

## PARTNERSHIP-WIDE

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Champion advocacy and engage with elected officials, policy and systems leaders</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urged the Federal and Ontario Governments to invest in Waterloo Region's immigration priorities in oral and written submissions to the 2021 Budget Consultations.</li> <li>In a roundtable with the federal Minister of Immigration, shared Waterloo Region's priorities regarding immigration planning and service supports.</li> <li>Advocated for immigrant-responsiveness within the regional pandemic response across sectors, contributing to a developing health equity approach, disaggregated data collection/dissemination, attention to specific challenges, language access and culturally appropriate responses. Supported ROWs development of community outreach to diverse communities, multi-lingual resources and accessibility of information on prevention measures, vaccine and more.</li> <li>Advised the Regional Chair and Kitchener Mayor's Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion on anti-racism developments. With the Mayor's Task Force, informing disaggregated data strategy, equitable hiring and retention strategies and community fund development.</li> <li>Presented the 2020-2025 Community Action Plan to the Kitchener and Cambridge City Councils, securing their endorsement, support and ongoing engagement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Build awareness of the Immigration Partnership and beneficial impact of immigration</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, partners, staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through Council/SG partner and staff engagement in pandemic tables, grew awareness of IP. Awareness and responsiveness to immigrant impacts growing.</li> <li>Significant social media engagement via Twitter and Facebook to promote the importance and contributions of immigrants to Canada. Attention to immigrants as essential workers in the context of the pandemic. Approx. 3,500 followers and 162,000 impressions across these platforms in the period.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p>Partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked with Council to embed an anti-racist approach into IPs governance.</li> </ul>

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<p>Lead collaborative learning and community education</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) membership and continued to develop IPs Data and Evaluation Strategy to align with the new CAP and incorporate anti-racism lens.</li> <li>Conducted IP's 2020 Partner Survey, with EAC, including new anti-racism focus. Data being analyzed and targeted reports being drafted. Information gathering with key partners to update top languages of translation, feeding into public health communications work.</li> <li>Engaged the Centre for Community Based Research to conduct an independent evaluation of IP's employer engagement work. Evaluation completed, results discussed with WSG and Council.</li> <li>Grew partner capacity for anti-racism work by hosting an Anti-Racism 101 training for all partners in mid-Nov in implementation of <a href="#">IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</a>. Follow-up training planned.</li> <li>Helped build data/research knowledge and capacity among community partners (i.e. shared 1. analysis of Muslim women responses to IP's 2019 Immigrant Survey with Coalition of Muslim Women of KW, 2. profile of immigrants/refugees in WR to staff at GRH, 3. demographic questions with Children and Youth Planning Table, etc.).</li> <li>Shared experience/advised Local Immigration Partnerships across Canada on various topics (e.g. National Secretariat project on increasing use of settlenet.org national discussion board; PEI LIP re housing actions; Hamilton LIP re temporary resident data; Grey-Bruce LIP re interpretation actions; Durham LIP re performance measurement framework; Southwest Ontario LIPs re advocacy, employer engagement, municipal engagement, etc.)</li> <li>Regular updates to the Immigration portal, with 9,513 visits by 7,587 unique visitors and 725 visits to the COVID landing page. Eleven Weekly Updates on Covid-19 and Immigration to 499 subscribers, with a 36% open rate and 1,738 opens. Shared relevant research reports via the Immigration Weekly to grow community knowledge of immigration matters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b> Break down silos within the Partnership and the community to promote immigrant success</p>	<p>SG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging a Council and Steering Group-wide approach to implementation of <a href="#">IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</a> and evaluation framework development.</li> <li>Continued to share resources, connections, provide support between BSG and SSG partners and pandemic groups on language and interpretation issues.</li> <li>Growing collaboration and alignment by regular staff engagement with WR Crime Prevention Council, Children and Youth Planning Table and Wellbeing Waterloo Region peers (focus on aligning anti-racism/equity in governance, data and evaluation, public education, and more), and other Local Immigration Partnerships across Ontario/Canada.</li> </ul>

## SETTLE STEERING GROUP

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<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Develop communication strategies and tools to simplify service systems and pathways for immigrants</b></p>	<p>ROW Citizen Service and Public Health, settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IP partners and staff continue to work with Ontario Health Team KW4 region partners in assessing critical needs in refugee/newcomer health – focusing on mental health, interpretation, and pandemic-related needs. In the Interpretation Services work stream, developed a common <a href="#">interpretation commitment statement</a> - will be seeking formal commitment by KW4 OHT partners. Continuing outreach to primary health care providers to register/use free LHIN-funded interpretation service. Working to add interpretation to the Emergency Department internal referral system to streamline the process and increase interpretation usage in hospital settings.</li> <li>With Reception House, engaging with a Wilfrid Laurier University Political Science class to further local research on language interpretation processes at local organizations, municipalities, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Drive collaboration and innovation within the settlement sector</b></p>	<p>YMCA, KWMC, Reception House, Carizon, MCRS, IP staff</p> <p>IP partners and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported YMCA, KWMC and Reception House in exploring service coordination and integration initiatives. Have developed a shared list of staff at each organization (with languages spoken by settlement workers) and a list of programs – both to enhance inter-organization knowledge and referrals. Are exploring electronic options for sharing documents and staff communication between organizations. These three organizations hosted the first of ongoing quarterly brown bag lunches for their frontline staff to build relationships and collective learning. Are developing a coordinated pathway/process for GARs that move to WR from other communities in Canada.</li> <li>Hosted shared learning events when needs are identified at SSG or action group tables (e.g. upcoming learning session about London program to reach out to and support landlords re. renting to newcomers; OW/ODSP information session for frontline staff serving newcomers – 40 attendees; hosted a meeting of local settlement organizations and the College Boreal that has recently been funded to provide francophone settlement services in the WR area)</li> <li>Staff and partners continue to participate on advisory groups for provincial/national research projects (e.g. Allies in Refugee Integration exploring settlement-private sponsor collaboration in Ontario, Virtual Mental Health Access national research project)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Leverage service providers and planning</b></p>	<p>Settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners and staff are supporting <a href="#">KW4</a> Ontario Health Team (OHT) groups, which have identified refugees as a priority population, to determine health, mental health, and language interpretation resources and pathways for refugees. Part of the KW4 OHT Refugee Health working group and the Refugee Mental Health Working</li> </ul>

<p><b>tables as effective immigrant supports through strong relationships and collaboration</b></p>		<p>Group. IP and LHIN staff to co-lead KW4 Interpretation Services working group comprised of many partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosted a collaborative meeting with newcomer-serving agencies, International Student Advisory Group, WLU and Conestoga College to explore services available to international students. Setting up Microsoft Teams platform for ongoing connections.</li> <li>• Maintained connection to and contributed to various housing community action tables, the WR Oral Health Coalition and other community tables to bring forward immigrant perspectives.</li> <li>• Local housing providers met regularly through IP’s Immigrant Housing Working Group to share and problem-solve.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">One partner notes that due to connections made through this group 9 large families they serve were approved for the Ontario Portable Housing Benefit enabling them to move into housing that is affordable for them.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Engage networks of private stakeholders in supporting immigrants</b></p>	<p>Settlement and other partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on IPs <a href="#">video series</a> featuring Landlord Award recipients, IP, Reception House and Compass/MCRS are developing a series of videos about newcomers finding home in Waterloo Region.</li> <li>• Connected a volunteer interested in providing creative writing workshops for newcomer youth with local agencies – as a result Carizon will be offering this workshop for local newcomer youth.</li> </ul>

## WORK STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Develop campaigns and tools to amplify the value proposition and economic contribution of immigrants to employers</b></p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<p>Ongoing placement of strategic ads in Chamber newsletters and directories, social media and virtual events for awareness building and message sharing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upcoming full page ad in the Cambridge Chamber Spectrum</li> <li>• Awareness building of IP and immigrant talent opportunities via event partnerships with the Greater KW Chamber.</li> <li>• Collaborated with Business and Economic Support Team WR (BESTWR) on webinar for restaurant/food sector, increasing awareness of the work of Immigration Partnership.</li> <li>• Hosted booths at virtual job fairs to connect with employers and boost awareness.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Foster cohesive service to employers and immigrant job-seekers across sectors and the talent spectrum</b></p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked closely with employment service partners and employers to build the bridge for immigrants to access meaningful employment.</li> <li>• Continued to work closely with the Workforce Planning Board (WFPB) to market their new FindyourJob.ca job board</li> <li>• Worked with a WFPB steering team to prepare the last of three job fairs for spring 2021. The first two were held in Oct and Nov, with around 20 employers and over 250 job seekers each.</li> <li>• The Talent Hub task group is operating again. They decided to explore existing platforms or programs that can be enhanced to create the hub's foundation, hearing from Magnet, FindYourJob.ca and Immploy (forthcoming). The group will continue to explore options through a partnership with World Education Services (WES), which will include review of the hub concept and other work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Engage networks of employers to hire and retain immigrants</b></p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WSG's role is to bring awareness to employers that immigrants are invaluable to their organization, that they are here and ready to work. Also to look at processes and systems that will allow for employers to easily access this talent and make connections. During COVID the message stays the same: Immigrants are a great source of talent. Engaging employer partners to see what their current hiring needs is challenging but many sectors are still hiring and are in need of talent. Sometimes the roles are not what immigrants are looking for but we continue to share any job postings received within our network so that a bridge can be created for immigrants to access employers.</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working closely with the Workforce Planning Board on the final (of 3) virtual job fairs to create opportunities for connections to employers.</li> <li>• Continue to participate in Reception House's Working Together Program to recommend and create connections to employers to create job opportunities for refugees.</li> <li>• Worked with KW Chamber to provide a virtual training on anti-racism in the workplace for approximately 50 employers.</li> <li>• We are working with the KW Chamber on 5 more webinars. IP determines the topics, theme, questions and recruits panel members. The next one will be focused on the Working Together Project and what English Language supports are available to employers.</li> <li>• We will be working with both the Greater KW Chamber and Cambridge Chamber on immigrant related events during 2021.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Collaborate with leaders and organizations (public, private and not-for-profit) to foster immigrant attraction, employment and entrepreneurship</b></p>	IP staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked closely with regional economic development reps via Best WR. Continue to address various sectors and what they are facing during COVID and how this group can support them.</li> <li>• Continued to deepen connections and interactions with economic development during COVID with City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener and City of Cambridge ED reps.</li> <li>• Participated in regular 'All Hands On' economic development meeting with business and community leaders sharing status of supports and advocating through COVID.</li> <li>• Continued to work with the Small Business Centre, promote their workshops and make connections with immigrant service providers to improve supports for immigrant entrepreneurs.</li> <li>• Continued to partner with other Immigration Partnerships across Southwestern Ontario to deliver webinars for employers. There will be four delivered during 2021, with the next focused on what employers need to know about hiring International Students.</li> <li>• Continued to work with the Job Developer Group and CELC (Community Employment and Literacy Council)</li> <li>• Entered a partnership with Worldwide Education Services (WES) on a program called Immigrants Works. Originally launched as a national social media campaign, numerous programs are now being delivered as an extension. We have begun work closely beginning with WES with the ultimate goal to launch an employer playbook for Waterloo Region re: hiring immigrants and more. We are currently meeting bi-weekly with WES team to develop a work plan, meetings with foundational partners, and an employer workshop. This WES initiative will review IP's work with employer engagement activity, the hub and more. It will build on and enhance the work which we have already been doing.</li> </ul>

## BELONG STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Build connections, capacity and civic engagement among ethno-cultural groups and the community at large to increase immigrant influence in policy making and social connectedness</b></p>	<p>BSG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethno-cultural groups list being updated.</li> <li>• Ongoing phone and zoom meetings to build a rapport and relationship with ethno-cultural leaders and members. Many ethnocultural organizations are closed temporarily and are not delivering their services, making connection difficult.</li> <li>• Participated in the Cambridge Mobilization Team (CMT) to maintain connections and share information. Helping bring anti-racism training to CMT members.</li> <li>• Ongoing connection with groups/organizations/individuals making reassurance phone calls to address isolation and offer help and support.</li> <li>• Recruited and supported 12 ethno-cultural leaders to make a personalized video to contribute to the Welcome Cambridge Virtual event in Nov.</li> <li>• Ongoing connections and network building with the Indigenous community leaders.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Work with municipalities and other public sector partners as leaders and advocates to strengthen immigrant welcoming, inclusion and engagement</b></p>	<p>City of Waterloo, City of Cambridge, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported and contributed to the planning of the City of Cambridge's Nov Welcome Cambridge Virtual Event.</li> <li>• Supporting City of Waterloo to develop a Social Inclusion Recognition Toolkit for senior/older adults.</li> <li>• Continued support to the Waterloo Region Police Service to host a First Response Service information session for immigrants. On hold for in-person gathering.</li> <li>• Continued to advocate for equity of access issues and interpretation/translation services via pandemic response groups like Psychosocial and Spiritual Working Group etc. Advocating for language to be treated with similar importance as accessibility or other equity lens' in service planning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Increase public support for immigration, and action to address racism, discrimination and foster immigrant belonging through campaigns and initiatives</b></p>	<p>IP Staff and Public Education Working Group (PEWG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosted the fourth annual Waterloo Region Global Migration Film Festival (GMFF) in Nov/Dec 2020 in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of Films selected - 7</li> <li>○ Number of Screenings - 13</li> <li>○ Total Numbers of Participants/audience - 270</li> <li>○ Number of Filmmakers attended - 5</li> <li>○ Number of partners/hosts – 9, including City of Cambridge, Idea Exchange, Greenway-Chaplin Community Centre, Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo Region, Waterloo Public Library, StudioHere, KW Art Gallery, International Migration Research Centre and City of Kitchener.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ IP hosted two screenings: 1<sup>st</sup> screening was on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> for IP Council, BSG, WSG, SSG, and IP staff. This film highlighted the subject of trauma and migration. 2<sup>nd</sup> film screening was on Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> for IP and the community at large. This film explored the intersection of disability, sport, migration and ambition. Both were screened on the Zoom webinar digital platform in partnership with Waterloo Public Library. The filmmakers attended the film screening as the guest speaker.</li> <li>● BSG reviewed the overview, goals, and strategies of the Community Action Plan 2020-2025. 2021 plans are currently being elaborated. The intention for this year is to be proactive and reactive to support and respond to social isolation in ethnocultural groups.</li> <li>● Building capacity to address hate crime, hate incidents, racism at the individual, organizational, and community level by attending related workshops and trainings.</li> <li>● The PEWG continues to develop anti-racism strategies, resources and campaign – a #RacialEquityWR.</li> <li>● Ongoing contributions to the webpage with anti-racism work/resources/connectors taking place in Waterloo Region. The webpage is housed on the IP website <a href="#">RacialEquityWR</a></li> <li>● Staff and partners continue to be part of the Finding Hope Movement planning/information committee. Webpage: <a href="#">Finding Hope</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Collaborate with systems and community tables and leaders</b></p>	<p>Municipal partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to participate in the Pandemic Psychosocial and Spiritual Supports Working Group and Cambridge Mobilization Team.</li> <li>● Continue to be a member of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Wellbeing Waterloo Anti-Racism Advisory Working Group</li> </ul>

## Welcome New Partners!

**SSG:** Sophia Stanberry (Region of Waterloo, Citizen Services), Wisam Osman (Coalition of Muslim Women KW), Rozina Shaheen (Muslim Social Services), Jean De Dieu Basabose (College Boreal), Charlene Mak (International Student Advisors Group).

