



The Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership is an indirect service project that supports and strengthens the community's capacity to welcome, settle and integrate newcomers.

Supporting the Community Since 2014



PROGRESS REPORT 2024/2025

PREPARED BY: RRLIP PROJECT STAFF

STRUCTURE

The RRLIP is guided by a multi-sector Partnership Council and informed by an Immigrant Advisory Table. The IAT is comprised of individuals with lived experience as newcomers, in varying stages of settlement and integration. Working Groups and/or Advisory Committees support the implementation of the priorities, leveraging their skills and expertise, community connections, and passion to address the challenges and gaps. A small staff of three support the project, overseeing the implementation of the local priority activities, along with the RRLIP's daily tasks and operations.

PRIORITY AREAS

In 2024-25, the RRLIP focused on five key priority areas. These priorities were emerged from research conducted by RRLIP, including the Newcomer Survey (2022), the Mental and Emotional Wellness Survey (2023 - 24), and continuous community consultation with a diversity of community partners and other stakeholders.

- Cultural Bridging
- Social Connections
- Mental and Emotional Wellness
- Housing Education Support
- Employment

Please keep reading for more details on the RRLIP's activities under each of these priority areas.

The RRLIP works in collaboration and partnership with organizations and individuals to advance the identified local priorities.



Cultural Bridging

This priority is supported by the RRLIPs Anti-Racism/Discrimination Working Group (AR/DWG).

A member of AR/DWG introduced RRLIP to Recreating Community Together (RCT) through partnerships with On Cue Production and Dance Saskatchewan. As a result, RRLIP joined RCT organizing committee attending the bi-weekly meetings to plan various events. As part of this collaboration, RRLIP invited the AR/DWG members to attend the premiere of the film ***From the Margins*** on February 22, 2025, RRLIP also participated in the premiere. This featured a panel discussion with artists, community leaders, and the filmmaker.

RRLIP was also involved in organizing the March 21 event for the ***International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination***. Key events include a school preview performance on March 20, a main event on March 21 featuring multicultural performers and an Indigenous knowledge keeper, a film screening on March 22, and the Arts for Change conference on April 4-5.

The Regina Police Services generously donated funds to cover the costs for food for the March 21 event. RRLIP extended invitation to the City Mayor and a Counselor, both of whom attended the March 21 event. RRLIP will continue to engage in the RCT's initiatives.

Following the Art of Change Workshop, CARFAC SASK (Canadian Artists' Representation/le Front des artistes canadiens Saskatchewan Inc) contacted RRLIP regarding the Airbridge Newcomer Artists Research Project, which aims to gather information to better empower newcomer artists in Saskatchewan by bridging connections between newcomer artists, arts organizations, and immigration organizations. The first step in developing resources and furthering opportunities for newcomer artists. RRLIP shared this survey with its community partners to distribute it among their newcomer clients, which will help empower newcomer artist by building connections.

RRLIP held bi-monthly AR/DWG meetings throughout the fiscal year from May, 2024 till March, 2025. During this period, two new members representing the Government of Saskatchewan and Common Weal, joined the group.



Social Connections

The Social Connections priority is addressed by providing support and partnership to other community stakeholders, whenever possible

The Welcome Kabayan event:

RRLIP staff participated in the Welcome Kabayan! event (with Kabayan meaning fellow countrymen) held in September, 2024, at the RCMP Heritage Centre, hosted by the Philippine Association of Saskatchewan. The event aimed to welcome Filipino newcomers, both immigrants and temporary foreign workers to Regina, while promoting multiculturalism, unity, and inclusion. Rooted in the Filipino spirit of bayanihan (community cooperation). The event brought together diverse cultural groups through food, music, dance, and storytelling. RRLIP had an information table, allowing staff to connect with attendees, share resources, and build community relationships. The event also featured partnerships with local organizations to provide vital information and support to newcomers, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement.

