



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

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F-1294048

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MEMORANDUM TO THE DEPUTY MINISTER AND THE ASSOCIATE DEPUTY MINISTER

**NATIONAL CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2024 – PROPOSED FUNDING PRIORITIES:
SETTLEMENT PROGRAM AND RESETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

FOR APPROVAL

SUMMARY

- The purpose of this memorandum is to seek your approval of the funding priorities, eligibility criteria and proposed changes for the 2024 Call for Proposals (CFP 2024) for the Settlement Program and the Resettlement Assistance Program. The CFP will renew the full range of services delivered by third-party service provider organizations for a five-year period (April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2030).
- The proposed changes in the scope and content of the programs will align programming with program evidence collected over the course of the last funding cycle (2019-2024), client outcomes and consultations with the settlement and resettlement sectors. As a result, the CFP will seek proposals that will make targeted improvements to the programs, including investments to support Truth and Reconciliation and organizations that serve racialized communities and clientele, 2SLGBTQI+ and other underrepresented populations.
- There is alignment between many of the proposed areas of innovation in the CFP and the themes identified through the Strategic Immigration Review consultations, notably: the promotion of welcoming communities; the importance of the « *par et pour* » approach for service delivery to Francophone newcomers; the use of technology to deliver services; and increasing access to services in smaller centres.
- We recommend you approve the proposed approach to CFP 2024 outlined in this memo by checking the “I concur” box and signing this memorandum by August 25, 2023, which will allow Departmental officials to finalize the process to launch the Call for Proposals in fall 2023.

BACKGROUND:

- The current investment for the Settlement and Resettlement Assistance Programs is over \$1.3B in 2023-2024, funding 562 recipient organizations with 850 Contribution Agreements (CA) on

Canada

a five-year cycle. As part of IRCC's commitment to deliver high-quality services to newcomers and refugees, IRCC plans to launch a call for proposals for the Settlement and Resettlement Assistance programs to provide services for another five years, as current agreements will expire on March 31, 2025.

- To continue to keep pace with an evolving immigration and settlement delivery context, we are proposing targeted improvements to ensure that services remain relevant and that the programs remain efficient, nimble and flexible so that clients can receive the support they need, when they need it.
- The proposed program policy priorities for the 2024 Call for Proposals (CFP 2024) were presented to ExCom on June 7, 2023.

CURRENT STATUS:

- Since CFP 2019, the Department has continued to develop its evidence base, notably through the Settlement Outcomes report, two major evaluations, several waves of the Newcomers Outcomes Survey, and research on the recent experience with the pandemic. As a result, the Department has strengthened its knowledge of what continues to work well and meet client needs and where there are opportunities to make changes.
- National consultations conducted early in 2023 with over 1,300 partners and stakeholders also informed key priority areas to be addressed. Based on these consultations, opportunities and priorities were identified and confirmed: continue to emphasize partnerships at all levels to minimize duplication of effort; maintain and expand specialized services to better meet the needs of diverse clientele; and continue the momentum initiated during the pandemic to improve access to digital services, including a transition to delivering pre-arrival services fully online for most overseas clients.
- Overall, the Department's work on the priorities and parameters for CFP 2024 will ensure the program continues to offer the "right service, to the right client, at the right time". It is with this overarching vision in mind that some refinements and changes to programming are proposed, to build on the solid foundations that are in place, while balancing the settlement sector's capacity to adjust to and manage change.
- Targeted improvements to the Settlement Program are grouped into overarching themes:
 - **Increase consistency:** Targeted improvements to base services in the program are intended to promote increased consistency and awareness of services by implementing a more nationally consistent approach to service delivery, and ensuring that clients with the most barriers and complex needs have the supports they need, i.e., development of a case management framework with common objectives and practices; standardization of needs and assets assessment and referral services (NAARS) with dedicated service provider organizations (SPOs), reducing the number of SPOs providing NAARS and requiring SPOs who deliver NAARS to use a standardized form and join a community of practice in their designated service zone. Overall, the improvements will enable clients to be connected to the supports they

need and access services of comparable quality and content, no matter where they are in Canada.

