



Equity Stream Program

**Strengthening the Settlement Sector with
Increased Grassroots Leadership and Funding**



Funded by:
Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :
Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

National Equity Stream: Overview



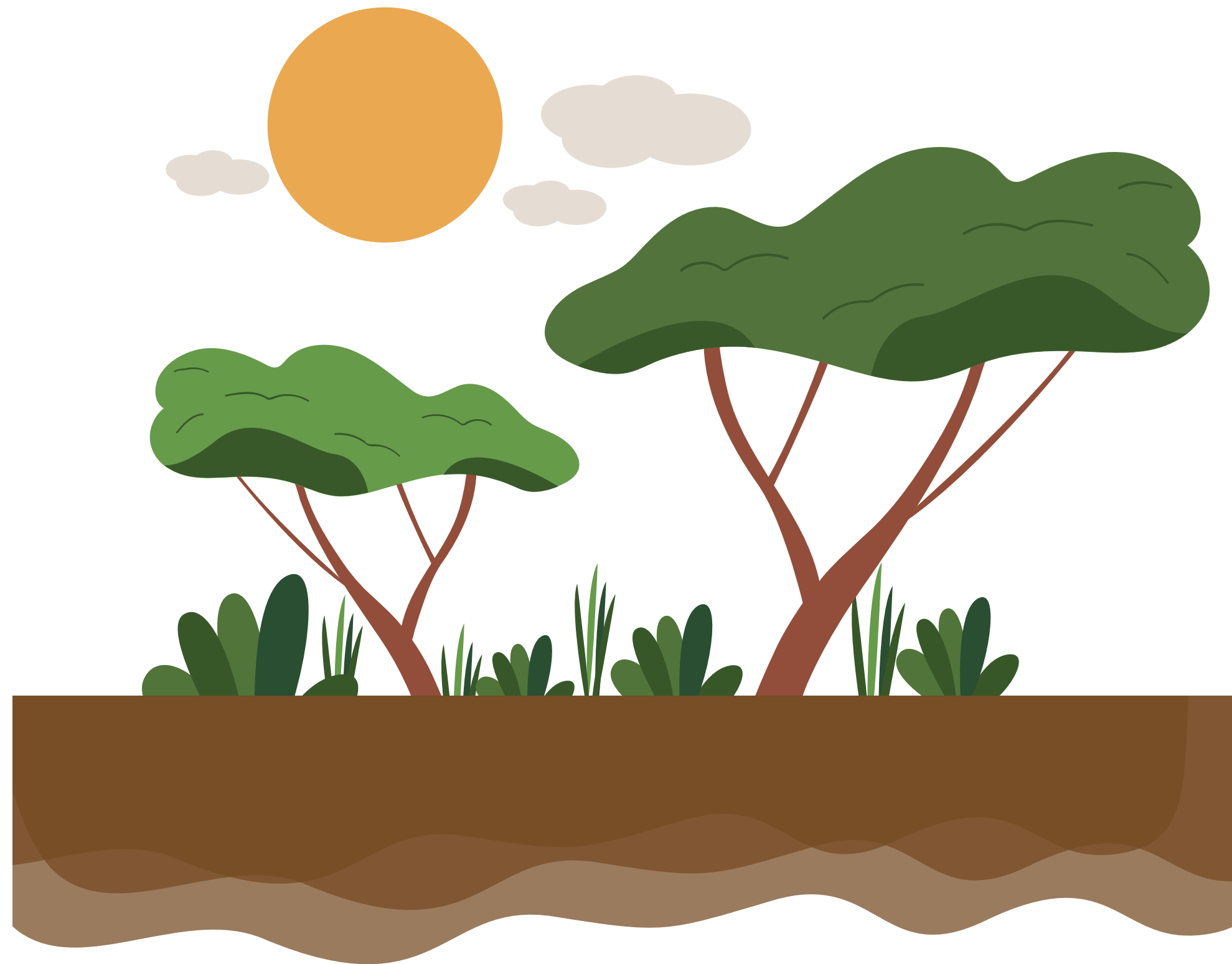
Purpose:

Build the capacity of organizations led by and serving equity-deserving populations (e.g., racialized groups, 2SLGBTQIA+, women, persons with disabilities, youth, seniors) to strengthen their role in Canada's settlement and integration sector.