South Saskatchewan Community Foundation (SSCF) Friendraiser Event 2024:

The South Saskatchewan Community Foundation hosted a Friendraiser event on Thursday, August 22, 2024 at the Conexus Arts Centre in Regina. RRLIP staff had the opportunity to attend the event, which served as a dynamic platform to foster connections among charities, donors, community members, and change makers from across Saskatchewan. This event provided organizations like RRLIP with a valuable opportunity to raise awareness, share stories of both success and challenge, and engage in thoughtful dialogue around community impact.

Prior to the main event, a Partner's Lunch & Learn was hosted by SSCF. This session brought together Community Foundation partners including charitable organizations and Friendraiser sponsors to explore strategies for enhancing collective impact. It also served as a valuable networking opportunity, encouraging the exchange of ideas and collaboration among diverse community stakeholders.



Social Connections, cont'd

Vital Signs Community Network (VSCN) Holiday Social 2024:

RRLIP team continued to attending Vital Signs Community Network (VSCN) meetings and events hosted by South Saskatchewan Community Foundation (SSCF). The Holiday Social event and Community Network was hosted at the Victoria Square Shopping Mall Community Centre. This annual event brought together members of the VSCN, Charity Fund holders, and representatives from diverse community organizations to celebrate the season and strengthen community connections. This event also offered engaging activities that fostered networking in a warm and festive atmosphere.

Cross-cultural connection events promotion: The RRLIP also promoted cultural and cross-cultural connection events through different channels including in the RRLIP blog, Facebook page and RRLIP-convened meetings, community partner meetings, etc. Examples of the events are: PowWow, Muslim Education Events, Chinese New Year, etc.),

Research Project Support: The RRLIP contributed a Letter of Support to a community partner's application for Saskatchewan Health Research Fund (SHRF) funding of a research project that will focus on preventing and addressing social isolation in elderly immigrants, refugees and other newcomers. RRLIP staff met virtually with the Primary Applicant to learn about the proposed project and assess our capacity to support, and shared information about this project with the Mental and Emotional Wellness Working.

RRLIP blog posts: RRLIP published weekly blog post and blog topics included: special awareness days, funding opportunities, the #ImmigrantsWork initiative, federal government immigration news, Newcomer Services Information Sessions, Aboriginal Storytelling Month, IRCC's Updated Fact Sheets available in multiple languages, Black History Month, International Women's Day event, International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination event and Employment Programs and other events.



Mental and Emotional Wellness

Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP) continued its commitment to supporting newcomer mental and emotional wellness by hosting bimonthly meetings of the Mental and Emotional Wellness Working Group (MEWWG). These meetings served as a platform for discussion, resource sharing, and collaboration among local service providers. A key focus this year was identifying gaps related to cultural stigma and addressing the specific mental wellness needs of newcomers.

This work builds on previous efforts. The MEWWG, supported by RRLIP, brings together representatives from settlement organizations, umbrella groups, and mental health service providers. RRLIP uses the term “mental and emotional wellness” rather than “mental health,” based on the guidance of its Immigrant Advisory Table (IAT) and community partners. This language shift aims to reduce stigma and improve clarity within newcomer communities.

RRLIP continued sharing the results of the MEWWG survey conducted in 2023–24, focused on mental and emotional wellness supports for newcomers and also resources related to cultural stigma/mental health and mental and emotional wellness reference sheet, available on the RRLIP website.

- *Survey Report* is available on RRLIP website under RRLIP 2023-2024 Reports.
- RRLIP produced a **resource on stigmas around mental health** in brochure and one-sheet handout formats.
- Mental and Emotional Wellness quick reference sheet



Housing Education Support

This priority is supported by the long standing RRLIP-convened **Canadian Housing Advisory Committee (CHAC)**. Members include settlement agencies, housing service providers, a local realtor, provincial and municipal housing authority representatives, and local shelter staff.

Fire Safety Guide:

Following fire safety concerns raised during RRLIP's Partnership Council meeting in February 2024, Regina Fire & Protective Services (RFPS) was invited to present at a CHAC meeting. The session gathered feedback from CHAC members and integrated RFPS insights to enhance fire safety measures in RRLIP's Housing Adaptation Checklist. Key recommendations included adding electrical safety measures and building connections with rental housing providers.