- **Promote and facilitate collaboration:** Consultations with the settlement sector indicated a need to increase collaboration within the sector, including cross-sector partnerships. CFP 2024 will make improvements in this area through co-planning and sharing information with other orders of government to support effective and efficient settlement program delivery. In addition, clearer expectations and objectives will be set for umbrella organizations and local immigration partnerships to ensure stronger community linkages and collaboration across local/regional partners and the introduction of new priorities that promote social inclusion, such as expanding Indigenous-newcomers connections that were initiated in the previous CFP.
 - **Increase capacity of community partners:** Encouraging the co-design of programming with clients, and strengthening community connections volunteer capacity (i.e., by providing increased training and resources on intercultural competence and trauma), and enhancing access to services in smaller centres are also important measures for CFP 2024 in creating the right conditions to attract and retain newcomers in those communities.
 - **Flexibility:** While the improvements for CFP 2024 will promote better consistency, flexibility will be maintained to ensure programming can be adapted to the characteristics and specific needs of clients and regions. The proposed changes will also ensure that the program remains flexible and recognizes the role of provinces and territories in co-planning to support the settlement and integration of newcomers.
- CFP 2024 will also solicit proposals in four dedicated *streams*: Resettlement Assistance Program; Francophone Integration Pathway; Equity; and Service Delivery Improvements. These streams highlight areas where the Department would like to see continued efforts in meeting the needs of diverse client cohorts or other program/policy objectives. For additional details on the improvements to base services and the dedicated funding streams, please see Annex A.
 1. **Resettlement Assistance Program:** CFP 2024 will build on the expansion undertaken in the Resettlement Assistance Program since 2019 by seeking proposals to extend the footprint to four additional areas of the country where opportunity, interest, and capacity exists. This will add capacity to facilitate distribution of government-assisted refugees across Canada. We will also look to ensure that Resettlement Assistance Program SPOs have more consistent capacity to serve French-speaking clients. In addition, through the CFP, we will embed a refugee pathway in contribution agreements to ensure a smooth and consistent transition for refugees accessing Resettlement Assistance Program support in their first weeks to settlement providers, to ensure clients are referred to the services they need. CFP 2024 will look to ensure consistent access to specialized services (e.g., case management), by introducing common eligibility criteria and comparable service offerings across the country.
 2. **Francophone Integration Pathway:** The Francophone Integration Pathway will be consolidated, through efforts to clearly recognize the Pathway within the Settlement

Program's Terms and Conditions. Other proposed measures include increasing capacity of organizations that deliver services to Francophone newcomers (e.g., through a « *par et pour* » model); setting a minimum funding target for Francophone programming in each region; strengthening community connections to better connect and retain Francophone newcomers to build a more robust Francophone settlement sector and increase investments in services from more partners.

3. **Equity (Capacity Building):** The CFP will seek to enhance the settlement sector's capacity to create more inclusive, equitable services for diverse newcomers. With an allocation of up to \$25M annually, this stream is designed to support organizations that have historically not received funding (or been unsuccessful applying for funding) under the Settlement or Resettlement programs. Under this stream, we will seek to build the capacity of organizations that are led by, and/or provide services to racialized clients, migrant women, and/or the 2SLGBTQI+ population.
4. **Service Delivery Improvement:** CFP 2024 is an essential step to advance and harness innovation by leveraging the use of digital and hybrid delivery of services, and maintaining a dedicated service delivery improvement envelope to promote small-scale testing and research of innovative approaches (i.e., supporting newcomer attraction and retention in small and medium population centres; connecting privately sponsored refugees to settlement services; improving capacity to serve clients who have multiple barriers, etc.)

CONSIDERATIONS:

N/R

- The overarching approach to CFP 2024 aims to balance an agenda of service continuity and stability for both clients and funded organizations, with opportunities to make strategic changes to where, how, and to whom, services are delivered.
- Areas where changes are contemplated were informed by a number of lines of evidence, including consultations with the settlement sector in Spring 2023 earlier this year and long-standing requests from the sector for improvements to consistency in service delivery (i.e., standardization of needs assessments and referrals services, and offering more services digitally) and reduction of administrative burden (i.e., improvements to the Funding Risk Assessment Model to focus on organizational risk, rather than individual agreements).
- However, some service providers may focus on what may be seen as changes or new expectations that the CFP will set out, such as: a new requirement to use and share best practices and resources in order to minimize duplication; the expansion of case management as

a direct service across the country; a transition to online delivery of pre-arrival services for most clients. Some of these changes may result in changes for SPOs who have been delivering these services, which they may perceive as negative. We will use settlement sector governance tables to further mobilize and socialize these changes with partners, while managing potential expectations and reactions.