**BSG:** Chaitali Maybhate (Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank), Renu Bhandari (Focus for Ethnic Women), Fauzia Wafai (Muslim Women of Cambridge and Islamic Center of North America), Katie Hill (Sustainable Waterloo Region), Serap Tezgel (Volunteer Action Centre student), Aisha Wovenu (Carizon), Marwa Gebeil (Kinbridge Community Association).

# Context and cross-referrals

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## Immigration Data and Trends

- Permanent resident arrivals in Waterloo Region were down by 36% in the first 11 months of 2020 compared to 2019 (2,790 permanent residents arrived Jan-Nov 2020 compared to 4,350 in 2019). ([IRCC data, 2020](#))
- IRCC announced its plan to welcome over 1.2 million permanent residents to Canada from 2021-2023. This is an increase of nearly 200,000 people over previous levels to account for 2020 arrival deficits and support economic recovery. ([IRCC, 2021-2023 Immigration Levels Plan](#))
- The [Jan 2021 Supplementary Mandate Letter to the Minister of Immigration](#) focuses on:
  - Bringing newcomers to Canada to drive economic growth and recovery, per the Levels Plan,
  - Creating pathways to permanent residency for those who provided health care or performed other essential services during the pandemic.
  - Continue exploring pathways to permanent residency and citizenship for temporary foreign workers.
  - Fully support and protect workers who are vulnerable to COVID-19 and secure labour to fill workforce gaps in farming and food processing.

## Contributors to success

- Partners have been keen to know what others are doing and partner when possible (though this is tempered by the demands of simply adapting to this quickly changing environment).
- Solid foundation of partnership and collaboration within IP has enabled us to move quickly to engage in pandemic response and address gaps.

## Challenges and how we're responding

- Partners have been challenged to continue programs virtually but have moved many programs/events to virtual space using multiple methods. Outreach to individuals who are not connected to specific programs or who lack tech access/skills to connect virtually is a challenge but partners are reaching out on a one-on-one basis. Virtual programming presents some challenges and also many opportunities.

## How Council or other Steering Groups can support

- Refer employers seeking talent to WSG.
- Participate in IP anti-racism training opportunities.

## Other community initiatives and how they relate

- The Region of Waterloo and cities of Kitchener and Waterloo are building up staff capacity to address equity, anti-racism and diversity. We are following developments and looking to align.
- Regional Council is working towards a regional anti-racism plan. This relates directly to the Belong Steering Group's goal in CAP 2020-2025 that "Immigration is widely supported and racism and discrimination are addressed through a regional Anti-Racism Strategy." It struck a community advisory committee and we continue to explore alignment.
- Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support, which provides support for refugee claimants in Waterloo Region and area has changed their name to Compass Refugee Centre as of February 2021 (<https://mcrs.ca>).
- Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre is merging with the Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre – a very welcome development to stability of health supports for vulnerable newcomers.

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<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Build awareness of the Immigration Partnership and beneficial impact of immigration</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, partners, staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through Council/SG partner and staff engagement in pandemic tables and a March presentation to the Rotary Club of Kitchener, grew awareness of IP, immigration and the experiences of immigrants in Waterloo Region.</li> <li>Significant social media engagement via Twitter and Facebook to promote the importance and contributions of immigrants to Canada. Approx. 3,700 followers and 153,000 impressions across these platforms in the period.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Lead collaborative learning and community education</b></p>	<p>Partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to grow partner capacity for anti-racism work by hosting an Anti-Racism 102 training for all partners (ongoing from Mar-Jun) in implementation of <a href="#">IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</a>. Excellent engagement and feedback on the first sessions.</li> <li>Staff participated national Metropolis immigration conference to bring learning to our work.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the EAC, continued to develop IPs Data and Evaluation Strategy to align with the new CAP and incorporate anti-racism lens. Developed the 2021 Immigrant Survey (coming in June).</li> <li>• Shared the 2020 Partner Survey findings with IP Council. Planned a virtual session to share findings further and discuss implications.</li> <li>• Published 2021 reference guide on <a href="#">Top Languages for Interpretation &amp; Translation</a> to inform Public Health vaccine outreach efforts and community efforts generally. Provided KW Multicultural Centre a list of interpretation language gaps identified while gathering top languages list info.</li> <li>• Helped build partner data/research knowledge and capacity. Shared 1. refugee numbers with faith-based private sponsorship group, 2. ethnic profile of WR to inform Children and Youth Planning Table youth survey, 3. number of newcomers working on COVID frontline for Compass, 4. consulted Region of Waterloo Housing staff re. data disaggregation and ethnicity survey questions, 5. immigrant retention rates to YMCA, 6. permanent resident arrivals data to KPL for strategic planning, etc. Participated with other Waterloo Region community collaboratives in discussions about equity measurement.</li> <li>• Led a collaborative discussion with Local Immigration Partnerships across Canada on possible research collaboration between LIPs – possible community of practice and ongoing sharing of experience/resources may develop. Consulted with staff at other LIPs regarding theory of change models and performance measurement.</li> <li>• Regular updates to the Immigration portal, with 6,142 visits by 5,134 unique visitors and 427 visits to the COVID landing page. Eight Weekly Updates on Covid-19 and Immigration to 539 subscribers, with a 33% open rate and 1,266 opens. Shared relevant research reports via the Immigration Weekly to grow community knowledge of immigration matters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b> Break down silos within the Partnership and the community to promote immigrant success</p>	<p>SG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing engagement of a Council and Steering Group-wide approach to implementation of <a href="#">IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</a> and evaluation framework development.</li> <li>• Continued to share resources, connections, provide support between BSG and SSG partners and pandemic groups on language and interpretation issues.</li> <li>• Growing collaboration and alignment by regular staff engagement with WR Crime Prevention Council, Children and Youth Planning Table and Wellbeing Waterloo Region peers (focus on aligning anti-racism/equity in governance, data and evaluation, public education, and more), and other Local Immigration Partnerships across Ontario/Canada.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Drive collaboration and innovation within the settlement sector</b></p>	<p>YMCA, KWMC, Reception House, Carizon, MCRS, IP staff</p> <p>IP partners and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported YMCA, KWMC and Reception House in exploring service coordination and integration initiatives. Developed a shared list of staff at each organization (with languages spoken by settlement workers) and a list of programs to enhance inter-organization knowledge and referrals. Set up a Microsoft Teams collaborative space for sharing documents, discussions and building relationships. Developing a coordinated pathway/process for GARs that move to WR from other communities in Canada. Convened weekly executive leadership meetings to facilitate collaboration and alignment.</li> <li>Hosted shared learning events related to needs identified at SSG or action group tables (e.g. learning session about London program to reach out to and support landlords re. renting to newcomers; planning a session about summer camp programs to inform outreach to newcomer and low-English ability communities)</li> <li>Staff and partners continue to participate on advisory groups for provincial/national research projects (e.g. Allies in Refugee Integration exploring settlement-private sponsor collaboration in Ontario, Virtual Mental Health Access national research project)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Leverage service providers and planning tables as effective immigrant supports through strong</b></p>	<p>Settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners and staff are supporting <a href="#">KW4</a> Ontario Health Team (OHT) groups, which have identified refugees as a priority population, to determine health, mental health, and language interpretation resources and pathways for refugees. Part of the KW4 OHT Refugee Health working group and the Refugee Mental Health Working Group. IP and LHIN staff to co-lead KW4 Interpretation Services working group comprised of many partners. IP contribution also included research into interpretation requirements by professional health colleges/associations to be incorporated into local communications/advocacy.</li> </ul>

relationships and collaboration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up Microsoft Teams collaborative space for ongoing sharing and referrals between local newcomer-serving agencies, International Student Advisory Group, WLU and Conestoga College to support international students. Shared related events, information and agencies for referrals.</li> <li>• Maintained connection to housing and other community action tables to bring forward immigrant perspectives. Staff &amp; partners participated in Leadership Waterloo Region’s April 2021 Affordable Housing Café.</li> <li>• Local housing providers met regularly through IP’s Immigrant Housing Working Group to share and problem-solve.</li> <li>• Language learning providers (now also including francophone College Boreal) meet periodically to share and problem-solve.</li> <li>• Advocated with Ontario 211 information service to enhance interpretation/translation access to their services (email/chat/web)</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p>Engage networks of private stakeholders in supporting immigrants</p>	Settlement and other partners, IP staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on IPs <a href="#">video series</a> featuring Landlord Award recipients, IP, Reception House and Compass are developing a series of videos about newcomers finding home in Waterloo Region.</li> <li>• Connected 1) a volunteer interested in providing financial literacy workshops for newcomers, to local immigrant-serving agencies, 2) a Rotary volunteer interested in offering train-the-trainer sessions for newcomer-serving agencies on Zoom supports for newcomers, 3) ESL teacher looking for a speaker to address vaccine hesitancy within her class to Public Health</li> <li>• A realtor in IP’s Immigrant Housing Working Group undertook an informal survey of fellow realtors (36 respondents, shared with 11,700 individuals) about their challenges/hesitations with renting to newcomers, then shared with the working group to inform planning.</li> </ul>

## WORK STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who’s Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p>Develop campaigns and tools to amplify the value proposition and economic contribution of immigrants to employers</p>	WSG members/IP staff	<p>Ongoing placement of strategic ads in Chamber newsletters and directories, social media and virtual events for awareness building and message sharing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoted via Chamber of Commerce (Cambridge and Greater KW) events and publications. Ie: Business Awards, annual publication</li> <li>• Gaining greater awareness through the use of social media: LinkedIn posts related to hiring immigrant talent and associated topics.</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Foster cohesive service to employers and immigrant job-seekers across sectors and the talent spectrum</b></p>	<p>WSG members/ IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosted booths at virtual job fairs to connect with employers and boost awareness.</li> <li>Worked closely with employment service partners and employers to build the bridge for immigrants to access meaningful employment.</li> <li>Continued to work closely with the Workforce Planning Board (WFPB) to market their new FindyourJob.ca job board</li> <li>The Talent Hub task group have been meeting and reviewing various platforms to potentially partner with. Three meetings occurred and a chart of “must haves” created. Particularly interested in FindYourJob.ca. The group will continue to explore options through a partnership with World Education Services (WES), which will include review of the hub concept and other work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Engage networks of employers to hire and retain immigrants</b></p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WSG's role is to bring awareness to employers that immigrants are invaluable to their organization, that they are here and ready to work. Also to look at processes and systems that will allow for employers to easily access this talent and make connections. During COVID the message stays the same: Immigrants are a great source of talent. Engaging employer partners continued to be challenging but many sectors were still hiring and in need of talent. Some the roles are not what immigrants are looking for but we continue to share any job postings received within our network so that a bridge can be created for immigrants to access employers.</li> <li>Worked closely with the WFPB team on the final in a series of three virtual job fairs which coincided with Global Skills Conference and enabled 20 employers to engage with over 200 internationally trained immigrants. The job fairs were a huge success but much more challenging to deliver virtually as there is much education for both the employer and the job seeker.</li> <li>Continued to participate in Reception House's Working Together Program to recommend and create connections to employers to create job opportunities for refugees. This 3 year pilot program just wrapped up, with hundreds of refugees in employment, and new plans are being put into place. We are securing recognition of the employers who engaged in these programs by the Regional Chair's Office and will provide by IP to encourage their ongoing engagement in hiring immigrants.</li> <li>Continued to partner with the Greater KW Chamber on the weekly Business Success webinars. The topics directly related to IP's work have been: Anti-racism in the workplace, Working Together Program, Future of Work (WFPB). Upcoming is the #ImmigrantsWork initiative and one on hiring International Students. Between September and March 780 employers participated and grew their awareness of IP.</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnered with the Greater KW Chamber on two Pillars To Prosperity webinars. One on education and the other on healthcare. The discussions were focused on the impact of COVID and future plans, with specific attention to how these areas affect immigrants/are impacted by immigration.</li> <li>We will be working with both the Greater KW Chamber and Cambridge Chamber on immigrant related events during 2021.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Collaborate with leaders and organizations (public, private and not-for-profit) to foster immigrant attraction, employment and entrepreneurship</b></p>	IP staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked closely with regional economic development reps via Best WR. Continue to address various sectors and what they are facing during COVID and how this group can support them.</li> <li>Participating in a group of leaders from regional economic development, Communitel, education and more to plan for a funding application for reskilling to bring immigrant focus.</li> <li>Continued to deepen connections and interactions with economic development during COVID with City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener and City of Cambridge ED reps.</li> <li>Participated in regular 'All Hands On' economic development meeting with business and community leaders sharing status of supports and advocating through COVID.</li> <li>Continued to work with the Small Business Centre, promote their workshops and make connections with immigrant service providers to improve supports for immigrant entrepreneurs.</li> <li>Continued to partner with other Immigration Partnerships across Southwestern Ontario to deliver webinars for employers. Four are planned for 2021. The first one focused was on "How To Hire International Students – the do's and don'ts". Participated in an employer exchange organized by Immjob across Southwestern Ontario.</li> <li>Continued to work with the Job Developer Group and CELC (Community Employment and Literacy Council)</li> <li>Through our partnership with Worldwide Education Services (WES) on a program called Immigrants Works, began working closely with WES with the ultimate goal to launch an employer playbook for Waterloo Region re: hiring immigrants and more. Currently meeting bi-weekly with WES team to develop a work plan, monthly with foundational partners, and are planning an employer workshop in the fall. This WES initiative will review IP's employer engagement work, the hub and more, and build on and enhance the work we have already been doing.</li> </ul>