The RRLIP team incorporated RFPS's feedback into a draft Fire Safety Guide; meetings were scheduled with RFPS on multiple occasions for this document review. This revised draft was shared with CHAC members for further input. The finalized guide, developed from the Housing Adaptation Checklist, addressed gaps identified by RFPS in fire safety information for newcomers. RRLIP integrated all feedback and shared the guide with the community partners and on its website, ensuring broader accessibility and awareness.

Revised Educational Toolkit for Rental Housing Providers:

The Program & Operations Coordinator for Rental Housing Saskatchewan (RHSK) connected with RRLIP regarding their plans to co-host a Renting to Newcomers lunch workshop with RRLIP in Regina in April 2025. In preparation for this workshop, RRLIP collaborated with RHSK to make some revisions in the *Renting to Newcomers Toolkit*, developed in 2023 in collaboration with CHAC and RHKS. The updated version of this toolkit will be accessible to RRLIP community partners and the wider community through its website.



Housing Education Support, cont'd

RentEd program:

The Canadian Housing Advisory Committee (CHAC) prioritizes tenant education to support newcomers in securing and retaining housing in Regina. Last fiscal year, RRLIP staff collaborated with Camponi Housing Inc., a non-profit organization that offers trainings in the RentEd program – a Renter's Education Course that supports renters in maintaining successful tenancies. Camponi also trains trainers to deliver the RentEd course.

Currently, RentEd is being offered in the City by Regina Housing Authority (RHA) and the facilitator from this is an employees from RHA. This program is delivered through different organizations, through the Nest, Ritzes and Friendship Centers. The program has been running successfully for approximately one year. There is such a high demand. Due to current staff capacity, RHA is limited to scheduling one training session per month. RHA could offer train-the-trainer programs if other agencies express interest.

Housing Presentation at SAISIA's Urban + Rural Sector Call

Saskatchewan Association of Immigration Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA) implemented a new approach by merging the urban and rural quarterly meetings. This adjustment was designed to focus on specific topics, better address the community challenges and opportunities. The first topic was Housing, and RRLIP was invited to deliver a presentation in September 2024. This presentation highlighted the RRLIP's work on the housing priority, Canadian Housing Advisory Committee (CHAC) and its initiatives on housing, and various resources RRLIP has developed related to housing.



Employment

The Employment priority is supported through the efforts of the Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership's (RRLIP) Labour Market Working Group (LMWG), which has played an active role in supporting newcomer employment since the early years of the RRLIP.

Refugees Hiring Event (RHE):

The Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP), in collaboration with its Labour Market Working Group (LMWG), organized a specialized hiring event on November 7, 2024 aimed at connecting refugees and displaced persons with meaningful local employment opportunities. Originally launched by Starbucks Canada in 2015 to support the hiring of Syrian refugees, Refugee Hiring Events (RHEs) are now being expanded by World Education Services (WES) and Jumpstart Refugee Talent.

This event followed a strategic model that matched pre-screened, job-ready refugee and displaced candidates with actual local job openings. On the day of the event, participating employers conducted real-time interviews and made on-the-spot hiring decisions. Out of 42 invited candidates, 35 attended, with 20 progressing to either being hired or moving to a second round of interviews. Additionally, 5 walk-in candidates participated, of whom 5 were either hired or advanced to the next interview stage. The event's success was the result of coordination between the LMWG planning committee, WES, and Jumpstart Refugee Talent, ensuring an impactful experience for both employers and job seekers.

Refugee Job Agenda Roundtable

RRLIP participated in two Refugee Job Agenda Roundtable meetings hosted by its partner, World Education Services (WES). During the December roundtable, RRLIP shared the outcome of the Refugee Hiring Event (RHE), while other panelists highlighted the importance for AI education and the challenges faced by newcomers in the job market.



Employment cont'd

Refugee Job Agenda Roundtable cont'd.....