- The launch of CFP 2024 will address some of the themes that emerged through the Strategic Immigration Review (SIR) consultations. In particular, by strengthening programming in a number of areas such as: promoting welcoming communities through increasing collaboration among stakeholders and building additional capacity to enhance the role of community partnerships; leveraging the use of hybrid and digital delivery of services; continuing to expand the « *par et pour* » approach for services to Francophones in Official Language Minority Communities outside of Quebec; and increasing access to services in smaller centres.
- A number of more foundational issues were raised during SIR consultations, and have also been raised in recent discussions at the Forum of Ministers Responsible for Immigration (FMRI) such as: questions around the eligibility of temporary residents for IRCC-funded settlement services, the need to develop a crisis response framework to provide a strategic approach to supporting vulnerable populations who may not be eligible for federally-funded settlement services, and efforts to explore new or different models of service partnerships with other institutions or levels of government. Work will continue to advance on these foundational issues outside the CFP process. On the FPT issues more broadly, ongoing bilateral discussions with provinces and territories (PTs) provide opportunities to update on the scope of the CFP.

CONSULTATIONS:

- Cross-country sessions were held with over 1,300 participants that brought together settlement and resettlement delivery partners, Francophone organizations and local immigration partnerships.
- FPT counterparts were engaged on the broad themes for the CFP through discussions at the FMRI Settlement Working Group. Bilateral FPT discussions have continued to consult on PTs' areas of interest or concern, and signal the Department's approach to CFP 2024.
- Officials will return to settlement and resettlement sector governance partners in October 2023 to present in greater detail the broad CFP parameters. This will support the mobilization of organizations and partners in developing the linkages and partnerships required to prepare their submissions.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- Existing sources of funding will be used to support settlement and resettlement funding agreements resulting from CFP 2024.
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- The approach we have proposed for CFP 2024, and measures to increase consistency and minimize duplication in services, is expected to contribute to mitigate impacts on Settlement Program clients

COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS:

- The eligibility criteria for CFP 2024 is not expected to generate public media interest outside of the Settlement and Resettlement sectors, although unsuccessful organizations may approach media outlets to voice their dissatisfaction. A responsive communications approach is recommended, with key messages developed that will outline the CFP 2024 priorities, as well as underscore the plans in place to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the process and the continuity of settlement services.
- Communications will be exploring a proactive communications approach to support the overall CFP 2024 process and subsequent contribution agreements to highlight the benefits to newcomers and Canadians. A communications strategy will be developed ahead of the launch of CFP 2024.

RECOMMENDATION:

- We recommend you approve the proposed approach to CFP 2024 outlined in this memo by checking the “I concur” box and signing this memorandum by August 25, 2023, which will allow Departmental officials to finalize the process to launch the Call for Proposals in fall 2023.

NEXT STEPS:

- The Settlement and Integration Sector will provide a foundational briefing to Minister Miller on the settlement and resettlement assistance programs, and an overview of CFP 2024 in early September. A memorandum outlining the proposed CFP 2024 funding priorities for the settlement and resettlement assistance programs will follow for the Minister’s awareness and concurrence.
- Upon your approval, Departmental officials will:
 - Finalize IT and system changes as well as funding guidelines and application resources for both applicants and IRCC officers for the Call for Proposals,
 - Prepare information webinars and engagement with organizations on the application process; and,

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- o Work toward the launch of the Call for Proposals before the end of 2023.

Catherine Scott

I concur

I do not concur

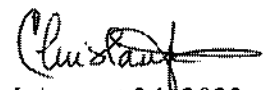


DMA e-approved

Scott Harris
Associate Deputy Minister

I concur

I do not concur



DM e-approved August 24, 2023

Christiane Fox
Deputy Minister

Annex A: CFP 2024 Design

**Pages 8 to / à 11
are withheld pursuant to section
sont retenues en vertu de l'article**

21(1)(b)

**of the Access to Information Act
de la Loi sur l'accès à l'information**