

SHARING SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION PRACTICES THAT WORK FRANCOPHONE PATHWAYS IN SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration
Agencies (SAISIA)
Saskatchewan

Area of Practice:

Practices to Support Francophone Newcomers in a Minority
Environment

Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDWvNYEnA0s>

A Pathways to
Prosperity Project

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**PATHWAYS TO
PROSPERITY**
Promoting Welcoming Communities in Canada



**VOIES VERS LA
PROSPÉRITÉ**
Promouvoir des communautés accueillantes au Canada

BACKGROUND ON THE ORGANIZATION AND IMPETUS FOR THE PROGRAM

The Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA) is a non-profit umbrella organization for settlement and integration agencies in Saskatchewan which was established in 1987. SAISIA's vision is to achieve excellence in the provision of settlement and integration services in Saskatchewan. Its mission is to support settlement and integration agencies in Saskatchewan by engaging stakeholders and representing Saskatchewan settlement and integration agencies nationally. In an effort to promote its vision and mission, the main goals of SAISIA are to enhance leadership coordination and advocacy on behalf of settlement and integration agencies in Saskatchewan, as well as to develop and maintain strategic and sustainable plans. SAISIA indirectly serves newcomers by providing settlement and integration agencies in Saskatchewan with access to professional development and opportunities to network, as well as links to resources that agencies can use to strengthen and enhance their internal procedures, client programs and services.

The impetus for the development of the networking event "Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan" was the need for the Francophone and Anglophone settlement and integration sectors to enhance communication between them. This need was particularly expressed by the Anglophone sector, which reported being eager to learn and engage with the Francophone sector but needed directions and support to make these connections. As a result, Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan was initially piloted in 2020 as a simple meet-and-greet event. After the initial event, and upon receiving feedback from both the Anglophone and Francophone settlement and integration sectors, it became an annual networking event.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Name:

Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan

Description:

Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan is an online networking event that aims to promote strong links between Anglophone and Francophone settlement and integration organizations. The networking event consists of presentations by Francophone service provider organizations (SPOs) that are followed by Q&A sessions. Specific program information and contacts are distributed during the event in the online chat as well as after the event.

Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan allows attending SPOs and other organizations to learn about initiatives, services and programs supporting the integration of French-speaking newcomers. The networking and information exchange among SPOs allows them to further serve newcomers by providing precise and complete information on settlement services and community programs offered in French by Francophone organizations. The knowledge that SPOs gain through the event may also have an indirect effect on newcomers by making them more aware of the presence of Francophone communities.

Goal(s):

Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan aims to 1) increase organizations' understanding of how and where Francophone newcomers access services; 2) support long-term collaboration/networking among Anglophone and Francophone organizations; 3) improve knowledge of Francophone settlement services among other organizations; and 4) allow organizations to learn about initiatives supporting the French speaking community more broadly (e.g., in education, health, employment).

Target Client Group(s):

The event targets Anglophone and Francophone SPOs and other organizations in Saskatchewan, as well as Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and provincial government representatives.

Delivery Partners:

The following organizations were panelists during the event in 2021:

- Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise (ACF)
- Réseau en immigration Francophone de la Saskatchewan (RIF-SK)
- Service d'accueil et d'inclusion Francophone SK (SAIF-SK)
- Communauté Francophone accueillante (CFA)
- Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan (CECS)
- Collège Mathieu
- Communauté des Africains Francophones de la Saskatchewan (CAFS)
- Conseil culturel francosaskois (CCF)
- Association Jeunesse francosaskoise (AJF)
- Réseau santé en français de la Saskatchewan (RSFS)
- Fédération des aînés francosaskois / Vitalité 55+ (FAF)

Human Resources:

The event is organized by SAISIA's Bilingual Urban Coordinator. To help with the organization of the event, the coordinator establishes a Francophone advisory committee. The role of the committee is to provide constructive feedback and to ensure that the event has a Francophone perspective and is inclusive. In 2021, committee members included representatives from the Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise (ACF), the Réseau en immigration Francophone de la Saskatchewan (RIF-SK), and the Service d'accueil et d'inclusion Francophone SK (SAIF-SK).

Funding:

The annual event is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

KEY FEATURES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THIS BEING A PROMISING PRACTICE

Effective:

One of the factors that contributes to the effectiveness of the event is the strong engagement and outreach to the Francophone settlement and integration sector. This includes personal outreach by email and phone explaining the benefits of registering as a panelist during the event. Another factor

contributing to the effectiveness of the event is the Francophone advisory committee, which ensures that the event has a Francophone perspective and is inclusive.

