funding model.

The Fund-Recipient Advisory Board will work with the Intermediary to co-create capacity building and professional development opportunities to increase the coordinated service delivery. The Fund-Recipient Advisory Board may create working groups to address specific topics or issues raised in response to the proposed funding model.

The Fund-Recipient Advisory Board may choose to coordinate and facilitate working groups in partnership with the Intermediary or directly between members to strengthen relational infrastructure and acknowledge that power dynamics exist between participants. Each working group is encouraged to share lessons and challenges directly with the Intermediary to inform the future implementation of the proposed funding model or to be addressed directly.

The Fund-Recipient Advisory Board in partnership with the Intermediary would create a feedback culture that may include ways for anonymous or aggregated feedback to be shared with the Funder to minimize the fear of feedback negatively impacting the Funder to Fund-Recipient relationship. The Fund-Recipient Advisory Board is composed of Service Providers from organizations that have been successful in receiving the funding whether or not they have previously participated in the CAB. Participation on the FAB will be compensated through individual funding contribution agreements of the funding recipients as an additional budget line or individually depending on what is more equitable.



## **Funder**

The Funder will create an internal team dedicated to the implementation and support of the proposed funding model including Project Officers, policy analysts and operations managers.

The primary responsibility of the Funder is to invest in the development and implementation of relational infrastructure in order to increase coordinated service delivery.

The Funder is responsible for acknowledging and working to address systemic inequities caused by the funding process, decisions, and implementation.

The Funder is responsible for contributing the majority of the funds for this funding model while also being open to partnerships with other Funders.

If a conflict arises in relation to Funder decisions where the FAB requires additional information, the Intermediary may request that the Funder's internal project team provide this information or join Advisory meetings.

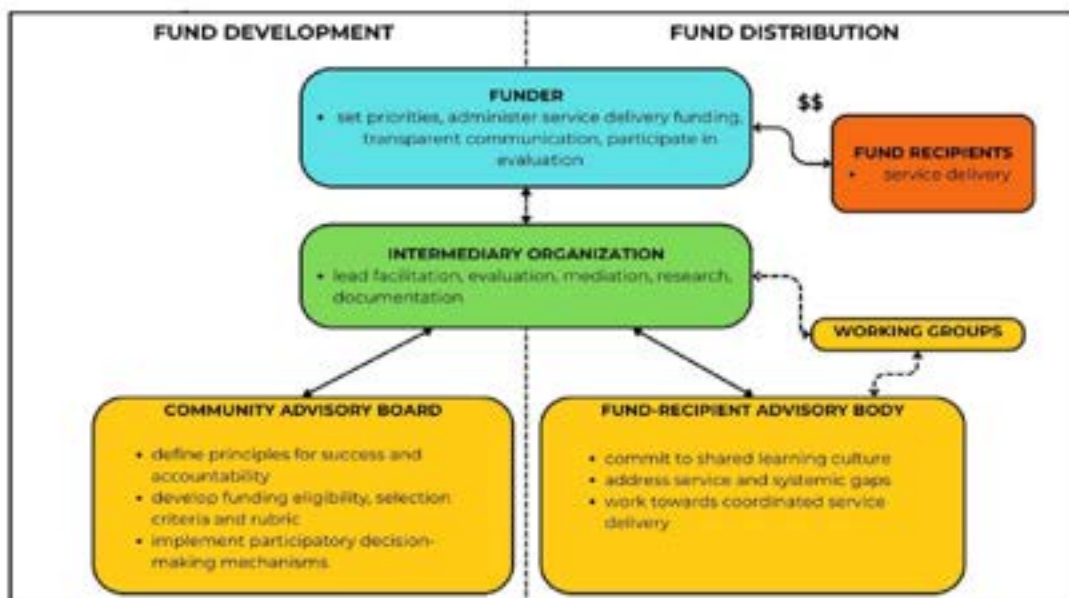
The Funder remains responsible for final decisions for funding and for distributing funds directly to Service Providers as well as administering contribution agreements and approvals.