At the March meeting, key presentations included the outlook of 2025 Labour Market , the 2024 Outcomes Report, and updates on Refugee Hiring Events. The discussions covered Jumpstart's new refugee job portal, a proposed employer recognition award, and efforts to strengthen Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

Founded 2015, the Refugee Jobs Agenda Roundtable serves a platform for over 150 Canadian employers, employment and immigrant-serving agencies, and government representatives to enhance refugees' access to meaningful employment that leverages their skills and talents. Led by co-chairs the Honorable Andrew Cardozo, and strategically coordinated by World Education Services (WES), the Roundtable is a multi-sectoral network, not a formal organization. It was initially created to support Syrian refugees by implementing practical, employment-focused initiatives in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

ImmigrantsWork Project 2023-2025

The RRLIP was one of five Canadian communities partnering with World Education Services (WES) and local employment service providers through the #ImmigrantsWork initiative to help employers address labour market challenges by hiring and retaining immigrant and newcomer talent in meaningful employment. Building on the success of an earlier pilot, Phase 2 expanded into new communities, including Regina, where the initiative was supported by a multi-sectoral group of Foundational Partners. Together, they engaged local employers to co-create practical, community-driven solutions.

Key project outputs included:

- **A Video Series:** RRLIP coordinated Regina Employers for #IW Video Series with WES in May 2024. Filming of two Regina employers featured in this series were Venvi Renaissance by Cogir and Regina Work Prep Centre (RWPC).
- **Social Media Outreach (LinkedIn, Facebook):** LinkedIn Outreach campaign phase 1 was launched from Sep - Nov 2024 and #ImmigrantsWork Employer video series campaign phase 2 has been launched from Jan - March, 2025.
- **Training series:** WES hosted two training series; the first two sessions were for service providers and focused on how to do more effective employer engagement. The last two sessions were for employers, offering them useful information as they seek to be more inclusive in hiring and retention.
- **Development of an Employer Navigator**, an online and human assessment and referral tool designed to support inclusive hiring practices. At an in-person workshop on November 5th, 2024, WES and RRLIP presented the Employer Navigator concept to Regina employers, asked for their input on the resource list. This tool will be launched at the end of June 2025.

Day to Day Work at the RRLIP Project

In 2024-2025, RRLIP staff...

- sent and responded to thousands of emails as part of conversations with individuals and organizations related to settlement and integration in Regina, in SK, and beyond.
- met with community partners and other stakeholders on 239 occasions, through 1-to-1 meetings, small and large group meetings, community events, conferences and other gatherings, both virtual and in-person.
- received over 52 community inquiries through our website from individuals and organizations, requesting assistance or information on local service agencies and other supports.
- RRLIP's funder, Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada (IRCC), launched the 2024 Call for Proposal (CFP) in Nov 2023 and RRLIP submitted its application. Negotiations for this CFP began in Dec 2024, and RRLIP Project Managers worked through Feb 2025 to finalize the negotiation process and the Grant Agreement was signed by IRCC.
- developed over 53 project blogs that highlighted IRCC funded programs and services and other pertinent local programming to support newcomer settlement in Regina.
- RRLIP also held 212 team meetings to plan and execute the project deliverables.
- maintained the project website as a tool of support for the community. The website can be accessed at: www.rrlip.ca
- the Project Manager and Asst. Project Manager conducted interviews for the Community Partnership and Engagement Coordinator's position and offered a term contract to provide coverage for an RRLIP team member on short term medical leave.
- the RRLIP Manager conducted onboarding training sessions to the RRLIP Community Partnership and Engagement Coordinator. These sessions covered various topics including RRLIP Schedule A activities, Community Plan, RRLIP 2025 - 26 work plan, status of Working Groups, RRLIP convened meetings and resources.
- supported the work of the Canadian Housing Advisory Committee, Labour Market Working Group, Anti-Racism & Discrimination Working Group, Mental and Emotional Wellness Working group, and also the on-going efforts of the RRLIP Partnership Council and Immigrant Advisory Table.
- provided on-going support to the local settlement sector through the coordination of meetings (bi-weekly, then monthly) for settlement staff to share information, discuss challenges, and provide support to one another.