Goals:

- Greater representation and participation of equity-deserving groups in the settlement sector.
- Stronger, more sustainable grassroots organizations.
- More inclusive, coordinated settlement supports for newcomers.

The “Why”



Funding Distribution

All four regional intermediaries have designed and implemented tailored strategies to ensure a fair and transparent funding process:

- Funding opportunity open to Grassroots Community Organizations (GCOs) with smaller budgets and lower capacity
- Priority given to small, emerging, and traditionally unfunded organizations outside of IRCC funding streams
- Grants typically range from \$50,000 to \$150,000, tailored to organizational size and need
- Simplified and narrative-based applications are used to address systemic barriers
- Proposals are assessed through an equity lens, often using community representation and a fair and transparent process.

COMMUNITY
DIVERSECITY
ORGANIZATIONS
Equity
FUNDING
ARISA
OCASI
ARASIA
CANADA
GRASSROOTS

Beyond Funding & Capacity Building:

Networking & Peer Learning – Opportunities to connect, share knowledge, and learn from peers and mentors.

Training & Skill Development – Workshops on governance, leadership, finance, partnerships, and equity-informed practices.

Cultural & Indigenous Learning – Incorporating local Indigenous perspectives, reconciliation, and culturally responsive approaches.

Community Voice & Co-Design – Engaging organizations in designing programs to ensure supports reflect real needs.



Organizations and Regions



Panel Discussion:

Experiences Across Regions

Panelists:



Moderator
Priscilla Bioh
ARAISA
Project Assistant



Tina Balachandran
DIVERSEcity
Community
Resources Society
Senior Manager



Yasin Samim
OCASI
Senior Program
Coordinator



Jennifer Mah
ARAISA
Equity Project Lead



Rosanna
AAISA/
Gateway
Association
Manager,
Capacity Building

**What unique aspects are
you bringing into your
region's version of the
project?**

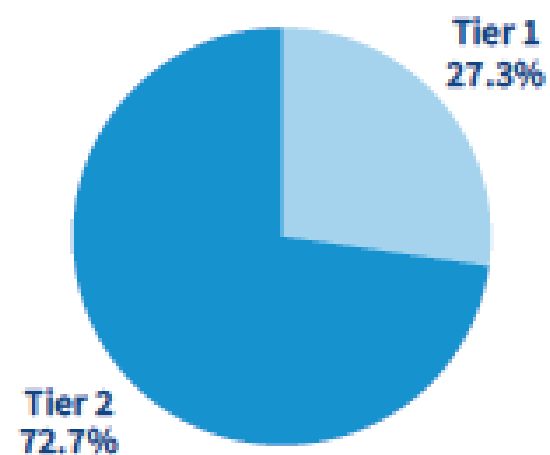
Program Strategies

- One-on-one coaching and mentorship
- Group training and advisory services
- Self-paced learning activities
- Resources to improve governance and funding readiness
- An opportunity to become a funding recipient via DIVERSEcity
- Networking with non-profits, and regional and provincial partners

Service Tiers

Tier 1: Scaling & Systems Optimization

Tier 2: Growth & Foundational Infrastructure



[DCRS.CA/BUILD](https://dcrs.ca/build)



DIVERSEcity BUILD BC-Yukon

Supporting the growth of BIPOC-led grassroots non-profit organizations in BC and Yukon providing services to newcomers, BIPOC, 2SLGBTQ+, seniors, youth, women and people with diverse abilities.