**BELONG STEERING GROUP**

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Build connections, capacity and civic engagement among ethno-cultural groups and the community at large to increase immigrant influence in policy making and social connectedness</b></p>	<p>BSG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruited and supported ethno-cultural group to organize and plan a virtual information session about Covid-19 vaccinations in partnership with the Region for 55 participants.</li> <li>Planned and organized Indigenization Training for Immigration Partnership Council, Belong Steering Group, Work Steering Group and Settle Steering Group. This 4 week certificate program will be facilitated using a holistic approach to learning by Kelly Fran Davis in the month of May (3 sessions + 1 Residential School Tour). Participated in a virtual tour of a former Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School organized by Education Woodland Cultural Centre.</li> <li>With the Social Inclusion Working Group, planned and organized First Ethno-Cultural Leadership Roundtable.</li> <li>Updated ethno-cultural groups list and ongoing efforts to make connections and build relationships.</li> <li>Ongoing phone and zoom meetings to build a rapport and relationship with ethno-cultural leaders and members. Many ethnocultural organizations are closed temporarily and are not delivering their services, making connection difficult.</li> <li>Participated in the Cambridge Mobilization Team (CMT) to maintain connections and share information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Work with municipalities and other public sector partners as leaders and advocates to strengthen immigrant welcoming, inclusion and engagement</b></p>	<p>City of Waterloo, City of Cambridge, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing support to the City of Waterloo in its development of a Social Inclusion Recognition Toolkit for older adults.</li> <li>Continued to advocate for equity of access issues and interpretation/translation services via pandemic response groups like Psychosocial and Spiritual Working Group etc. Advocating for language to be treated with similar importance as accessibility or other equity lens' in service planning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Increase public support for immigration, and action to address racism, discrimination and foster immigrant belonging through campaigns and initiatives</b></p>	<p>IP Staff and Public Education Working Group (PEWG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organized and implemented the March 21 Social Media Campaign for The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination from March 18 to 21. Engaged partners to share the work they are doing to make anti-racist organizational change. Number of organizations that participated – 20: Carizon, City of Cambridge, City of Kitchener, City of Waterloo, Coalition Of Muslim Women, Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir, Family and Children Services, Focus for Ethnic Women WR Inc., Greater KW Chamber of Commerce, Idea Exchange, Immigration Partnership Council, Kind Minds Family Wellness, Kitchener Multicultural Centre, KWAG, Orange Sky Enterprises, Reception House WR, Region of Waterloo, Volunteer Action Centre, Waterloo Public Library, YMCA of Three Rivers Number of videos - 23 (several organizations contributed multiple videos)</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<p>Number of speakers - 26  Social media analytics (March 18-21): 87 retweets, 6,482 video views.  Videos can be watched on IP's <a href="#">YouTube channel</a> or <a href="#">Twitter account</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building capacity to address hate crime, hate incidents, racism at the individual, organizational, and community level by attending related workshops and trainings.</li> <li>• The PEWG continues to develop anti-racism strategies, resources and campaign – #RacialEquityWR.</li> <li>• Ongoing contributions to the webpage with anti-racism work/resources/connectors taking place in Waterloo Region. The webpage is housed on the IP website <a href="#">RacialEquityWR</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b>  <b>Collaborate with systems and community tables and leaders</b></p>	<p>Municipal partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to participate in the Pandemic Psychosocial and Spiritual Supports Working Group and Cambridge Mobilization Team.</li> <li>• Continue to be a member of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Wellbeing Waterloo Anti-Racism Advisory Working Group</li> </ul>

# Welcome New Partners!

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**SSG:** Ajirioghene Evi-Cobbinah (Kind Minds Family Wellness)

**BSG:** Rozina Shaheen (Muslim Social Services), Katy Boose (Reception House), Helen Loftin (Reception House)

## Context and cross-referrals

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### Immigration Data and Trends

- Permanent resident arrivals in Waterloo Region were down by 34% in 2020 compared to 2019 (3,050 permanent residents arrived 2020 compared to 4,590 in 2019).
- By December 2020, monthly arrivals to Waterloo Region had begun to surpass that from a year before (265 in Dec 2020 compared to 225 in Dec 2019, and 480 in Jan 2021 compared to 390 in Jan 2020). ([IRCC data, 2021](#))

### Contributors to success

- Partners have been keen to know what others are doing and partner when possible (though this is tempered by the demands of simply adapting to this quickly changing environment).
- Solid foundation of partnership and collaboration within IP has enabled us to move quickly to engage in pandemic response and address gaps.

### Challenges and how we're responding

- Partners have been challenged to continue programs virtually but have moved many programs/events to virtual space using multiple methods. Outreach to individuals who are not connected to specific programs or who lack tech access/skills to connect virtually is a challenge but partners are reaching out on a one-on-one basis. Virtual programming presents some challenges and also many opportunities.

### How Council or other Steering Groups can support

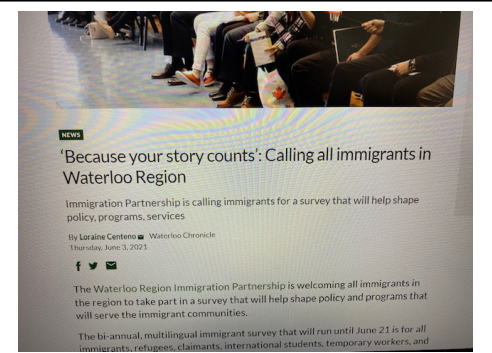
- Refer employers seeking talent to WSG.
- Participate in IP anti-racism training opportunities and work to embed anti-racism into your organizational practices.
- Share and nominate landlords for the IPs [2021 Newcomer Landlord Award](#).
- Review and improve as needed organizational policies on interpretation provision.

### Other community initiatives and how to they relate

- The Region of Waterloo and cities of Kitchener and Waterloo are building up staff capacity to address equity, anti-racism and diversity. We are following developments and looking to align.
- Regional Council is working towards a regional anti-racism plan. This relates directly to the Belong Steering Group's goal in CAP 2020-2025 that "Immigration is widely supported and racism and discrimination are addressed through a regional Anti-Racism Strategy." It struck a community advisory committee and we continue to explore alignment.
- We are exploring formal membership with the KW4 Ontario Health Team.

## PARTNERSHIP-WIDE

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Champion advocacy and engage with elected officials, policy and systems leaders</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to advocate for immigrant-responsiveness within the regional pandemic response across sectors, contributing to a developing health equity approach, disaggregated data collection/dissemination, attention to specific challenges, language access and culturally appropriate responses. Supported ROWs development of community outreach to diverse communities, multi-lingual resources on prevention measures, vaccine and more, pop-up vaccine clinics.</li> <li>Advised the Kitchener Mayor's Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion on anti-racism developments, informed disaggregated data strategy development, equitable hiring/retention strategies and community fund development.</li> <li>Engagement with WRDBS senior leadership about effective community and outreach strategies for immigrant populations resulting in changes to some communications. Further discussion with WRDSB leaders about deepening / broadening engagement / mutual support - possibility of dedicated meeting involving community partners discussed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Build awareness of the Immigration Partnership and beneficial impact of immigration</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, partners, staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through Council/SG partner and staff engagement in pandemic tables and others, grew awareness of IP, immigration and the experiences of immigrants.</li> <li>Significant social media engagement via Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook to promote the importance and contributions of immigrants to Canada. Approx. 3,900 followers and 244,566 impressions across these platforms in the period.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p>Partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With the EAC, finalized IPs Data and Evaluation Framework for IP Council approval.</li> <li>Developed, piloted and launched the 2021 Immigrant Survey. Significant promotion through email (nearly</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>Lead collaborative learning and community education</b></p>  <p>Immigrant Survey story headline in the Waterloo Chronicle and New Hamburg Independent. June 2021</p>		<p>2,000 messages sent) IP social media, the Weekly, IP partners, <a href="#">newspaper</a> and radio, Google/Facebook ads and many more. <b>The goal is to hear from 1500 immigrants – as of Jun 10, we're reached 583 responses – much more collective work is needed!!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helped build partner data/research knowledge and capacity (i.e. provided information about the 2021 census to ESL and immigrant-serving organizations to enable them to support newcomers and low-English individuals).</li> <li>Working with the Workforce Planning Board regarding the possibility of adding immigrant-focused questions to the EmployerOne survey.</li> <li>Continued to grow partner/staff capacity for anti-racism work by hosting an Anti-Racism 102 training for all partners (ongoing from Mar-Jun) in implementation of <a href="#">IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</a>. Excellent engagement.</li> <li>Regular updates to the Immigration portal, with 7,298 visits by 6,077 unique visitors and 311 visits to the COVID landing page. Nine Weekly Updates on Covid-19 and Immigration to 566 subscribers, with a 30% open rate and 1,877 opens. Shared relevant research reports via the Immigration Weekly to grow community knowledge of immigration matters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Break down silos within the Partnership and the community to promote immigrant success</b></p>	<p>SG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing engagement of a Council and Steering Group-wide approach to implementation of <a href="#">IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</a> and evaluation framework development.</li> <li>Continued to share resources, connections, provide support between BSG and SSG partners and pandemic groups on language and interpretation issues, providing linkages for guest speakers to specific newcomer/racialized/language groups re vaccines and safe-isolation sites.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="971 1465 1560 1864" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Supported groups coming together to problems solve for specific challenges, i.e. enabling migrant farm workers in Waterloo Region to apply for permanent residence through the new IRCC program – connected community groups to KWMC-provided tablets to assist English language learning and YMCA language assessment opportunities to meet testing requirements.</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing collaboration and alignment by regular staff engagement with WR Crime Prevention Council, Children</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<p>and Youth Planning Table and Wellbeing Waterloo Region peers (focus on aligning anti-racism/equity in governance, data and evaluation, public education, and more), and other Local Immigration Partnerships across Ontario/Canada.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing possibility of Immigrant Survey replication in other communities in Ontario with Local Immigration Partnership peers.</li> </ul>

## SETTLE STEERING GROUP


Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Develop communication strategies and tools to simplify service systems and pathways for immigrants</b></p>	<p>ROW Citizen Service and Public Health, settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners/staff continue to work with KW4 Ontario Health Team region partners in assessing critical needs in refugee/newcomer health – focus on mental health, interpretation and pandemic-related needs. Developed a common <u>interpretation commitment statement</u> and are building formal commitment by KW4 OHT partners by August 2021. Continuing outreach to primary health care providers to register/use free LHIN-funded interpretation service.</li> <li>• The language learning working group of SSG updated the <u>English Language Learning Options in Waterloo Region Overview</u>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Drive collaboration and innovation within the settlement sector</b></p>	<p>YMCA, KWMC, Reception House, Carizon, MCRS, IP staff</p> <p>IP partners and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported YMCA, KWMC and Reception House in exploring service coordination and integration initiatives. Set up a Microsoft Teams collaborative space for sharing documents, discussions and building relationships. Developing a coordinated pathway/process for GARs that move to WR from other communities in Canada. Convened weekly executive leadership meetings to facilitate collaboration and alignment.</li> <li>• Hosted shared learning events related to needs identified at SSG or action group tables (e.g. Hosted information session on Newcomers and Summer Camps in Waterloo Region with 43 participants attended or viewed recording).</li> <li>• Staff and partners continue to participate on advisory groups for provincial/national research projects (e.g. Allies in Refugee Integration exploring settlement-private sponsor collaboration in Ontario, Virtual Mental Health Access national research project).</li> </ul>