Efficient:

The high level of organization behind the event contributes to its success. For example, the coordinator starts planning the event 5-6 months in advance and provides early notice to the Francophone sector (i.e., invites panelists, invites advisory group members). The coordinator also prepares clear guidelines for panelists and advisory committee members well in advance so that these guidelines are ready before any outreach is conducted. In addition, the coordinator schedules video conferences to support panelists. During these video conferences, the coordinator clarifies roles and responsibilities, provides information on how to use technology and simultaneous interpretation, and offers the opportunity to test the online meeting platform. Furthermore, the coordinator collaborates with several organizations to promote the event and encourage participant registration. Finally, the coordinator uses various platforms (i.e., Canva, Eventbrite, Survey Monkey, Zoom, etc.) to help organize the event and to ensure that all information is clear for panelists and participants.

Relevant:

The Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan event supports Anglophone and Francophone SPOs by increasing the visibility and awareness of Francophone settlement and integration programs and services available in Saskatchewan. In addition, the program provides networking opportunities which may result (and have resulted) in long-term collaboration between Anglophone and Francophone organizations.

Sustainable:

The event enables ongoing communication between Anglophone and Francophone SPOs and the development of unique ideas for collaboration (i.e., translation of documents, promotion of Francophone programs, engagement of Francophone agencies to identify needs).

Transferable:

Anglophone organizations interested in engaging with Francophone organizations in their own province or territory may find it helpful to learn about how the Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan event successfully approached and engaged with the Francophone community. One recommendation is to consider in advance the expected outcomes and planned level of engagement with Francophone organizations before conducting any outreach. In addition, other organizations may be interested in reviewing the structure of the event and the online platforms used.

Innovative and Forward Thinking:

An innovative and forward-thinking feature of the event is the approach used to engage the Francophone community. Before reaching out to Francophone agencies in Saskatchewan, it was essential to first become well-informed about the types of Francophone programs and services available in the province. This included understanding Francophone politics and culture in Saskatchewan. Furthermore, it has been important not to make any assumptions and to consider that Francophone organizations in Saskatchewan may have a different work culture. In other words, it has been important to listen, adapt and apply practices that best serve their needs.

Differs in Definable Ways from Other Similar Practices:

This networking event is unique as it is the first of its kind in Saskatchewan to bring all Francophone parties together and exchange information with the Anglophone settlement and integration sector. Although there are Francophone summits that provide information on Francophone organizations in Saskatchewan, this networking event provides the opportunity for Francophone SPOs to share information directly with Anglophone SPOs. During the event, they also have the opportunity to come together in working groups to support collaboration.

High Client Uptake:

The networking event was developed based on the needs identified in both the Anglophone and Francophone settlement and integration sector. In 2020, approximately 25 individuals attended the event. In 2021, approximately 50 individuals attended the event.

High Client Retention:

In 2021, all panelists and participants who completed the feedback survey reported that they would recommend the event to a colleague. Furthermore, while registration for the 2022 event has not opened yet, many SPOs that participated in the previous events have informally mentioned that they will be attending the 2022 event.

Strong Evidence of Successful Outcomes:

The results of the feedback surveys sent to participants ($n = 14$) and panelists ($n = 7$) in 2021 show that the event was successful. For example, 93% of participants felt that their knowledge of Francophone programs and services had improved as a result of attending the event. All participants also rated the panel speakers as good (36%) or very good (64%). Furthermore, all participants and panelists agreed that the event may support collaboration or networking opportunities between Anglophone and Francophone organizations. Overall, they rated the event as good (43%) or very good (57%).

As a result of the event, some SPOs and panelists came together after the event to work together on projects (i.e., job fairs, youth programs, SWIS program). For example, CECS organized a Francophone job fair and received support from some of the Anglophone SPOs. One Francophone SPO is providing monthly orientations to an Anglophone SPO. In addition, some panelists expressed their interest to serve on the Francophone advisory committee for planning future Francophone Pathways in Saskatchewan events. For example, in 2021 the advisory committee included representatives of three Francophone agencies. For the 2022 event, the advisory committee will include representatives of 5 Francophone organizations.

Another noteworthy outcome is that the establishment of the Francophone advisory committee has strengthened the relationship between Francophone agencies and SAISIA. This long-term partnership may help SAISIA to potentially review other means to enhance opportunities for Francophone communities.

Finally, as a result of organizing this annual event, SAISIA has received requests from Anglophone agencies (i.e., umbrella organizations, non-profit organizations, settlement and integration agencies) across Canada to provide support with Francophone engagement.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION STRATEGY

To evaluate the event, a feedback survey is sent to all panelists and participants immediately after the event. In addition, after the event, the coordinator also schedules meetings with panelists to receive additional feedback. The aim is to collect overall feedback, to assess the event's effectiveness and to identify what features were particularly effective and what areas require improvement. Based on these suggestions, the event is modified to best serve SPOs' and other organizations' needs. In addition, the Francophone advisory committee is an ongoing body for feedback and guidance, available before and after the event.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

SAISIA

<https://www.saisia.ca/>

Webinars

<https://www.saisia.ca/webinars.html>