Organizational Focus



20

participating
organizations

Capacity Gaps

- Stable funding
- Grant writing experience
- Developing partnerships
- Scalability
- Facilities / program space
- Systems and administration (governance, financial, IT ...)
- Staffing and volunteer management
- Website and other tools

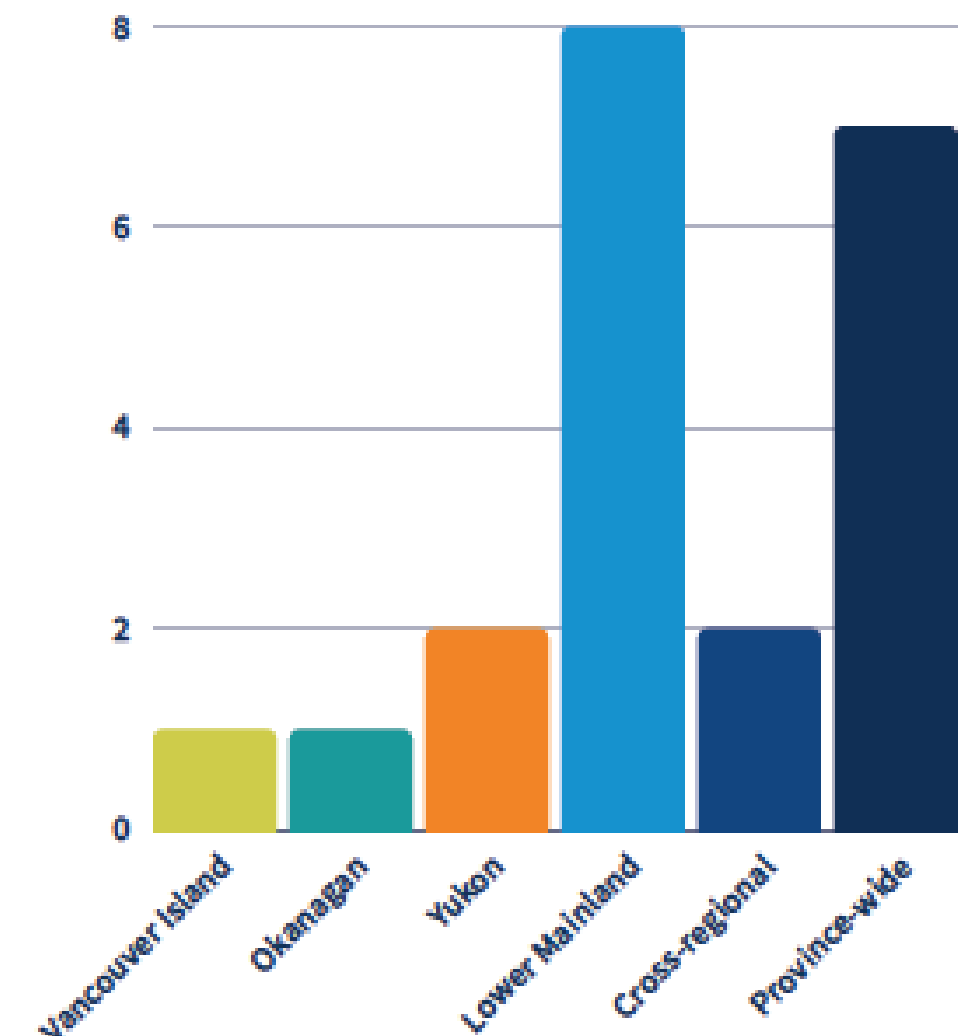
With support from:



DGB Consulting Group



Region



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PNT Region

Guiding Principles:

- Community-Led: We follow the lead of those closest to the issues.
- Anti-Oppressive and Anti-Racist: We name and challenge harm in systems and in ourselves.
- Accessible: We make sure everyone can take part in ways that work for them.
- Collaborative: We build together, with respect and shared learning.
- Sustainable: We focus on long-term change that lasts, not quick fixes.
- Relationship-Based: We take time to build trust and move at the speed of care.
- Responsive to Needs: We adapt based on what communities tell us they need.

