

Canadian NEWCOMER

LIPs Across Canada - Local Immigration Partnerships Go National



In 2009, Canadian Newcomer ran a story about how Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), together with the Province of Ontario (through the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement), launched an initiative called Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) – a plan to provide ground-level funding to local and regional governments, since they, better than anyone else, understand the needs of the communities they serve. This year (2012) there are at least 45 LIPs coalitions active in Ontario – and more applications coming all the time.

In January 2012, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), in partnership with the Alberta Ministry of Human Services, issued a Call for Proposals to establish Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) in southern Alberta. And according to the [Welcoming Communities website](#), CIC intends to roll out the LIP program throughout the Prairies and Atlantic Canada by 2014.

Immigrants who can move to our communities, settle in, find jobs and contribute to the economy are necessary to address labour market shortages and growth across Canada. And LIP is a proven mechanism to help lay the groundwork, and build the infrastructure, to increase your community's chances of success.

Following the launch of the initiative in Ontario, CIC Communications Advisor Rejean Cantlon explained, "This initiative will identify gaps and provide clear direction, so that communities can enhance their ability to help newcomers integrate. Communities that are organized, welcoming and committed to helping newcomers succeed have the best potential to attract and retain new immigrants."

Two years later, the organizational best practices have been identified. They're available to communities that are considering forming their own LIP coalitions. These are just a few of the great [tools and resources](#) available to prospective LIPs applicants at the [Welcoming Communities website](#).

The Best Practices document determines the inputs and processes that are most likely to result in success for your community. It will help you find the most effective ways to reduce barriers, identify service gaps, and provide services for newcomers. It's important to show a positive attitude in your proposal/ mission statement by showing your community's efforts to be inclusive and to create welcoming communities.

The basic procedures for submitting a proposal are the same for every community. The process begins with your community establishing a Partnership Council – made up of representatives from local and regional governments, community organizations, immigrant serving agencies, language training providers, local associations, regional employment networks and economic

development corporations. Best practices show that LIP central councils should also include members from federal ministries, employers, schools or school boards, hospitals, health units or health networks, police, media, universities and colleges, religious organizations and francophone organizations/networks. The more “broadly based and wide-reaching” your LIP council, the more likely your application will succeed.

Once the partnership has been created, one of the organizations or municipalities involved must respond to a call for proposals on behalf of their community’s partnership council. That single applicant should be the Municipality/ Regional Government itself, or an established community organization endorsed by the Municipality/ Regional Government.

The goal of the partnership is to provide your community with a perspective on settlement needs, and encourage a more effective use of resources from a range of funders who are currently supporting newcomer settlement. The more effectively your community develops and provides services for newcomers, the greater the potential for you to attract new immigrants as a primary destination or through secondary migration.

The Welcoming Communities Best Practices report recommends that your community’s chances of a positive outcome increase if:

- special coordinating structures are put in place for linking the LIP to broader city processes
- your municipality has signalled an intent to modify its immigration liaison activities according to the findings of the LIP surveys and consultations.
- your municipality invests financing or in-kind support for planning activities
- your community includes public education and/or media campaigns in the LIP plan

When your community’s proposal receives a positive recommendation from the evaluators, the municipality applying will receive the funding directly.

Once the funding is received, its distribution will be determined through in-depth research conducted by your Partnership Council on the needs of newcomers in your community. By looking closely at programs currently in place, they can identify gaps in the currently-provided services, and decide what direction to take so that communities can best integrate newcomers. The Settlement Strategies and Action Plans developed in this way will be tools that will help make these communities more desirable places for immigrants to live.

The successes and lessons learned through this process will continue to guide funding as the program moves forward.

As Rejean Cantlon said in 2009, “Improving access to services that make the integration process easier will benefit not only newcomers but communities across the province.”

This story is from the "Local Immigration Partnerships" InfoBlock. To read more stories on this topic, click [here](#).

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