<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Leverage service providers and planning tables as effective immigrant supports through strong relationships and collaboration</b></p>	<p>Settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners and staff are supporting <a href="#">KW4</a> Ontario Health Team (OHT) groups, which have identified refugees as a priority population, to determine health, mental health, and language interpretation resources and pathways for refugees. Part of the KW4 OHT Refugee Health working group and the Refugee Mental Health Working Group. IP and LHIN staff to co-lead KW4 Interpretation Services working group comprised of many partners.</li> <li>Finalizing Microsoft Teams collaborative space for ongoing sharing and referrals between local newcomer-serving agencies.</li> <li>Maintained connection to housing and other community action tables to bring forward immigrant perspectives. Staff &amp; partners participated in Leadership Waterloo Region’s April 2021 Affordable Housing Café and a LWR class affordable housing panel discussion.</li> <li>Local housing providers met regularly through IP’s Immigrant Housing Working Group to share and problem-solve.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Engage networks of private stakeholders in supporting immigrants</b></p>	<p>Settlement and other partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building on IPs <a href="#">video series</a> featuring Landlord Award recipients, IP, Reception House and Compass are developing a series of videos about newcomers finding home in Waterloo Region.</li> <li>Supported Reception House to submit a funding proposal that builds on discussions at the Immigrant Housing Working Group (of SSG) to engage landlords to benefit refugees looking for housing</li> <li>Outreached to Afar-speaking community (due to lack of trained interpreters) to recruit an Afar interpreter for June 2021 Conestoga interpreter training.</li> </ul>

## WORK STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who’s Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Develop campaigns and tools to amplify the value proposition and economic contribution of immigrants to employers</b></p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<p>Ongoing placement of strategic ads in Chamber newsletters and directories, social media and virtual events for awareness building and message sharing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoted via Chamber of Commerce (Cambridge and Greater KW) events and publications. ie. annual publications</li> <li>Gaining greater awareness through the use of social media: LinkedIn posts related to hiring immigrant talent and associated topics. Promoting partnerships with other organizational initiatives.</li> <li>Hosted a booth at last of three virtual job fairs to connect with employers and boost awareness.</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Foster cohesive service to employers and immigrant job-seekers across sectors and the talent spectrum</b></p>	<p>WSG members/ IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked closely with employment service partners and employers to build the bridge for immigrants to access meaningful employment.</li> <li>• Continued to work closely with the Workforce Planning Board (WFPB) to market their FindyourJob.ca job board</li> <li>• The Talent Hub task group have been meeting and in light of the pandemic and limited funding they have chosen to explore FindYourJob.ca (via WFPB) as the platform to provide additional resources to employers and also job seekers to get connected. The logistics to still be worked on and reviewed by SWO WFPB's. It is still in the planning stages and looking for next steps from WFPB.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Engage networks of employers to hire and retain immigrants</b></p> <div data-bbox="94 989 581 1339" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>IP's Nora (right) with Bashir from Reception House (left) recognizing Janet Lehman of JD Sweid Foods Inc. (centre) for exceptional contributions to refugee employment in Waterloo Region. Waterloo, May 2021.</p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WSG's role is to bring awareness to employers that immigrants are invaluable to their organization, that they are here and ready to work; also to look at processes and systems that will allow employers to easily access this talent and make connections. During COVID the message stays the same: Immigrants are a great source of talent. Engaging employer partners continued to be challenging but many sectors were still hiring and in need of talent. Some the roles are not what immigrants are looking for but we continue to share any job postings received within our network so that a bridge can be created for immigrants to access employers. FindYourJob.ca reports an increase in job postings across the region and there is more movement regarding hiring which is positive. Many sectors are still struggling to find people – particularly trades, manufacturing, warehousing and transportation.</li> <li>• We are participating in the Reskilling Initiative being led by the Region of Waterloo with representatives from education, business, service providers. The goal is to access funding for a pilot that would focus on one sector (Warehousing) to increase its ability to hire and retain talent. Immigrants and refugees will play a significant role within this project.</li> <li>• Continued to support the Reception House's Working Together Program to recommend and create connections to employers to create job opportunities for refugees. This was a 3 year pilot program which recently wrapped up, and while they await further information about funding, they are continuing to work on supporting employers and making employment connections. Employers hired over 120</li> </ul>

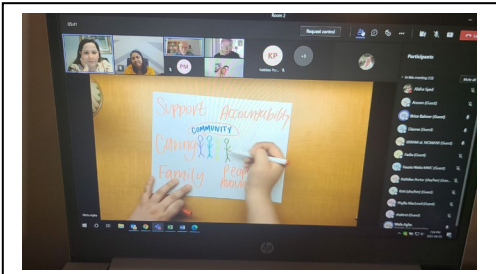
Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
 <p>IP's Nora (right) with Bashir from Reception House (centre) recognizing Shawn Brake of Conestoga College (left) for exceptional contributions to refugee employment in Waterloo Region. Waterloo, June 2021.</p>		<p>refugees during the 3 years. We recently recognized the employers and <a href="#">Conestoga College</a> for their great commitment and they provided short <a href="#">video testimonials</a> that have been promoted via social media to bring further awareness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to partner with the Greater KW Chamber on the weekly Business Success webinars. The topics directly related to IP's work have been: Anti-racism in the workplace, Working Together Program, Future of Work (WFPB), #ImmigrantsWork initiative and one on hiring International Students and the last one will focus on the Connector and Mentorship Programs as a source of talent. Between September and May over close to 1,000 employers participated and grew their awareness of IP. We will continue this partnership again in the fall of 2021 and winter/spring of 2022.</li> <li>We will be partnering with the Greater KW Chamber of Commerce on the upcoming Manufacturing Summit in July.</li> <li>We will be working with both the Greater KW Chamber and Cambridge Chamber on immigrant related events as we move throughout this year and beyond.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Collaborate with leaders and organizations (public, private and not-for-profit) to foster immigrant attraction, employment and entrepreneurship</b></p>	<p>IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked closely with regional economic development reps via Best WR. Continue to address various sectors and what they are facing during COVID and how this group can support them.</li> <li>Participating in a group of leaders from regional economic development, Communitel, education and more to plan for a funding application for reskilling to bring immigrant focus. (see above)</li> <li>Continued to deepen connections and interactions with economic development during COVID with City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener and City of Cambridge ED reps.</li> <li>Participated in regular 'All Hands On' economic development meeting with business and community leaders sharing status of supports and advocating through COVID.</li> <li>Continued to work with the Small Business Centre, promote their workshops and make connections with immigrant service providers to improve supports for immigrant entrepreneurs.</li> <li>Continued to partner with other Immigration Partnerships across Southwestern Ontario to deliver webinars for employers. Four are planned for 2021. Join the next one on June 22: <a href="#">Bilingualism in the</a></li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<p><a href="#">Workplace</a>. Will also be working with other LIPS on a Workforce Conference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to work with the Job Developer Group and CELC (Community Employment and Literacy Council)</li> <li>Through our partnership with Worldwide Education Services (WES) on a program called Immigrants Works, began working closely with WES with the ultimate goal to launch an employer playbook for Waterloo Region re: hiring immigrants and more. Currently meeting bi-weekly with WES team to develop a work plan, monthly with foundational partners, and the goal is to have an employer workshop in the October of 2021. This WES initiative will review IP's employer engagement work, the hub and more, and build on and enhance the work we have already been doing.</li> </ul>

## BELONG STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>I.</b></p> <p><b>Build connections, capacity and civic engagement among ethno-cultural groups and the community at large to increase immigrant influence in policy making and social connectedness</b></p>	<p>BSG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planned and hosted an Indigenization Training for 30 Immigration Partnership Council, Belong Steering Group, Work Steering Group and Settle Steering Group members as part of IPs anti-racism journey. The 4-week certificate program was facilitated using a holistic approach to learning by Kelly Fran Davis (3 sessions + 1 Residential School Tour). These sessions had discussions that were heavy, sensitive and emotional in nature. Thirty-five members participated in the virtual tour of a former Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School organized by Education Woodland Cultural Centre. Twenty-one participants successfully completed the full four sessions and submitted the required reflections to receive the Certificate of Completion from Immigration Partnership and Kelly Fran Davis.</li> <li>The Social Inclusion Working Group planned and organized BSGs Ethno-Cultural Leadership Roundtable in early June. Twenty-six attended this very successful community engagement and networking event. We made connections with Fidelia Ukueje – Vice President, Nigerians in the Region of Waterloo (NIROW) &amp; Wafa Agha – Board of Directors Member, Women Empowerment Society of Waterloo Region and Guelph City, amongst others. We also connected with 25 other ethno-cultural members and further, they are sharing</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
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Jamboard input on isolation and belonging by participants of the June Ethno-Cultural Leadership Roundtable. June 2021

- resources and building relationships amongst themselves. An excellent discussion about isolation and what it means to 'belong' took place.
- Organized and hosted a virtual information session about the Safe Voluntary Isolation Site, updated Covid-19 vaccinations and clinics information session for 25 participants.
- Ongoing updating of ethno-cultural groups list and efforts to make connections and build relationships. Ongoing phone and zoom meetings to build a rapport and relationship with ethno-cultural leaders and members.
- Participated in the Cambridge Mobilization Team (CMT) to maintain connections and share information.

**2.**

**Work with municipalities and other public sector partners as leaders and advocates to strengthen immigrant welcoming, inclusion and engagement**

City of Waterloo, City of Cambridge, IP staff

- Supported the London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership and the London Middlesex Health Unit to host Vaccine Info sessions for London's immigrant community by sharing details/resources and responding to inquiry regarding the COVID-19 sessions conducted in Waterloo Region. The session was attended by over 100 people.
- Connected with Family and Children Services and Muslim Social Services in regards to The Resilience Project, which aims to help children build resilience and overcome hardship through healing.
- Ongoing support to the City of Waterloo in its development of a Social Inclusion Recognition Toolkit for older adults.
- Attended 3 EAPO (Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario) Webinar/discussion Series: Cultural Perspectives and Elder Abuse Supporting Healthy Aging, Respect and Safety of South Asian Older Adults.
- Attended EnCOMPASSing Shared Humanity: Refugee Rights Webinar.
- Continued to advocate for equity of access issues and interpretation/translation services via pandemic response groups like Psychosocial and Spiritual Working Group, etc. Advocating for language to be treated with similar importance as accessibility or other equity lens' in service planning.
- Continued participation to discussions that affect the lives of immigrants and refugees. Ex. Approaches to Elder abuse, CMW need assessment survey, Anatolia - Mental Health Webinar, etc.
- Participated in a discussion on undocumented/unknown immigration status

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Increase public support for immigration, and action to address racism, discrimination and foster immigrant belonging through campaigns and initiatives</b></p>	<p>IP Staff and Public Education Working Group (PEWG)</p>	<p>individuals organized by Safe &amp; Healthy Community Advisory Committee - Kitchener.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building capacity to address hate crime, hate incidents, racism at the individual, organizational, and community level by attending related workshops and trainings.</li> <li>• The PEWG continues to develop anti-racism strategies, resources and campaign – #RacialEquityWR.</li> <li>• Ongoing contributions to the webpage with anti-racism work/resources/connectors taking place in Waterloo Region. The webpage is housed on the IP website <a href="#">RacialEquityWR</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Collaborate with systems and community tables and leaders</b></p>	<p>Municipal partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to participate and work closely with the Pandemic Psychosocial and Spiritual Supports Working Group and Cambridge Mobilization Team.</li> <li>• Continue to be a member of the Region of Waterloo's internal Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Human rights (EDI) Working Group</li> <li>• Helped in the planning and implementing of the virtual Eid celebration for Region of Waterloo staff</li> <li>• Partnering with CCORIC to plan World Refugee Day 2021 (June 20).</li> </ul>

# Welcome New Partners!

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**SSG:** Donalee McIntyre (City of Cambridge)

**BSG:** Nazy Pazoki Zadeh (House Of Friendship), Taryn Rerrie (Student, EDI unit, Region of Waterloo's CAO's Office ), Mifrah Abid (Coalition of Muslim Women of KW), Kaminda Musumbulwa (City of Cambridge), Suzan Koujan (Canadian Arab Women Association)

## Context and cross-referrals

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### Immigration Data and Trends

- There were 1,225 new permanent resident arrivals to Waterloo Region in the first quarter of 2021. Permanent resident arrivals for 2021 Q1 were 11% higher than 2020 Q1 and 41% higher than 2019 Q1. ([IRCC data, 2021](#))

### Contributors to success

- Due to pandemic restrictions, connecting with immigrants for the Immigrant Survey is even more dependant on partners' networks and promotion. Partners have been very supportive and we've had incredible early success survey responses as a result – **THANK YOU SO MUCH!!!**
- Partners have been keen to know what others are doing and partner when possible (though this is tempered by the demands of simply adapting to this quickly changing environment).
- Solid foundation of partnership and collaboration within IP.

### Challenges and how we're responding

- Partners have been challenged to continue programs virtually but have moved many programs/events to virtual space using multiple methods. Outreach to individuals who are not connected to specific programs or who lack tech access/skills to connect virtually is a challenge but partners are reaching out on a one-on-one basis. Virtual programming presents some challenges and also many opportunities.

### How Council or other Steering Groups can support

- **WE NEED A MASSIVE PUSH OF THE [Immigrant Survey](#) TO REACH 1500 RESPONSES** – encourage staff, colleagues, clients, members, volunteers, neighbours, friends and family born outside Canada to take the survey before June 21.
- Refer employers seeking talent to WSG. Encourage organizational leaders and hiring managers in your circles to join our June 22 webinar on: [Bilingualism in the Workplace](#).
- Engage in IP anti-racism training opportunities. Embed anti-racism in organizational practices.
- Share and nominate landlords for the IPs [2021 Newcomer Landlord Award](#).
- Review and improve as needed organizational policies on interpretation provision.

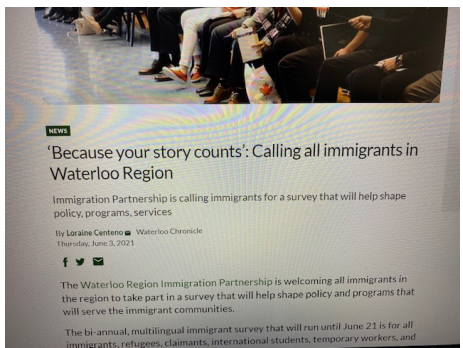
### Other community initiatives and how they relate

- The Region of Waterloo and cities of Kitchener and Waterloo are building up staff capacity to address equity, anti-racism and diversity. We are following developments and looking to align.
- Regional Council is working towards a regional anti-racism plan. This relates directly to the Belong Steering Group's goal in CAP 2020-2025 that "Immigration is widely supported and racism and discrimination are addressed through a regional Anti-Racism Strategy." It struck a community advisory committee and we continue to explore alignment.
- We are exploring formal membership with the KW4 Ontario Health Team.