**GRASSROOTS
ACCELERATOR
PROGRAM**



[AAISA.CA/INITIATIVE/GAP](https://aaisa.ca/initiative/gap)

Ontario

Values

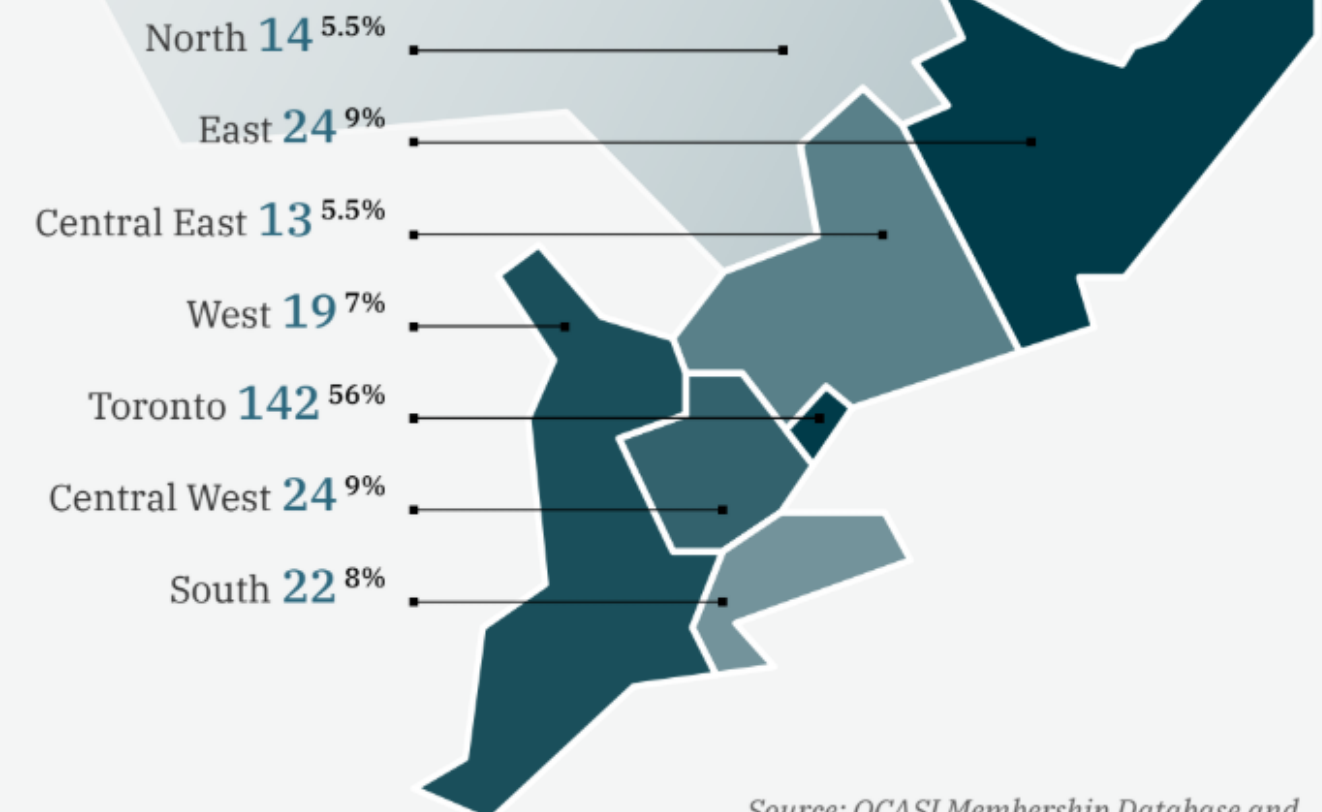
EQUITY
CO-CREATION
TRANSPARENCY
ACCESSIBILITY
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
INCLUSIVE OUTREACH
EFFECTIVE SUPPORT