The Funder is accountable to the Intermediary, CAB and FAB to communicate and be transparent about how recommendations are used and not used.

The Funder is responsible for sharing any relevant data, research and policy changes that would directly impact the shared goals of equitable and coordinated service delivery. The Funder will coordinate capacity building for internal team members on anti-oppression, anti-racism and equity and may work with a consultant to oversee the fund initiation phase and include the consultant as a part of the internal team to support their own internal learning and evaluation.

The Funder should be prepared to be challenged on existing inequities within funding models and mechanisms, to be responsive to recommendations, and to default towards transparency around how recommendations are implemented or not implemented.

**DIAGRAM 3. FUNDING MODEL STAKEHOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

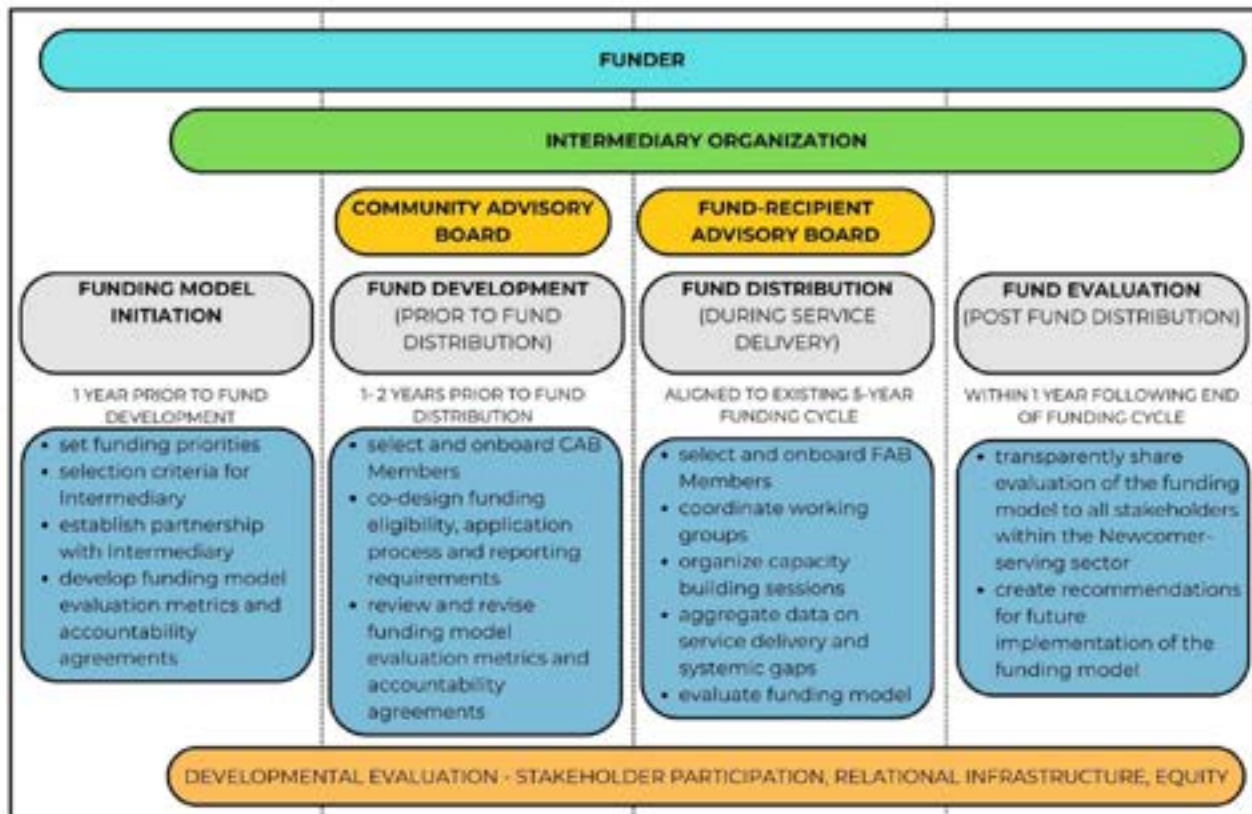


## TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES

The proposed community-based funding model has 4 phases: Funding Model Initiation, Fund Development phase (prior to fund distribution), the Fund Distribution phase (during service delivery) and the Fund Evaluation phase (post fund distribution).