## PARTNERSHIP-WIDE


Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>I.</b></p> <p><b>Champion advocacy and engage with elected officials, policy and systems leaders</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to advocate for immigrant-responsiveness within the regional pandemic response across sectors, contributing to a developing health equity approach, disaggregated data collection/dissemination, attention to specific challenges, language access and culturally appropriate responses. Supported ROWs development of community outreach to diverse communities, multi-lingual resources on prevention measures, vaccine and more, pop-up vaccine clinics.</li> <li>The Kitchener Mayor's Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion wound down. IP engagement, together with other committee members, resulted in a new equity and anti-racism policy applicable to City Council, staff and volunteers, a comprehensive disaggregated data strategy development, a roadmap for building out equitable hiring/retention strategies, a permanent equity and anti-racism advisory committee of City Council be to put in place, a framework for a community fund targeted at supporting BIPOC communities and more.</li> <li>In the Region's Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan Advisory Committee, advocated: 1. That the work is grounded in IP research among immigrants to inform planning, engagement, priorities and future action; 2. That hate, racism and inequity to be included as priorities affecting safety and wellbeing; and 3. That the plan focuses on addressing systems change.</li> <li>Further engagement with WRDBS senior leadership about effective communication and outreach strategies for immigrant populations.</li> <li>Asked all Waterloo Region <a href="#">candidates for federal election to share their positions on immigration</a> and shared the results widely to inform voting.</li> <li>Assessed potential local impact of the <a href="#">federal government's plan to resettle 20,000 Afghan refugees</a> to</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<p>Canada. Connected with community partners to understand needs, connect service partners and take some initial actions (see SSG below). Informed Regional Council of current status. With KWCF/CNDCF, activated the <a href="#">IP Fund for Immigrant and Refugee Initiatives</a> as a donation mechanism. Continued to communicate with IRCC for updates to inform planning, response needs and actions.</p>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Build awareness of the Immigration Partnership and beneficial impact of immigration</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, partners, staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through Council/SG partner and staff engagement in pandemic tables and others, grew awareness of IP, immigration and the experiences of immigrants.</li> <li>• Significant social media engagement via Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook to promote the importance and contributions of immigrants to Canada. Approx. 4,275 (+375) followers and 305,586 (+61,020) impressions across these platforms in the period.</li> <li>• Fostered significant media coverage of immigration and IP through growing collaboration with a Waterloo Chronicle editor:</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Local college hosts podcast series featuring immigrants in Waterloo Region</a>, The Record, Waterloo Chronicle, Cambridge Times, July 8</p> <p><a href="#">Immigrant, CBC Morning Edition radio show</a>, CBC News, July 10</p> <p><a href="#">Immigrants of Waterloo Region: Spotlight on the immigrants who have chosen to make this area their home</a>, Waterloo Chronicle, Cambridge Times, July 26</p> <p><a href="#">‘We all belong’: Here’s how you can get a #RacialEquityWR campaign lawn sign</a>, New Hamburg Independent, Waterloo Chronicle, Cambridge Times, August 12</p> <p><a href="#">Social media campaign encourages WR residents to take action against racism</a>, Kitchener Today, August 20</p> <p><a href="#">For immigrants in Waterloo Region, finding work is often a struggle</a>, Waterloo Chronicle, Cambridge Times, August 31</p> <p><a href="#">The 2021 Newcomer Landlord Award is now open for nominations</a>, Waterloo Chronicle, Cambridge Times, The Record, the Start, Sept 7</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p>Partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surpassed our goal of 1500 responses in the 2021 Immigrant Survey. Huge thanks to all our partners and the <b>1507</b> immigrants that responded! The data is now being analyzing. We are exploring how things have changed since the 2019 survey and disaggregating the data to see how experiences differ among specific</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>Lead collaborative learning and community education</b></p>  <p>Immigrant Survey story headline in the Waterloo Chronicle and New Hamburg Independent. June 2021</p>		<p>groups. Consulted with ROW staff about survey findings informing ROW budget discussions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helped build data/research knowledge and capacity among other LIPs – sharing IP’s Data and Evaluation Framework, IP’s Immigrant Survey tool broadly, and meeting individually with several other LIPs (Simcoe, Grey-Bruce, Halton, and others). There is interest among SW Ontario LIPs in possibly expanding the Immigrant Survey to their communities in the next cycle.</li> <li>Provided top languages for translation for several groups that are looking to translate surveys or materials, consulting with some on the process and suggestions (Coalition of Muslim Women of KW, Region of Waterloo, WRDSB, etc.).</li> <li>Continued to grow partner/staff capacity for anti-racism work by hosting an Anti-Racism 102 training for all partners (ongoing from Mar-Jun) in implementation of <u>IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</u>. Excellent engagement and feedback. Facilitated a future action brainstorming session in early Sept.</li> <li>Regular updates to the Immigration portal, with 13,271 visits by 10,833 unique visitors and 311 visits to the COVID landing page. Thirteen Weekly Updates on Covid-19 and Immigration to 566 subscribers, with a 32% open rate and 2,171 opens. Shared relevant research reports via the Immigration Weekly to grow community knowledge of immigration matters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b> Break down silos within the Partnership and the community to promote immigrant success</p>	<p>SG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing engagement of a Council and Steering Group-wide approach to implementation of <u>IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</u> and evaluation framework development.</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to share resources, connections, provide support between BSG and SSG partners and pandemic groups on language and interpretation issues, providing linkages for guest speakers to specific newcomer/racialized/language groups re vaccines and safe-isolation sites.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="967 495 1560 905" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Supported groups coming together to problem solve for specific challenges, i.e. enabling migrant farm workers in Waterloo Region to apply for permanent residence through the new IRCC program – connected the employer and volunteer community groups to KWMC-provided tablets to assist English language learning and YMCA language assessment opportunities to meet requirements to apply.</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing collaboration and alignment by regular staff engagement with WR Crime Prevention Council, Children and Youth Planning Table and Wellbeing Waterloo Region peers (focus on aligning anti-racism/equity in governance, data and evaluation, public education, and more), and other Local Immigration Partnerships across Ontario/Canada.</li> <li>Convened weekly executive leadership meetings to facilitate collaboration and alignment.</li> <li>Ongoing connection with Local Immigration Partnership peers in SW Ontario and nationally. Will host next SWO LIP meeting in Oct.</li> </ul>

SETTLE STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
	ROW Citizen Service and Public Health, settlement partners, IP staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support community efforts following the Afghan refugee announcement, and in conversation with immigrant-receiving partners, created a community-wide landing page providing information about Afghan resettlement in Waterloo Region – what is known, how people can help, and how to find out more</li> </ul>

<p><b>Develop communication strategies and tools to simplify service systems and pathways for immigrants</b></p>		<p>(<a href="http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/AfghanResettlement">www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/AfghanResettlement</a>). The webpage is being updated as new information emerges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners/staff continue to work with KW4 Ontario Health Team partners in assessing critical needs in refugee/newcomer health – focus on mental health, interpretation and pandemic-related needs. The common <u>interpretation commitment statement</u> that we collectively developed was formally adopted by the KW4 OHT and all member agencies. Continue to develop tools for health care providers about how to use interpretation, clarifying for OHT members what an interpretation commitment means for individual organizations, and other supports. An environmental scan regarding interpretation is being developed as a foundation for future conversations about a systemic approach to interpretation.</li> <li>The Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network has been merged with 4 other LHINs within Ontario Health West. As they review programming and budgets, the previous local funding that provided free interpretation for physicians, specialists and LHIN-funded community programs may be at risk.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Drive collaboration and innovation within the settlement sector</b></p>	<p>YMCA, KWMC, Reception House, Carizon, MCRS, IP staff</p> <p>IP partners and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work with YMCA, KWMC and Reception House is hosting periodic lunches for direct-service staff to learn and network together. Convened weekly executive leadership meetings to facilitate collaboration and alignment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Leverage service providers and planning tables as effective immigrant supports through strong relationships and collaboration</b></p>	<p>Settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners and staff are supporting <u>KW4</u> Ontario Health Team (OHT) groups, which have identified refugees as a priority population, to determine health, mental health, and language interpretation resources and pathways for refugees. Part of the KW4 OHT Refugee Health working group and the Refugee Mental Health Working Group. IP staff is leading KW4 Interpretation Services working group until a health-sector co-lead is found.</li> <li>Collaborated with Region of Waterloo Housing staff in the preliminary planning to develop a <u>portal housing benefit for equity-deserving populations</u> (Black, Indigenous and people of colour). Launched on Sept 9, it will be initially piloted with 30 families from the community housing waiting list and, based on the insights from that, community organizations from specific population groups will be engaged to drive program planning and implementation.</li> <li>Maintained connection to housing and other community action tables to bring forward immigrant perspectives. Staff and partners met with Cambridge Affordable Housing Roundtable specifically regarding outreach to landlords in Cambridge. Staff &amp; partners will be participating in Leadership Waterloo Region’s affordable housing panel discussion in October. Participated in City of Waterloo’s Housing Grant consultations to share immigrant perspectives.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruited additional partners for the Immigrant Housing Working Group. Local housing providers and interested individuals met regularly to share, network and problem-solve in this SSG sub-group.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p>Engage networks of private stakeholders in supporting immigrants</p>	Settlement and other partners, IP staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building on IPs <a href="#">video series</a> featuring Landlord Award recipients, IP, Reception House and Compass are developing a series of videos about newcomers finding home in Waterloo Region (“This is Home”). The first one is available at <a href="http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/LandlordAward">www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/LandlordAward</a> and additional videos will be added as they are completed.</li> </ul>

## WORK STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p>Develop campaigns and tools to amplify the value proposition and economic contribution of immigrants to employers</p>	WSG members/IP staff	<p>Ongoing placement of strategic ads in Chamber newsletters and directories, social media and virtual events for awareness building and message sharing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoted via Chamber of Commerce (Cambridge and Greater KW) events and publications.ie. annual publications</li> <li>Gaining greater awareness through the use of social media: LinkedIn posts related to hiring immigrant talent and associated topics. Promoting partnerships with other organizational initiatives.</li> <li>Hosted a booth at Greater KW Chamber Business Around 5 events using video, backdrops and chatrooms to build awareness and engage with employers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p>Foster cohesive service to employers and immigrant job-seekers across sectors and the talent spectrum</p>	WSG members/IP staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked closely with employment service partners and employers to build the bridge for immigrants to access meaningful employment.</li> <li>Continued to work closely with the Workforce Planning Board (WFPB) to market their FindyourJob.ca job board and to discuss the future of including more immigrant hiring, networking and resource tools.</li> <li>The Talent Hub task group have been meeting and in light of the pandemic and limited funding they have chosen to explore FindYourJob.ca (via WFPB) as the platform to provide additional resources to employers and also job seekers to get connected. The logistics to</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
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		<p>still be worked on and reviewed by SWO WFPB's and some funding is still be reviewed by the Workforce Planning Board. A presentation was given to WSG and they agreed to move in this direction. Next step: to give an overview to Council (if this is required). It is still in the planning stages and looking for next steps from WFPB.</p>
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### 3.

#### Engage networks of employers to hire and retain immigrants



IP's Nora (right) with Bashir from Reception House (centre) recognizing Shawn Brake of Conestoga College (left) for exceptional contributions to refugee employment in Waterloo Region. Waterloo, June 2021.