EQUITY STREAM FUND

Strategies

- PROGRAM-WIDE INTEGRATION
- CO-DESIGNED GUIDES AND TOOLS
- INDEPENDENT SELECTION, CLEAR CRITERIA
- FULL BILINGUAL SUPPORT (FRENCH & ENGLISH)
- CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION AND REFINEMENT
- TARGETED, MULTI-CHANNEL CFP
- NEEDS-BASED GCO TRAINING & MEMBERSHIP

Agencies per Region



Source: OCASI Membership Database and
Membership Renewal 2024/2025

OCASI
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

DELTA | FAMILY
RESOURCE
CENTRE

TNG
Community Services

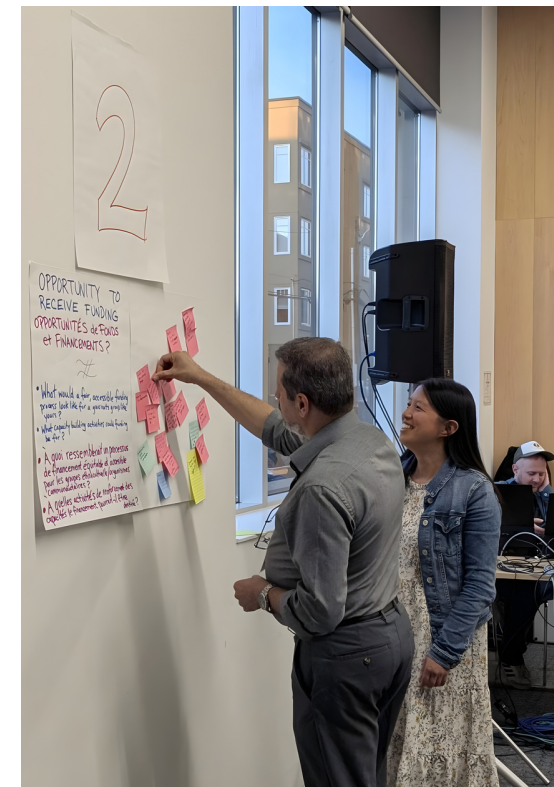
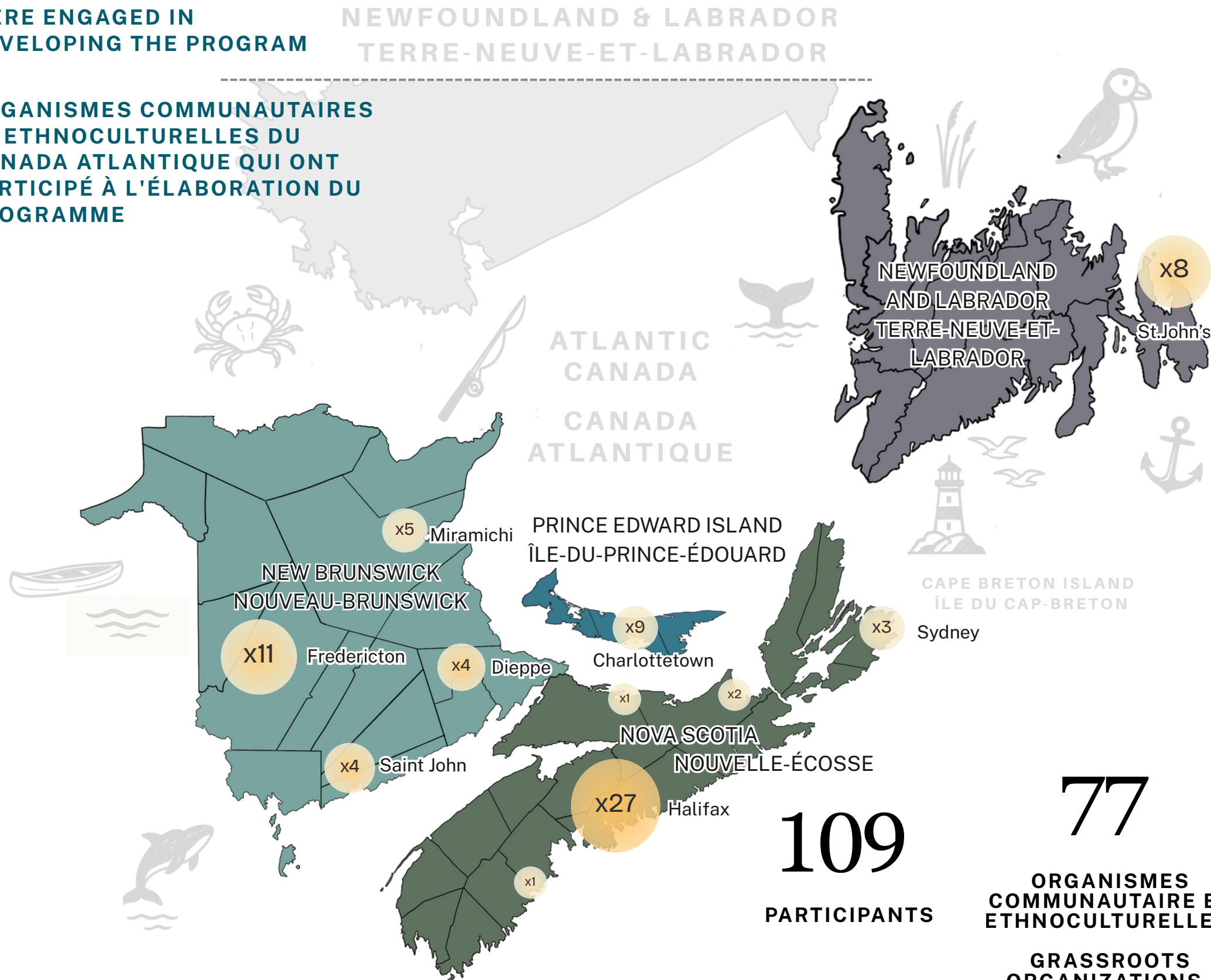
CÉS | C