For each phase, the lead of the phase is responsible for ensuring that there is intentional engagement of participants with varying levels of participation and transparency around accountability measures.

**DIAGRAM 4. FUNDING MODEL TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES**



The initial phase is the **Funding Model Initiation** during which the funder sets the funding priorities and selection criteria for the Intermediary and to establish the foundations of the partnership with the Intermediary. The partnership with the Intermediary should include the development of the funding model evaluation metrics and accountability agreements between all participants. This phase is proposed to take 1 year.

The next phase is the **Fund Development** which is led by the Intermediary to select and onboard CAB Members, co-design the funding eligibility including the selection process and criteria, application process, and reporting requirements and to review and revise the funding model evaluation metrics and accountability agreements between all participants. This phase is proposed to take 1-2 years.

Following **Fund Development**, the Intermediary and CAB will recommend capacity building sessions and other support for the FAB in order to scaffold learning from the **Fund Development** phase into the Fund Disbursement phase. Members of the CAB may end up as Members of the FAB and would maintain a continuity of learning.



The following phase is the **Fund Distribution** which is led by the Intermediary to onboard FAB Members, to coordinate working groups, to organize capacity building sessions and to aggregate data from all Fund Recipients to address service delivery and systemic gaps and to evaluate the funding model. This phase is proposed to align to the existing 5-year funding cycle.

The final phase is the **Fund Evaluation** which is led by the Intermediary to transparently share evaluation of the funding model with all stakeholders within the newcomer-serving sector and to create recommendations for future implementation of the funding model. This phase is proposed to occur within the 1 year following the funding cycle and overlaps with planning for the following Funding Model Initiation phase.

The process and outcomes from each of the 4 phases feed into the findings, recommendations, and revisions of the funding model. It is important to implement an ongoing developmental evaluation framework to evaluate participant participation levels, strength of relational infrastructure, Service Providers' capacity to document and respond to service delivery gaps, and participants' readiness to respond to and directly address power dynamics and systemic inequities.

There also needs to be a deliberate pause between each phase to evaluate what changes needed to be made to the proposed model and to document the implications of those changes.

Considerations to take into account for the proposed timeline and activities include accepting that this funding model requires different mechanisms to ensure investment in relational infrastructure and this shift could be jarring for participants who are used to a different relationship between Funders and fund recipients. This could surface conflicts that feel disruptive to progress and efficient service delivery.

## CONCLUSION AND FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As we conclude this project and share the proposed community-based funding model, we acknowledge that this proposed model is one of many ways to implement a participatory funding model that centres equity.

We continuously reminded participants and our research team that we are not the first to propose changes to the way the newcomer-serving sector is funded, and we will most certainly not be the last.

This research was conducted at a time when we witnessed first-hand varying responses to multiple refugee crises and the results of adaptations to service delivery and the response of mutual aid.

Our project team tested participatory research and equity principles within the existing funding model. Based on our observations during research phases and direct feedback from participants, we created multiple ways for Newcomers to participate which required different levels of commitment. An example of this is the integration of Newcomer Peer Leaders, roles which were created as a result of hearing from Newcomers the importance of having Newcomer representation within the Advisory more embedded in the project.

Throughout the project, we learned that it takes time and resources to support Newcomer participation, but that these resources create access for those who would otherwise be excluded. We have embedded many of these learned strategies and recommendations into this proposed community-based funding model as a result.