<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WSG's role is to bring awareness to employers that immigrants are invaluable to their organization, that they are here and ready to work; also to look at processes and systems that will allow employers to easily access this talent and make connections. During COVID the message stays the same: Immigrants are a great source of talent. Engaging employer partners in 2020 was a challenge because of COVID but there has been an increase in outreach from employers desperately looking for people. Manufacturing, healthcare, warehousing, restaurants and retail and more. They do not know where to turn. They are looking at how they can hire immigrants and refugee's and from where. Other employers have more questions around immigration law – how to retain folks who have been on a work permit or how to bring people from abroad. The questions and concerns are growing on behalf of employers. We are sharing job postings to our network regularly but clearing it shows the need for a hub where immigrants and refugee's can go to access jobs and employers can engage them. Some the roles are not what immigrants are looking for but we continue to share any job postings received within our network so that a bridge can be created for immigrants to access employers. FindYourJob.ca reports an increase in job postings across the region.</li> <li>• Participating in the Reskilling Initiative being led by the Region of Waterloo with representatives from education, business, service providers. The goal is to access funding for a pilot that would focus on one sector (Warehousing) to increase its ability to hire and retain talent. Immigrants and refugees will play a significant role within this project. This project was put on hold for a few months as the Region's Economic Dev who are leading this project are focused other priorities. More funding will be available and this group will reconvene in the fall of 2021.</li> <li>• The Working Together project with Reception house (a three year program) wrapped up. During the summer months, we recognized the employers who participated in Working Together with a gift and they shared their</li> </ul>
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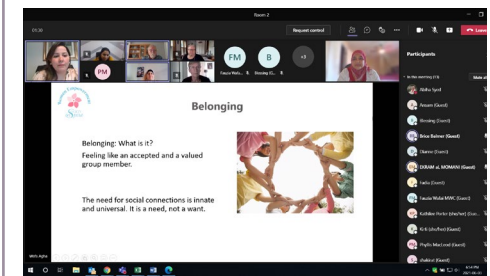
Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<p>success and excitement about the program. Reception House are continuing to work on supporting employers and making employment connections. Employers hired over 120 refugees during the 3 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to partner with the Greater KW Chamber on the weekly Business Success webinars until June and will continue forward with these during the fall of 2021 and winter/spring of 2022. The last one of the season focused on the Mentorship and Connector Programs. Between September and June close to 1,200 employers participated and grew their awareness of IP. We will continue this partnership again in the fall of 2021 and winter/spring of 2022.</li> <li>Partnered with the Greater KW Chamber of Commerce on the Manufacturing Summit in July.</li> <li>Working with both the Greater KW Chamber and Cambridge Chamber on immigrant related events as we move throughout this year and beyond.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Collaborate with leaders and organizations (public, private and not-for-profit) to foster immigrant attraction, employment and entrepreneurship</b></p>	<p>IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked closely with regional economic development reps via Best WR. Continue to address various sectors and what they are facing during COVID and how this group can support them. This group will continue working together beyond COVID as they need has been expressed that there is not a community table to discuss the urgent talent gaps for employers.</li> <li>Participating in a group of leaders from regional economic development, Communitech, education and more to plan for a funding application for reskilling to bring immigrant focus. (see above)</li> <li>Continued to deepen connections and interactions with economic development during COVID with City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener and City of Cambridge ED reps. City of Cambridge will join WSG this fall.</li> <li>Participated in regular 'All Hands On' economic development meeting with business and community leaders sharing status of supports and advocating through COVID.</li> <li>Continued to work with the Small Business Centre, promote their workshops and make connections with immigrant service providers to improve supports for immigrant entrepreneurs.</li> <li>Continued to partner with other Immigration Partnerships across Southwestern Ontario to deliver webinars for employers. The last one was in June: <a href="#">Bilingualism in the Workplace</a>. We will continue this partnership throughout 2021 and 22. Will also be working with other LIPS on a Workforce Conference.</li> <li>Continued to work with the Job Developer Group and CELC (Community Employment and Literacy Council)</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through our partnership with Worldwide Education Services (WES) we are working on a program called Immigrants Works. The ultimate goal is to launch an employer playbook for Waterloo Region re: hiring immigrants and more. Have been meeting bi-weekly with WES team to develop a work plan, monthly with foundational partners, and have been doing employer informant interviews throughout the summer to get their feedback about needs and ideas for the format for the Employer Workshop on October 28, 2021. This WES initiative will review IP's employer engagement work, the hub and more, and build on and enhance the work we have already been doing.</li> <li>• We will be participating in the Manufacturing Day event this October with Workforce Planning Board. This year it will remain via video vs in person tours. The video will include a tour of local manufacturers and an opportunity to hear from the owners and HR professionals about opportunities.</li> </ul>

## BELONG STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Build connections, capacity, and civic engagement among ethno-cultural groups and the community at large to increase immigrant influence in policymaking and social connectedness</b></p>	<p>BSG partners, IP staff and Social Inclusion Working Group (SIWG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued participation in discussions that affect the lives of immigrants and refugees with community partners, ethnocultural groups, and members.</li> <li>• Attended four-week training by Region of Waterloo Deepening Conversations Second Round: Deepening the Conversations on Reconciliation.</li> <li>• The Social Inclusion Working Group planned and organized the first virtual WR Multicultural Connections event with the goals: providing an opportunity for different ethno-cultural communities to exchange experiences relating to social isolation, social exclusion/inclusion/connectedness, and belonging. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many immigrants and refugee communities experience social isolation and exclusion from the broader community. There was discussion that promoted and explored the potential for collective action to increase social connectedness and inclusion across different ethno-cultural groups. 35</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
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Presentation by guest speaker Wafa Agha – Belonging! Ethno-Cultural Multicultural Connections June 2021

- people from different communities attended the event.
- Fidelia Ukueje – Vice President, Nigerians in the Region of Waterloo (NIROW) and Wafa Agha – Board of Directors Member, Women Empowerment Society of Waterloo Region and Guelph City, were the guest speakers
- Ongoing updating of ethno-cultural groups list and efforts to make connections and build relationships.
- Ongoing phone and zoom meetings to build a rapport and relationship with ethno-cultural leaders/members.
- Participated in the Newcomers in politics roundtable event committee.

**2.**

**Work with municipalities and other public sector partners as leaders and advocates to strengthen immigrant welcoming, inclusion, and engagement**



IP's Abiha Syed (left) with Kelly Fran (middle) Indigenous Consultant and Professor and Brittney Emslie (right) BSG's Chair from KWMC.

City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener, City of Cambridge, IP staff

- The Indigenization 4-week certificate training 102 is in discussion and will be finalized soon. It will be a holistic approach to learning by Kelly Fran Davis and will be titled Pathway To Reconciliation. This training will be by invitation-only to those who attended Indigenization training 101 in May of 2021.
- Continued support/participation, share resources, networking, provide support between partners on language and interpretation issues, providing connections for guest speakers to specific newcomer/racialized/language groups re belonging and community building.
  - Election Project, 2022 Municipal Election – City of Kitchener. To engaging residents on alternative voting methods (E.g. paper ballots, online voting, vote by mail, and telephone voting) and improving the election processes.
  - Social Isolation Toolkit to improve social connectedness for senior/older adults – City of Waterloo
  - Newcomers' Connections Conference - City of Cambridge
- Collaborated with the Region of Waterloo in discussion on the Out of Province Immunization Form and accessibility for newcomers. Public Health intends to register vaccination doses in the Province's electronic immunization record.

**3.**

**Increase public support for immigration, and action to address racism,**

IP Staff and Public Education Working Group (PEWG)

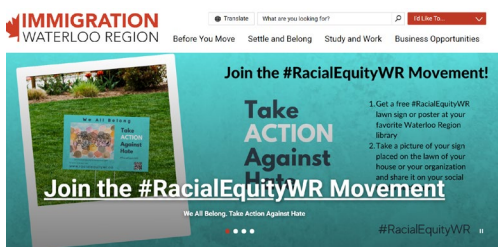
- Continue to support, collaborate and build capacity to address hate crime, hate incidents, racism at the individual, organizational, and community level by attending related workshops and trainings.

## Strategic Direction

## Who's Leading

## Progress Update

discrimination and foster immigrant belonging through campaigns and initiatives



Abiha Syed and Brittney Emslie visited local businesses to promote the #RacialEquityWR campaign.



Visit to **The Healing of the Seven Generations Centre**. Dianne Boston Nyp from Volunteer action centre (front), Scott Norton and volunteer Serena (left/back), Abiha Syed from IP, Brittney Emslie BSG Chair from KWMC (far right)

- Ongoing contributions to the webpage with anti-racism work/resources/connectors taking place in Waterloo Region. The webpage is housed on the IP website [RacialEquityWR](#)
- The PEWG continues to develop anti-racism strategies, resources, and campaigns like #RacialEquityWR.
  - #RacialEquityWR lawn sign Campaign was launched, 780 lawn signs are printed.
  - It is an evolving campaign to end racism/discrimination, to show solidarity and take action against hate in Waterloo Region. It engages residents, local businesses, and community partners in creating a welcoming and anti-racist community.
  - 15 community partners and members were consulted and feedback was taken about the design, wordings/messaging, and purpose of the lawn signs. Received 98% positive feedback and the minor suggestions were taken into consideration.
  - Partnered with the Kitchener Public Library, Waterloo Public Library, Idea Exchange Library, and Regional Libraries (Ayr, New Hamburg, Elmira, Wellesley) and their branches as the #RacialEquityWR lawn signs pick up sites.
  - Abiha Syed and Brittney Emslie visited local businesses in the downtown areas of Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge to promote the #RacialEquityWR campaign.
- Partnered with Arcy Canumay the [Bicycle Mayor of Waterloo](#) for a #RacialEquityWR Bike Ride event at Victoria Park.
  - This event teamed up with bike collaborators and allies: Cities of Kitchener/Waterloo/Cambridge, CycleWR, Sustainable Waterloo Region, People Protected WR, Cycling into the future, Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region, WRDSB and WCDSB, NCR Canada, and Cycling advocates
  - Abiha Syed and Brittney Emslie shared the #RacialEquityWR campaign details and the importance to take action against hate in building a welcoming and antiracist community. Arcy Canumay shared the plan of having a larger #RacialEquityWR community bike ride in the Summer of 2022

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Collaborate with systems and community tables and leaders</b></p>	<p>Municipal partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to participate and work closely with Psychosocial and spiritual working group – A pandemic response group with the purpose to help people know where and how to access psychosocial and spiritual supports during the pandemic - Wellbeing Waterloo</li> <li>• Continue to participate and work closely with Cambridge Mobilization Team.</li> <li>• Continue to be a member of the Region of Waterloo's internal Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Human rights (EDI) Working Group</li> <li>• Significant promotion and outreach to the ethno-cultural members to participate in the 2021 Immigrant Survey through emails and What's App messages.</li> </ul>

# Welcome New Partners!

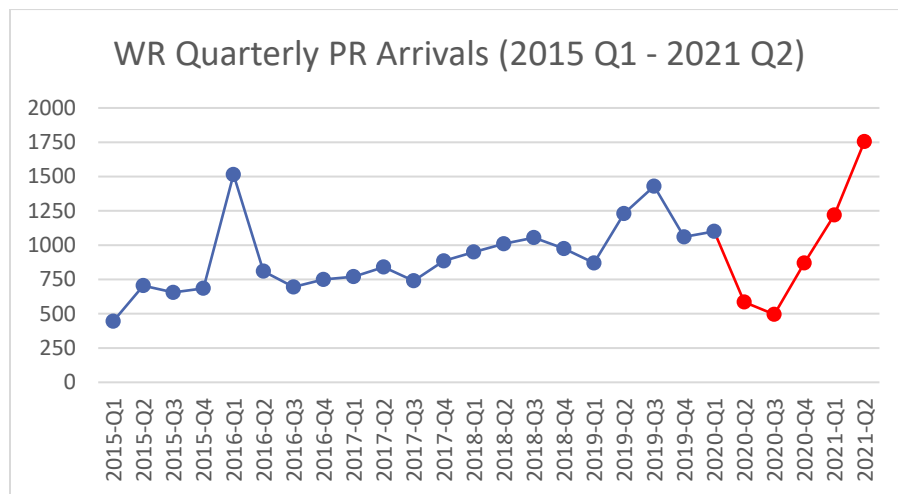
**SSG:** Alana Banton (Region of Waterloo, Housing - replacing Sherry White), Rozina Shaheen (Muslim Social Services KW), Wisam Osman (Coalition of Muslim Women KW), Jenni Wagler (COMPASS Refugee Centre)

**BSG:** Amy Slack (Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank – replacing Chaitali Maybhate)

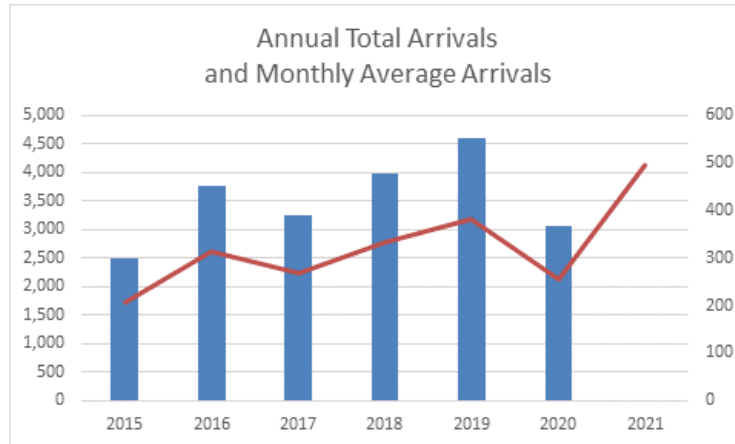
## Context and cross-referrals

### Immigration Data and Trends

- In August, the federal government announced it will resettle 20,000 Afghan refugees in Canada. Some of have started to arrive in Waterloo Region; total arrivals are yet known.
- Canada’s immigration target for 2021 is 401,000. As of the end of June, 144,715 new permanent residents had been admitted to Canada (a mix of people previously in country on a temporary permit and PR applicants with no prior history in Canada).
  - In Ontario, this included 41,390 economic immigrants, 12,920 sponsored family members and 15,395 refugees.
- There were **2,980** new permanent resident admissions in Waterloo Region in Q1 and Q2 2021 (1,775 Kitchener, 780 Waterloo, 405 Cambridge, 10 Woolwich, 10 Wilmot).
- Permanent resident arrivals for 2021 Q2 were 200% higher than 2020 Q2 and 43% higher than 2019 Q2. ([IRCC data, 2021](#))



- Average monthly PR admissions numbers have increased from 208 per month in 2015 up to 383 in 2019, down to 254 in 2020 and are back up to the highest yet – 497 per month Q1 and Q2 2021. At this pace, Waterloo Region will have a projected total of almost 6,000 PR admissions in 2021.



### Contributors to success

- We met our goal of hearing from more than 1500 immigrants through the Immigrant Survey in June in large part due to outreach and promotion by partners. **THANK YOU SO MUCH!!!**
- Partners have been keen to know what others are doing and partner when possible (though this is tempered by the demands of simply adapting to this quickly changing environment).
- Solid foundation of partnership and collaboration within IP.

### Challenges and how we're responding

- Partners have been challenged to continue programs virtually but have moved many programs/events to virtual space using multiple methods. Outreach to individuals who are not connected to specific programs or who lack tech access/skills to connect virtually is a challenge but partners are reaching out on a one-on-one basis. Virtual programming presents some challenges and also many opportunities.