All of these activities are part of the RRLIP's work to strengthen and support the community of Regina's capacity to welcome, settle and integrate newcomers.



Participation on Community Tables

In addition to the committees and working groups that the RRLIP convenes, RRLIP staff also attend and share information with many tables convened by community partners, including:

- Al Ritchie Inter-Agency Committee
- Regina Early Years Family Centre Advisory Committee
- South Saskatchewan Community Foundation Advisory Committee
- University of Regina Online Therapy Unit Community Advisory Panel
- Partnership for Positive Aging
- WRAPCAP Partnership Meeting

The RRLIP participates on these community tables to support the broader community in being more welcoming of newcomers and to ensure newcomer challenges and opportunities are considered in the planning and priority setting of each group/entity.

Community Plan 2025-2026

The development of the Community Plan 2025-26 took place in the last month of the reporting period. Consultations began in November 2024 during the RRLIP's 10th Anniversary/Community Forum and continued with discussions in the RRLIP's working group until January 2025. The discussions focused on RRLIP's priorities, strengths and assets, needs, community collaboration and partnerships. Input collected during these consultations were consolidated in February. The draft plan was shared with the Partnership Council for their feedback in March and the final plan was completed by April, 2025.

The priorities and activities in this revised Community Plan were also informed by the Newcomer Survey of 2022, the Mental and Emotional Wellness Survey of 2023/2024, and augmented by input received by RRLIP-convened tables and at the community forum. In addition, service provider, newcomer and other key stakeholder feedback was considered. Implementation of Community Plan activities rely on the collaboration of RRLIP convened working groups and tables, however, the plans success will depend on the engagement of the entire community.



NAARS Evaluation

The RRLIP team convened an evaluation committee meeting in June 2024, inviting the researchers to present the finding of the NAARS evaluation, which was followed by a committee discussion. The NAARS evaluation summary report was subsequently shared with the committee members in September 2024.

June 2023 IRCC requested that the RRLIP coordinates an evaluation activity regarding a pilot project called the Saskatchewan and Manitoba Centralized NAARS Model with ZONE Referral Protocol. As a result, the RRLIP mobilized an evaluation committee consisting of settlement agencies from Regina, Saskatoon and Winnipeg (where the NAARS and Zone pilot project was implemented), coordinated evaluation committee meetings to discuss the evaluation project details and processes, and provided support to the evaluation committee in their task of choosing an evaluator for the project. The chosen evaluation team conducted consultations with the agencies (and some of their clients) who have implemented the pilot project, to understand if the intended outcomes were met.

Annual Evaluation Survey

The Regina Region Local Immigration Partnerships Project does offer indirect services, it is the organizations and individuals we support and partner with, that evaluate the impact of the RRLIP Project on an annual basis.

Sample feedback from the RRLIP's 2024-2025 evaluation survey include:
While at an RRLIP-convened table...

- 72% of respondents reported they learned new information from other individuals and/or organizations that furthered their work with newcomers.
- 76 % of respondents reported they collaborated with other individuals/organizations that furthered their work with newcomers.

96% of respondents reported they believed it is important to have a Local Immigration Partnership in our community.

Survey Respondent Comments:

"I greatly appreciate the contribution that RRLIP makes to the community. Thank you so much everyone."

"RRLIP is a fantastic organization, Regina is lucky is to have such a committed group of individuals supporting our newcomers."



Acknowledgement

The RRLIP would also like to acknowledge and thank its host agency, Regina Open Door Society Inc., and its funder: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

RRLIP would like to also acknowledge its convened tables, working groups, settlement agencies and service organizations, and the broader community.

Vision: Regina welcomes newcomers, values and celebrates diversity and supports the integration of all residents.

Mission: The Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP) and its member organizations will educate, collaborate and partner for the benefit of newcomers in Regina.