Atlantic Region



ATLANTIC CANADA
GRASSROOTS
ORGANIZATIONS THAT
WERE ENGAGED IN
DEVELOPING THE PROGRAM

ORGANISMES COMMUNAUTAIRES
ET ETHNOCULTURELLES DU
CANADA ATLANTIQUE QUI ONT
PARTICIPÉ À L'ÉLABORATION DU
PROGRAMME



- Co-cr ation de supports
- Collaboration
- Int grer les principes traditionnels
- la viabilit  organisationnelle
- L'apprentissage continu

- Co-creation
- Collaboration
- Weaving in traditional Principles
- Sustainability
- Continuous Learning

► **KEY STRENGTHS:** What are grassroots organizations' unique strengths that can improve the broader newcomer service landscape?



“Grand nombre de personnes”

“Équipe dynamique

“Our team approaches everything with compassion and empathy”

“Strong base of volunteers and community support”

“Staff with lived experience of holistic afrocentric approach”

“We are mostly former immigrants and have lived experience”

“Knowledge of community needs”

“Amplifying voices through storytelling”

“Empower newcomer women”

“All of us want to help and eagerly support”

“Strong networks and collaborations”

“Our safe spaces” **“Our staff have opened our eyes to what it’s like being a newcomer with a child who has disabilities**

“Initiatives designed by newcomers for newcomers”

“A shared commitment to preserving our heritage while contributing to the multicultural fabric.”

“Board members have diverse backgrounds so we complement each other's skills.”

Conversations

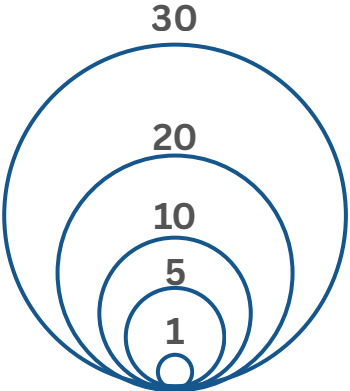
Advisory

Selection Panel

Peer Learning

Co-creating supports for grassroots organizations: What's Important?