### How Council or other Steering Groups can support

- Refer employers seeking talent to WSG.
- Share and nominate landlords for IP's 2021 Newcomer Landlord Award until the September 17 deadline.
- Review and improve as needed organizational policies on interpretation provision.
- Participate in BSG's #RacialEquityWR campaign – display lawnsigns, posters and more to help spread the message at home, work and in the community.

### Other community initiatives and how they relate

- The Region of Waterloo and cities of Kitchener and Waterloo are building up staff capacity to address equity, anti-racism and diversity. We are following developments and looking to align.
- Regional Council is working towards a regional anti-racism plan. This relates directly to the Belong Steering Group's goal in CAP 2020-2025 that "Immigration is widely supported and racism and discrimination are addressed through a regional Anti-Racism Strategy." It struck a community advisory committee and we continue to explore alignment.
- We are exploring formal membership with the KW4 Ontario Health Team.

**PARTNERSHIP-WIDE**

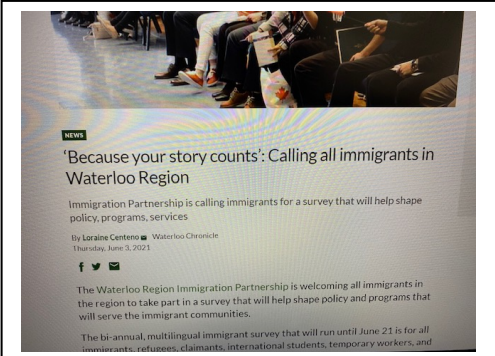
Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>I.</b></p> <p><b>Champion advocacy and engage with elected officials, policy and systems leaders</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to advocate for immigrant-responsiveness within the regional pandemic response across sectors, contributing to a developing health equity approach, disaggregated data collection/dissemination, attention to specific challenges, language access and culturally appropriate responses. Supported ROWs development of community outreach to diverse communities, multi-lingual resources on prevention measures, pop-up vaccine clinics and focus on 5-11 year old outreach.</li> <li>In follow-up to Kitchener Mayor's Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, will participate on selection committee to identify members of City Council's new Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee.</li> <li>In the Region's Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan Advisory Committee, advocated: 1. That the work is grounded in IP research among immigrants; 2. That hate, racism and inequity to be included as priorities affecting safety and wellbeing; and 3. That the plan focuses on addressing systems change. Also supported Region staff consulting on the plan with connections with local partners and community leaders and sharing Immigrant Survey data.</li> <li>Became a member of the KW4 Ontario Health Team and attended first meeting in early Nov.</li> <li>Engagement with area school boards to clarify enrolment procedures for refugees living in temporary accommodation. Meetings with WRDBS senior leadership to find solutions.</li> <li>With KWMC, engaged Ontario Health to secure ongoing investment in medical interpretation in Waterloo Wellington.</li> <li>Shared Waterloo Region <a href="#">candidates for federal election positions on immigration</a> widely to inform voting.</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessed potential local impact of the <a href="#">federal government's plan to resettle 40,000 Afghan refugees</a> to Canada. Connected with community partners to understand needs, connect service partners. Informed Regional Council of current status. With KWCF/CNDCF, activated the <a href="#">IP Fund for Immigrant and Refugee Initiatives</a> as a donation mechanism. Communicated with IRCC for updates to inform planning and actions. Worked to launch an ad hoc IP Council Refugee Task Force to support area resettlement coordination.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Build awareness of the Immigration Partnership and beneficial impact of immigration</b></p>	<p>IP Council members, partners, staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through Council/SG partner and staff engagement in pandemic tables and others, grew awareness of IP, immigration and the experiences of immigrants.</li> <li>Significant social media engagement via Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook to promote the importance and contributions of immigrants to Canada. Approx. 4,416 (+141) followers and 102,119 impressions.</li> <li>Fostered significant media coverage of immigration and IP through growing collaboration with a Waterloo Chronicle editor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">New \$1.55M rent assistance program to benefit marginalized families in Waterloo region</a>, CBC News, Sept 10, 2021</li> <li><a href="#">Community members can support Afghan and other Refugees through KWCF, CNDCF and Immigration Partnership</a>, Press Release, Sept 13, 2021</li> <li><a href="#">Community foundation using special fund again to help refugees</a>, Kitchener Today, Sept 13, 2021</li> <li><a href="#">New fund to help groups working to resettle Afghan, other refugees in Waterloo region</a>, CBC News, Sept 15, 2021</li> <li><a href="#">Region launches next phase of anti-racism campaign</a>, The Observer, Sept 16, 2021</li> <li><a href="#">FEDERAL ELECTION 2021: Waterloo Region community groups call for action on LGBTQ+ rights, low-income supports and immigration policy</a>, New Hamburg Independent, The Record, The Star, Sept 21, 2021</li> <li><a href="#">Your Voice Against Racism: Abiha Syed</a>, Waterloo Chronicle, Cambridge Times, The Record, the Start, New Hamburg Independent, Sept 22, 2021</li> <li><a href="#">Meet the Waterloo Region immigrant who's been helping treat cancer patients</a>, Waterloo Chronicle, Cambridge Times, The Record, the Start, New Hamburg Independent, Oct 27, 2021</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
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### 3.

#### Lead collaborative learning and community education



Immigrant Survey story headline in the Waterloo Chronicle and New Hamburg Independent. June 2021

Partners, IP staff

- Analyzed data from June 2021 Immigrant Survey. Disaggregated data to explore unique experiences of specific groups (geography, age, immigration category, racialized, disability, LGBTQ+, income, employment, English ability, education, isolation, faith affiliation, etc.)
- Partnered with Wilfrid Laurier University to hire research student to help with data analysis.
- Currently finalizing data analysis and, in consultation with Evaluation Advisory Committee, preparing to present findings in a summary report, infographics, virtual presentation/Q&A focused on findings and another presentation on the survey/research methodology for other LIPs and local groups interested in surveys of immigrants/newcomers.
- Shared relevant data insights from Immigrant Survey with specific groups (e.g. KWMC for program evaluation and funding proposals, KW4 OHT for interpretation environmental scan, CFFM for research/journal article, BSG Welcoming and Inclusive Municipalities Subgroup for funding application, ROW for Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan and 2022 budget discussions, Counselling Collaborative for funding proposal). Explored shared presentation of youth and immigrant survey findings with Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT).
- Helped build data/research knowledge and capacity among other LIPs: Started a LIP research community of practice and shared IP's Data and Evaluation Framework, etc.
- Provided Wilfrid Laurier University research with local data about temporary residents.
- Provided local translation options and top languages for translation to groups looking to translate materials/services (e.g. Spectrum).
- Helped build community capacity for anti-racist organizational change by sharing IP's journey of embedding anti-racism in its governance with the Crime Prevention Council.
- Regular updates to the Immigration portal, with 7,660 visits by 6,124 unique visitors and 662 visits to the Afghan Resettlement landing page. Nine Weekly Updates on Covid-19 and Immigration to 566 subscribers, with a 32% open rate and 1,513 opens. Shared relevant research reports via the Immigration Weekly to grow community knowledge.

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Break down silos within the Partnership and the community to promote immigrant success</b></p>	<p>SG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing engagement of a Council and Steering Group-wide approach to implementation of <a href="#">IPs Anti-Racism Commitment</a> and evaluation framework development.</li> <li>• Continued to share resources, connections, provide support between BSG and SSG partners and pandemic groups on language and interpretation issues, providing linkages for guest speakers to specific newcomer/racialized/language groups re vaccines and safe-isolation sites.</li> <li>• Growing collaboration and alignment by regular staff engagement with WR Crime Prevention Council, Children and Youth Planning Table and Wellbeing Waterloo Region peers (focus on aligning anti-racism/equity in governance, data and evaluation, public education, and more), and other Local Immigration Partnerships across Ontario/Canada.</li> <li>• Convened weekly settlement executive leadership meetings to facilitate collaboration and alignment.</li> <li>• Ongoing connection with Local Immigration Partnership peers in SW Ontario and nationally. Hosted a meeting of nine SWO LIPs in Oct.</li> </ul>

## SETTLE STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Develop communication strategies and tools to simplify service systems and pathways for immigrants</b></p>	<p>ROW Citizen Service and Public Health, settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared information about Afghan resettlement needs and activities among SSG immigrant-serving partners.</li> <li>• Partners/staff continue to work with KW4 Ontario Health Team partners in assessing critical needs in refugee/newcomer health – focus on mental health, interpretation and pandemic-related needs. Surveyed KW4 OHT members about language interpretation use and compiled estimates of annual usage by the largest 9 local users to support ongoing exploration of coordinated system approach.</li> <li>• IP Council and KWMC met with Ontario Health West about ongoing health interpretation funding (previously through the WW LHIN) – they are still clarifying funding commitment going forward but have committed to bridge funding at in interim.</li> <li>• Provided feedback to City of Waterloo on resource for new residents (immigrants and others).</li> </ul>

<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Drive collaboration and innovation within the settlement sector</b></p>	<p>YMCA, KWMC, Reception House, Carizon, MCRS, IP staff</p> <p>IP partners and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with YMCA, KWMC and Reception House in hosting periodic lunches for direct-service staff to learn and network together.</li> <li>• Supported GRH and other health partners in piloting Voyce-enabled mobile tablets for interpretation in health settings (both hospital and broader community contexts).</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Leverage service providers and planning tables as effective immigrant supports through strong relationships and collaboration</b></p>	<p>Settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners and staff continue to support <u>KW4</u> Ontario Health Team (OHT) groups, which have identified refugees as a priority population, to determine health, mental health, and language interpretation resources and pathways for refugees. Part of the KW4 OHT Refugee Health working group and the Refugee Mental Health Working Group. IP staff is co-leading KW4 Interpretation Services working group with CFFM staff.</li> <li>• Continue to collaborate with Region of Waterloo Housing staff in the planning to develop a <u>portal housing benefit for equity-deserving populations</u> (Black, Indigenous and people of colour). Launched on Sept 9, it will be piloted with 30 families from the community housing waiting list and, based on the learnings, community organizations from specific population groups will be engaged to drive program planning and implementation.</li> <li>• Carizon, with IP and other partners, are developing the Newcomer Service System Navigator program to support newcomers needing to navigate complex mental health and community services systems.</li> <li>• Maintained connection to housing and other community action tables to bring forward immigrant perspectives. Submitted feedback to provincial energy efficiency loan programs for racialized groups.</li> <li>• Staff &amp; partners participated in Leadership Waterloo Region’s affordable housing panel discussion.</li> <li>• Immigrant Housing Working Group partners met regularly to share, network and problem-solve in this SSG sub-group.</li> <li>• Consulted with University of Waterloo Health Studies regarding partnerships with immigrant-serving partners to host student placements.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Engage networks of private stakeholders in supporting immigrants</b></p>	<p>Settlement and other partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected 2021 Newcomer Landlord Award winners and will announce these at the National Housing Day local celebration event on Nov 22. Shared IP and partners’ <u>“This is Home” video series</u> featuring Landlord Award recipients (with Reception House and COMPASS) about newcomers finding home in Waterloo Region (<a href="http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/LandlordAward">www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/LandlordAward</a>).</li> </ul>