In closing, this research and proposed model are an invitation to experiment and learn from being in dialogue with participants from the newcomer-serving sector.

We would like to imagine that anyone who takes the time to read this report sees this research as a further invitation to continue to explore the relational infrastructure needed within the newcomer-serving sector that will foster collaboration, coordinated service delivery, more effective services for Newcomers, as well as healthier relationships between Service Providers and the Funder.

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## APPENDIX A. CENSUS DATA UPDATE

**TABLE 2. SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE IMMIGRANT, RECENT IMMIGRANT AND NON-PERMANENT RESIDENT POPULATIONS IN TORONTO SOUTH USING THE 2016 AND 2021 CENSUS**

	Immigrants		Recent Immigrants		Non-permanent Residents	
	2016 Census	2021 Census	2016 Census	2021 Census	2016 Census	2021 Census
<b>Population</b>						
Population Size	247,180	267,450	35,495	49,090	31,505	42,790
% of Toronto South Population	34.3	35.3	4.9	6.5	4.4	5.6
<b>Age (years)</b>						
Average Age	49.2	49.3	33.3	32.8	29.0	29.3
Median Age	48.4	47.6	32.5	32.4	28.0	27.8
<b>Racialized Status (%)</b>						
Racialized	59.5	64.4	71.1	74.3	66.6	74.1
Non-Racialized	40.5	35.6	28.9	25.7	33.4	25.9
<b>Top Racialized Groups (%)</b>						
Chinese	16.2	15.5	12.4	11.3	24.1	19.7
South Asian	12.6	14.9	20.9	29.9	13.7	18.9
Black	7.7	8.5	7.6	8.2		
Latin American					5.8	9.8

**TABLE 2. SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE IMMIGRANT, RECENT IMMIGRANT AND NON-PERMANENT RESIDENT POPULATIONS IN TORONTO SOUTH USING THE 2016 AND 2021 CENSUS (CONTINUED)**

	Immigrants		Recent Immigrants		Non-permanent Residents	
	2016 Census	2021 Census	2016 Census	2021 Census	2016 Census	2021 Census
<b>Language (%)</b>						
Able to Have a Conversation in English	90.5	92.3	92.0	96.1	94.6	96.7
Able to Have a Conversation in French	9.0	8.9	8.8	9.1	7.5	7.7
Able to Have a Conversation in a Non-Official Language	79.1	79.3	85.1	83.8	80.2	85.5
<b>Top Non-Official Languages Able to Have a Conversation (%)</b>						
Mandarin	8.6	9.7	11.3	10.8	21.7	19.2
Spanish	7.6	8.4	9.8	9.2	9.6	12.8
Cantonese	8.7	7.5				
Hindi		6.5	9.7	20.4	7.3	11.6
Portuguese	7.5	6.4		4.3	5.7	7.2
Arabic			5.0*	5.9	4.5	3.7
Tagalog	5.0		7.0			
Bengali			5.0*			
<b>Poverty (LIM-AT)**</b>						
% living in a low-income household	23.9	17.3	33.3	16.3	47.0	34.2

\* Tied.

\*\* Poverty/low-income rates are based on household income in the year prior to the Census (i.e. 2015 household income for 2016 Census, 2020 household income for 2021 Census).

Sources: Social Planning Toronto, 2022; Statistics Canada, 2023a; Statistics Canada, 2023b.

## APPENDIX B: NOTES ON CENSUS DATA LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### HOW CENSUS DATA CAN BE USED IN THE PROPOSED FUNDING MODEL

Census data is a valuable resource and often under-utilized across the im/migrant- and refugee-serving sector. However, there are opportunities to make use of census data in our proposed funding model to ensure evidence-informed decision-making.