Funding Process and Distribution



Legend

●

Halifax (NS)

●

Dieppe (NB)

●

Fredericton (NB)

●

Miramichi (NB)

●

Saint John (NB)

●

St. John's (NL)

●

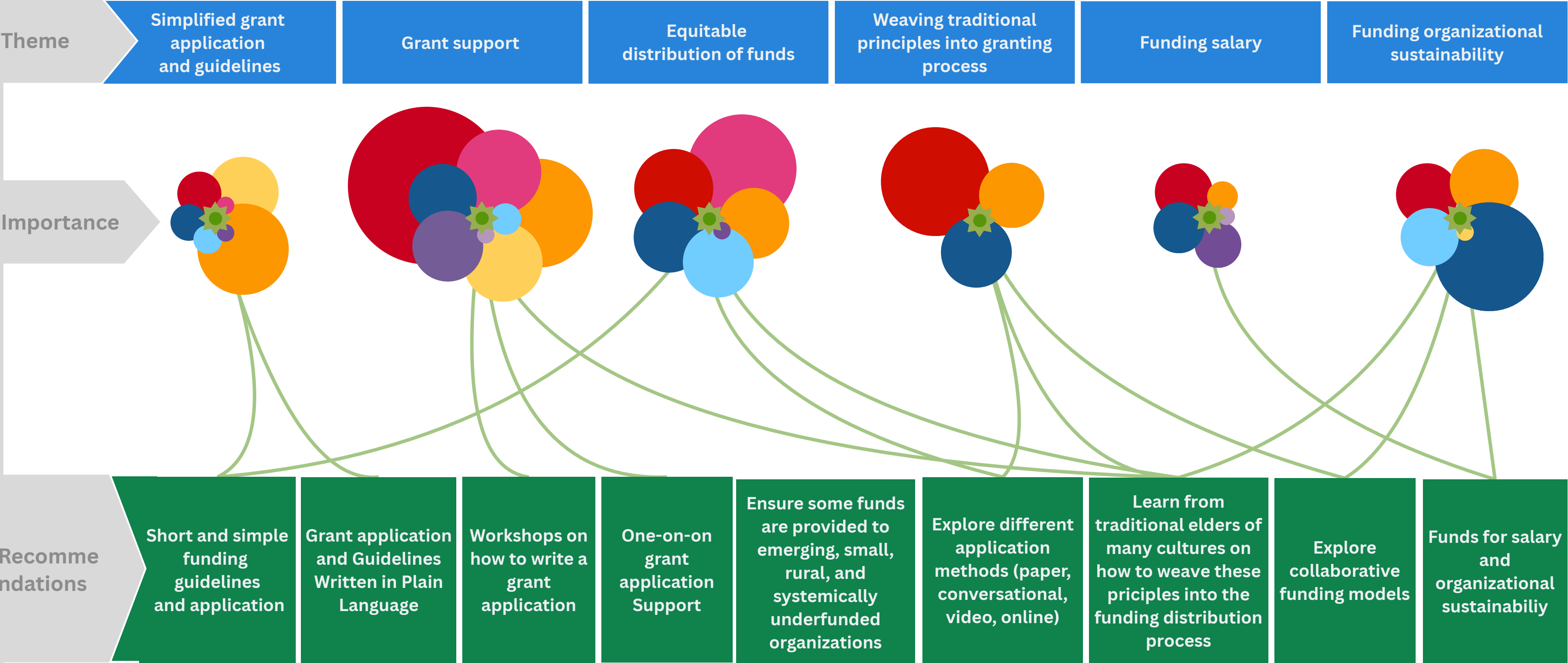
Sydney (NS)

●

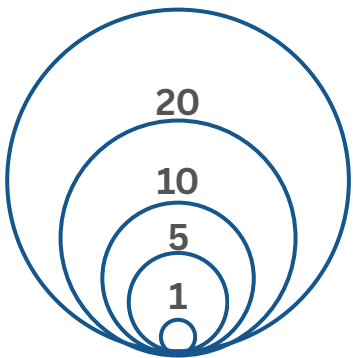
Prince Edward Island

●

Online / Mixed Regional Session



Co-creating supports for grassroots organizations: What's Important?