## WORK STEERING GROUP

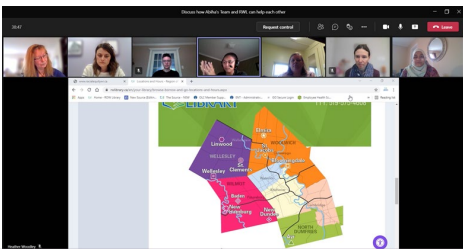

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Develop campaigns and tools to amplify the value proposition and economic contribution of immigrants to employers</b></p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<p>Ongoing placement of strategic ads in Chamber newsletters and directories, social media and virtual events for awareness building and message sharing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoted via Chamber of Commerce (Cambridge and Greater KW) events and publications. ie. annual publications</li> <li>• Gaining greater awareness through the use of social media: LinkedIn posts related to hiring immigrant talent and associated topics. Promoting partnerships with other organizational initiatives.</li> <li>• Hosted a booth at Greater KW Chamber Business Around 5 events using video, backdrops and chatrooms to build awareness and engage with employers.</li> <li>• Partnered with the Guelph Wellington Immigration Partnership to support Workforce Planning Board in an immigrant research project that will be completed by the Spring of 2022.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Foster cohesive service to employers and immigrant job-seekers across sectors and the talent spectrum</b></p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked closely with employment service partners and employers to build the bridge for immigrants to access meaningful employment.</li> <li>• Continued to work closely with the Workforce Planning Board (WFPB) to market their FindyourJob.ca job board and to discuss the future of including more immigrant hiring, networking and resource tools.</li> <li>• The Talent Hub task group have been meeting and in light of the pandemic and limited funding they had been exploring FindYourJob.ca (via WFPB) as a possible platform to provide additional resources to employers and also job seekers to get connected. But it was concluded that beyond FindYourJob.ca posting some resources, it is best to consider other alternatives for maximum effectiveness. The group have been gathering to discuss other ideas including the Greater KW Chamber possibly hosting similar to their Student Access program. The critical component in planning for the Hub is that it requires funds for programming, marketing, staff and administration. Ongoing discussions take place at WSG.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Engage networks of employers to hire and retain immigrants</b></p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WSG's role is to bring awareness to employers that immigrants are invaluable to their organization, that they are here and ready to work; also to look at processes and systems that will allow employers to easily access this talent and make connections. Engaging employer partners in 2020 was a challenge because of COVID but there has been an increase in outreach from employers during 2021 desperately looking for people. Manufacturing, healthcare, warehousing, restaurants and retail and more. They do not know</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		<p>where to turn. They are looking at how they can hire immigrants and refugees and from where. Other employers have more questions around immigration law – how to retain folks who have been on a work permit or how to bring people from abroad. The questions and concerns are growing on behalf of employers. We are sharing job postings to our network regularly but clearly it shows the need for a hub where immigrants and refugees can go to access jobs and employers can engage them. Some of the roles are not what immigrants are looking for but we continue to share any job postings received within our network so that a bridge can be created for immigrants to access employers. FindYourJob.ca reports an increase in job postings across the region. We have had more employers reach out and they are not sure what the answer is to this talent crisis. We have been sharing creative ideas with them and suggesting to connect with ethno cultural groups to build a reputation as an employer of choice. The answers to there question of where to access people is not easy. We do hope that an increase in immigration can begin to address this gap.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have participated in the Reskilling Initiative being led by the Region of Waterloo with representatives from education, business, service providers. The goal is to access funding for a pilot that would focus on one sector (Warehousing) to increase its ability to hire and retain talent. Immigrants and refugees will play a significant role within this project. This project was put on hold for a few months as the Region's Economic Dev who are leading this project are focused other priorities. The group were to reconvene in the fall of 2021 but this has not happened yet. We are waiting for direction on this initiative.</li> <li>• We continue to partner with the Greater KW Chamber on the weekly Business Success webinars with one in September of 2021 and again one is scheduled for November and more planned for 2022 as well.</li> <li>• We have partnered with Cambridge Chamber of Commerce on a series of webinars related to immigration topics. These are to take place this fall. We supported an Anti-Racism seminar they offered in Oct.</li> <li>• We continue to work the Greater KW Chamber and Cambridge Chamber on immigrant related events as we move throughout this year and beyond. IP participates on the DEI Committee of the Greater KW Chamber of Commerce to offer input into their messaging to the business community and the community as a whole.</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>Collaborate with leaders and organizations (public, private and not-for-profit) to foster immigrant attraction, employment and entrepreneurship</b></p>	<p>IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work closely with regional economic development reps via Best WR and beyond. Continue to address various sectors and what they are facing during COVID and how this group can support them. This group will continue working together beyond COVID as they need has been expressed that there is not a community table to discuss the urgent talent gaps for employers.</li> <li>• Have been having discussions and acting as a resource for the Business Education Partnership to be able to provide support to newcomer teens re: careers.</li> <li>• Developed stronger relationships with new team members at ROW Ec Dev and the City of Cambridge. All urban municipalities now engaged with WSG.</li> <li>• Continue relationships with SWO Immigration Partnerships with leadership by Immploy as we look to plan webinars for employers.</li> <li>• Participate in regular 'All Hands On' economic development meetings with business and community leaders sharing status of supports and advocating through COVID.</li> <li>• Continued to work with the Small Business Centre, promote their workshops and make connections with immigrant service providers to improve supports for immigrant entrepreneurs.</li> <li>• Will be participating in the Workforce Planning Boards' Employer Conference in Nov.</li> <li>• Continued to work with the Job Developer Group and CELC (Community Employment and Literacy Council)</li> <li>• Through our partnership with Worldwide Education Services (WES) we are working on a program called Immigrants Works. The ultimate goal is to launch an employer playbook for Waterloo Region re: hiring immigrants and more. Have been meeting bi-weekly with WES team to develop a work plan, monthly with foundational partners, and an employer workshop was delivered in Oct - 65 employers who registered for this event. We will be compiling information from this event and using it toward plans for the Employer Playbook for our region. There was good input from employers.</li> <li>• We participated in the Oct Manufacturing Day event with Workforce Planning Board. This was a virtual tour. Immigrants and refugees joined in on their own schedule. It included a tour of local manufacturers and an opportunity to hear from the owners and HR professionals about opportunities.</li> <li>• Continue to attend educational meetings and to participate in sessions that keep IP connected to the business community within Waterloo region and beyond. The changes that are facing employers are drastic re:</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
		staff shortages and whatever IP can do to bridge the gap is very important.

# BELONG STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
  <p data-bbox="136 1213 565 1310">Ethno-Cultural Multicultural Connections Grant Writing Workshop October 2021</p>	<p data-bbox="613 617 808 785">BSG partners, IP staff, and Social Inclusion Working Group (SIWG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="841 617 1516 716">• Continued participation in discussions that affect the lives of immigrants and refugees with community partners, ethnocultural groups, and members.</li> <li data-bbox="841 726 1549 789">• Continued participation in South Western Ontario Local Immigration Partnership meetings.</li> <li data-bbox="841 800 1549 898">• Connected with Canada Local Immigration Partnerships to discuss/plan a focus group to reach out to ethnocultural members.</li> <li data-bbox="841 909 1549 1184">• The Social Inclusion WG planned and organized the virtual Multicultural Connections Grant Writing Workshop. It was well attended by 44 participants, who took part in the discussion enthusiastically. This workshop provided an opportunity for different ethno-cultural community members to ask questions and exchange experiences relating to grant writing and the application process.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="883 1192 1370 1220">The panel included representatives from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="932 1228 1500 1255">- United Way Waterloo Region Communities</li> <li data-bbox="932 1264 1500 1291">- Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation</li> <li data-bbox="932 1299 1305 1327">- Ontario Trillium Foundation</li> <li data-bbox="932 1335 1516 1434">- Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries &amp; Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="841 1444 1549 1686">• Connected with the Region of Waterloo Library Branches management team to discuss how we can collaborate to make the townships more equitable and help ethnocultural communities develop a sense of belonging. The townships include Linwood, St. Clements, Wellesley, Elmira, St. Jacobs, Bloomingdale, Baden, New Hamburg, New Dundee, and Ayr.</li> <li data-bbox="841 1696 1549 1936">• This year the International Organization for Migration is not hosting the Global Migration Film Festival. BSG's SIWG decided to organize the Waterloo Region Migration Film Festival (WRMFF) 2021 - #WRMigFest. It will be a small and local film festival aiming to use films as educational tools to pave the way for greater discussion around migration and relocation, by creating</li> </ul>

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
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safe spaces for respectful interaction and dialogues. It will take place from December 1-18.

- Ongoing updating of ethno-cultural groups list and efforts to make connections and build relationships.
- Ongoing phone and zoom meetings to build a rapport and relationship with ethno-cultural leaders/members.

**2.**


**Work with municipalities and other public sector partners as leaders and advocates to strengthen immigrant welcoming, inclusion, and engagement**



Indigenization Certificate Training Part-2  
November 9, 2021

City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener, City of Cambridge, IP staff

- The Indigenization Certificate Training Part 2 - Pathway To Reconciliation is scheduled for Nov 2, 9, 16, and 23. 20 participants registered.
- Attended the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation in Kitchener and Cambridge.
- Continued support/participation, share resources, networking, support between partners on language and interpretation issues, connections for guest speakers to specific newcomer/racialized/language groups re belonging, and community building.
  - Provided feedback for park new logo – City of Waterloo.
  - The final version of “Guide to Improve Social Connectedness” was approved and is out in the community (Toolkit to improve social connectedness for senior/older adults) – City of Waterloo.
  - Newcomers’ Connections Conference Committee - City of Cambridge
  - Continued support to the consultant working on the development of a targeted preventative children’s mental health strategy for the region via Lutherwood. Lutherwood is the lead agency for children’s mental health in Waterloo Region.
  - Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan to improve the wellbeing and safety of everyone - Region of Waterloo.



Kelly Fran Davis speaker on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, Cambridge. September, 2021

IP Staff and Public Education Working Group (PEWG)

- Continue to support, collaborate and build capacity to address hate crime, hate incidents, racism at the individual, organizational, and community level by attending related workshops and training.
- Ongoing contributions to the webpage with anti-racism work/resources/connectors taking place in Waterloo Region. The webpage is housed on the IP website RacialEquityWR
- The PEWG continues to develop anti-racism strategies, resources, and campaigns like #RacialEquityWR.
  - #RacialEquityWR lawn sign Campaign was officially wrapped up for 2021. Of the 780 lawn signs printed, only 30 remain.

**discrimination and foster immigrant belonging through campaigns and initiatives**

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
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Dianne Boston-Nyp (left), IP's Abiha Syed (middle), and Chair of BSG Brittney Emslie (right) #RacialEquityWR Bike Ride event at Victoria park, October 2021

- #RacialEquityWR Bike Ride event was organized to mark the wrapping-up of the #RacialEquityWR lawn sign Campaign in partnership with Arcy Canumay, the Bicycle Mayor of Waterloo; 15 people attended this event. There were representatives from CycleWR, Sustainable Waterloo Region, Climate Action WR, Intersection of Environmental Racism, Climate Change, and Health, etc. There was a discussion about the #RacialEquityWR Campaign, sustainability and cycling. We also brainstormed about the most effective ways to re-launch this campaign in the spring of 2022.

**4.**

**Collaborate with systems and community tables and leaders**

Municipal partners, IP staff

- Developed the guiding principles for the Welcome and Inclusion Municipalities Working Group (WIMWG). This will help/guide the representatives from each municipality (Waterloo, Kitchener and Cambridge) to better understand how the work of WIMWG aligns, focuses and reflects the work of the three municipalities.
- Applied for Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation Racial Equity Fund for a project to address racial inequities and belonging through art which will build on the #RacialEquityWR work.
- Continue to participate and work closely with Psychosocial and spiritual working group – A pandemic response group with the purpose to help people know where and how to access psychosocial and spiritual supports during the pandemic - Wellbeing Waterloo
- Continue to participate and work closely with Cambridge Mobilization Team.
- Continue to be a member of the Region of Waterloo's internal Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Human rights (EDI) Working Group

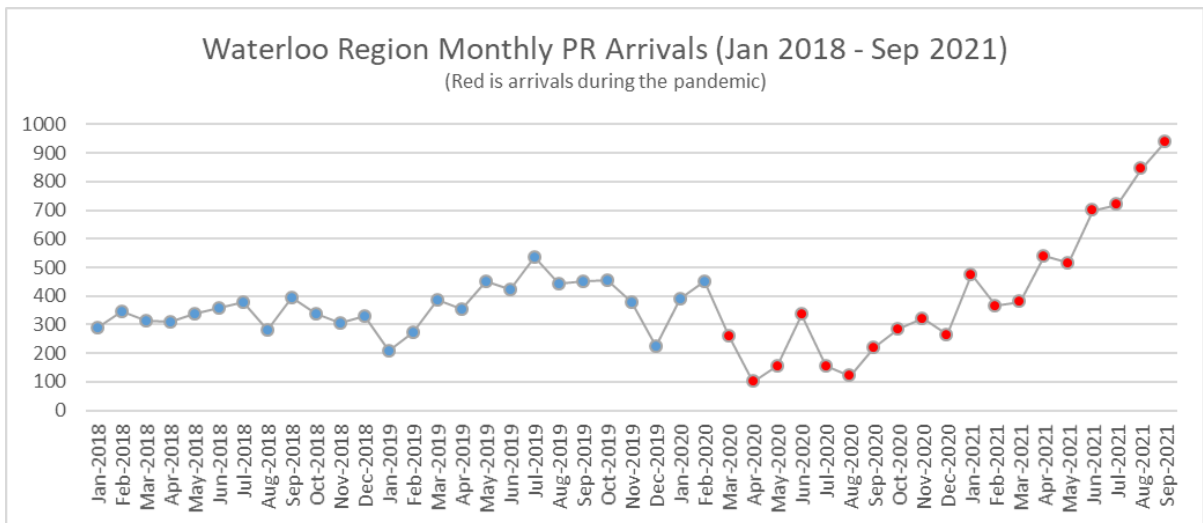
# Welcome New Partners!

**SSG:** Dauda Raji (House of Friendship), Ashi Nasim & Shariqua Raza (Muslim Women of Cambridge)  
**BSG:** Marian Rozman (YMCA of Three Rivers), Aracy Selvakumar (Reception House) Olga Vigil Letang (City of Cambridge, replacing Vanessa Lopak) and Paige Monck-Whipp (Wellbeing Waterloo Region)

## Context and cross-referrals

### Immigration Data and Trends

- In September, the federal government increased the number of Afghan it committed to resettling to 40,000. Some of have started to arrive in Waterloo Region.
- Canada's immigration target for 2021 is 401,000. As of the end of September, 267,000 new permanent residents had been admitted to Canada (a mix of people previously in country on a temporary permit and PR applicants with no prior history in Canada). Canada is on track to reach the 2021 target if the current rate of new arrivals is maintained over the last three months of the year ([CIC News, 2021](#)).
- Monthly new permanent resident arrivals in Waterloo Region continue to increase. Before the pandemic, average monthly arrivals had risen from 208 in 2015 to 383 in 2019. In the first six months of the pandemic, monthly average arrivals dropped to 180 but has since risen to 940 new admissions in September 2021 (575 Kitchener, 215 Waterloo, 140 Cambridge, 10 in rural townships) ([IRCC data, 2021](#)).



### Contributors to success

- Partner passion and commitment!
- Partners have been keen to know what others are doing and partner when possible (though this is tempered by the demands of simply adapting to this quickly changing environment).
- Solid foundation of partnership and collaboration within IP.

### Challenges and how we're responding

- Partners have been challenged to continue programs virtually but have moved many programs/events to virtual space using multiple methods. Outreach to individuals who are not

connected to specific programs or who lack tech access/skills to connect virtually is a challenge but partners are reaching out on a one-on-one basis. Virtual programming presents some challenges and also many opportunities.

**How Council or other Steering Groups can support**

- Refer employers seeking talent to WSG.
- Review and improve as needed organizational policies on interpretation provision and anti-racism.
- Participate in the 2021 Waterloo Region Migration Film Festival campaign – host a screening or attend a film.

**Other community initiatives and how to they relate**

- The Region of Waterloo and cities of Kitchener and Waterloo are building up staff capacity to address equity, anti-racism and diversity. We are following developments and looking to align.
- It is budget season for our area municipalities – we have started sharing insights from the Immigrant Survey to inform priority setting.