First, census data can be used to inform the recruitment of Newcomer participants on the Community Advisory Board (CAB) and Fund Recipient Advisory Board (FAB). Census data can help to ensure that Newcomer participants are representative of the Toronto South population. However, this should not be done without careful consideration of the needs and priorities of the Advisory Boards. Newcomers who are more vulnerable, who have intersectional experiences of marginalization, or who have precarious immigration status, may not be accurately represented in census data or may simply be part of smaller population groups in the Toronto South area. Yet, in some individuals with these unique experiences should be prioritized for the limited number of Newcomer seats in the CAB or FAB.

Second, census data can help to identify priority populations to be served by the grants that are awarded. Review of the most recent census data can tell us where some of the greatest needs are. For example, census data can be used to identify which groups of newcomers and im/migrants experience the highest rates of poverty. Data can be utilized either by the Community Advisory Board – for example, by setting up specific grant streams for priority populations identified in the data – or by the grant applicants – for example, by rationalizing the need for their proposed program, service or initiative as evidenced in the data. Again, census data should not be interpreted without consideration of other factors such as what other, if any, programs, services and/ or initiatives already exist to serve this group.

As these two opportunities suggest, the use of census data can play an important role when combined with other types of information and knowledge to make evidence-informed decisions to better meet the needs of TSLIP newcomers and im/migrants.



# APPENDIX C: MODEL-MAKING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## PART I: SERVICE PROVIDERS AND NEWCOMERS

### **1. Roles & Responsibilities - Newcomers and Service Providers**

- How should Newcomers & Service Providers be involved in decision-making processes?
- What are barriers to meaningful and equitable participation pathways for both?
- What eligibility criteria should be considered for participation?

### **2. Roles & Responsibilities - Intermediary**

- What would be the ideal role of an intermediary organization (like the role Tamarack or the TAEH play) within a funding model?
- What criteria should be in place to when selecting an intermediary organization (size, capacity, sector knowledge, Funder relationships, etc.)
- What role does the intermediary play in fostering collaboration between SPOs?

### **3. Roles & Responsibilities - Funder**

- What processes can be put in place to create more open communication and trust between the Funder and SPOs?
- What standards are required to foster trust between Funders and SPOs?
- What would need to change about the current funding and reporting structure to improve collaboration among SPOs?

### **4. Sharing Power**

- What should happen when the community decision is at odds with the Funder's interest?
- Who holds the relationship with Newcomers?
- What mechanisms will ensure accountability and trustworthiness of the intermediary organization? How should this organization be selected?

### **5. Creating Accountability**

- How can reporting be made more manageable for Service Providers, and more meaningful to Funders?
- How will we develop metrics/targets for measuring success of the model?
- How do we ensure ongoing and effective evaluation of the model, and continued responsiveness to all participants?

## **PART II: GRASSROOTS AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE PROVIDERS**

### **1. Current Gaps in Funding Accessibility and Equity**

- Where does your organization receive most of its funding? What is the process or relationship like between you and the Funder(s)?
- Are there challenges for your organization to supporting Newcomers through your services? What are the main gaps in support?

### **2. Engagement of Community and Grassroots Leaders**

- In your experience, are grassroots and community leaders meaningfully engaged in decisions that impact their funding and service delivery opportunities?
- Ideally, how would you like to be engaged in decision-making processes? What have you seen work (advisory bodies, community forums, etc.); and what does not work?
- What should happen when the community decision is at odds with the Funder's interest?

### **3. Funder or Intermediary/Trustee Relationships**

- In some of the proposed models, there is an intermediary organization who facilitates the relationship between the Funder and grant recipients. This organization may:
  - Facilitate meetings and serve as a mediator between Funder and recipients.
  - Evaluate funded programs and make recommendations.
  - Receive and distribute funding (similar to the role of a trustee)
- Do you see benefits or concerns with this structure of having a third-party organization involved?
- What criteria should be in place to when selecting an intermediary organization (size, capacity, sector knowledge, Funder relationships, etc.)? What should be their role?

### **4. Recommendations**

- What would a successful funding structure look like?
- What changes would you like to see to the ways things are currently done in the sector?