● Halifax (NS)

● Dieppe (NB)

● Fredericton (NB)

● Miramichi (NB)

● Saint John (NB)

● St. John's (NL)

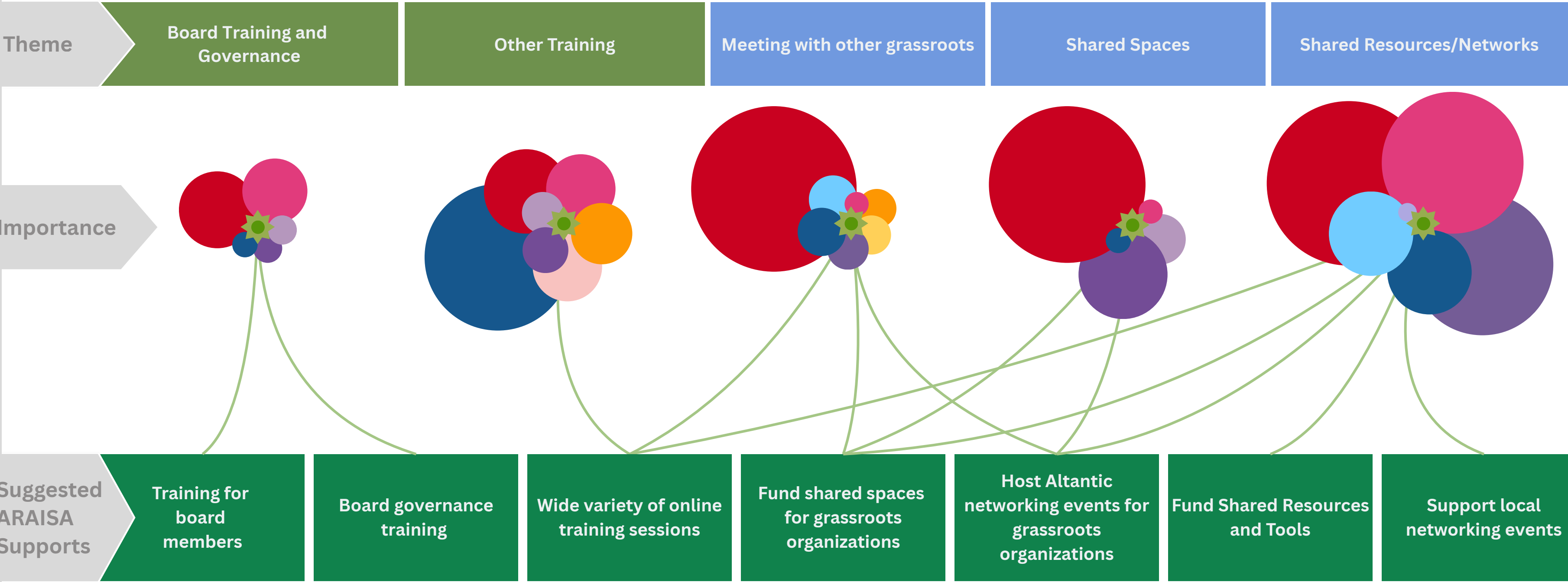
● Sydney (NS)

● Prince Edward Island

● Online / Mixed Regional Session

Training

Networking and Collaboration



In your previous experience of this project, what kind of collaborations and partnerships did you make and how were they helpful to the overall success of the project?

**What are some barriers,
challenges and even
some lessons you have
learned in the process of
this project?**

How have you been able to foster sustainability in the different types of support you have been providing to the grassroots, in past experiences or in the current project?



Questions

**How do you see yourself
collaborating with grassroots
organizations in your work?**

**THANK YOU
MERCI
HAY ČX^w Qə
WELA'LIN
MIIGWETCH
NITSÍNIIYI'TAKI**

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