

WELCOME AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

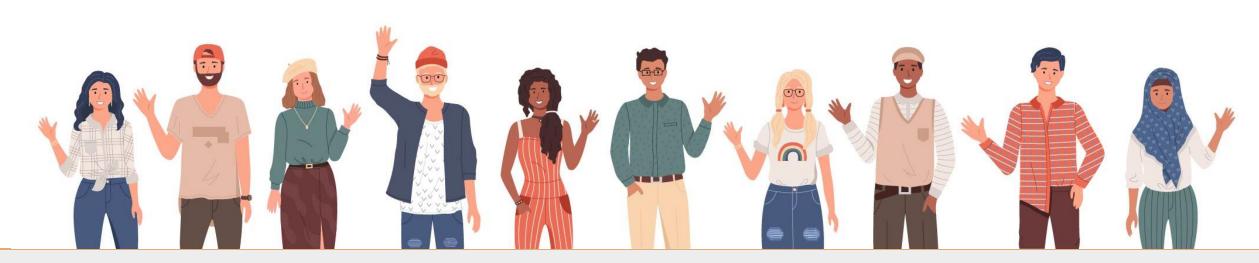
Land Acknowledgement

- At ISANS, we acknowledge that we are on unceded, traditional Mi'kmaq territory, and we are grateful for the Peace and Friendship treaties.
- As we work to settle newcomers to Nova Scotia, we honour and respect the Indigenous people of this land.
- We are actively working toward reconciliation recognizing the harm caused through colonialism – as well as building relationships with indigenous peoples.



Creating Welcoming Communities

 The arrival of new Nova Scotians affords us the opportunity to explore, in more detail, the possibilities of establishing communities that are inclusive, diverse, and welcoming.





Welcome Ambassador Program: How it Came to Be

- Funded by NSOI
- 2016 Syrian "surge"
- Short period of time
- Community preparedness
- Creating an environment



Who can Participate in Welcome Ambassador?

- Private sponsors
- Volunteers
- Businesses
- Social services
- Individuals
- Anyone!



Welcome Ambassador Program: The Process

- 1) Application
- 2) Acceptance of commitments (time, values, action)
- 3) Complete Modules using Adult Education principals (applied, experiential, and hands-on)
- 4) Complete the Action Project
- 5) Certificate
- 6) Evaluation
- * Currently, we have approximately 175 former Welcome Ambassadors



Welcome Ambassador Program: What it Looks Like

- 4 modules over 4 weeks (4 x 3hrs = 12hours). Time for reflection.
- Manual with 4 modules
- Module 1: Community Building & Understanding the Situation of Refugees
- Module 2: Cultural Humility & Understanding New Nova Scotians (first-voice guest speaker)
- Module 3: Power & Privilege
- Module 4: Communication & Action Plans



2016 Independent Evaluation: Overall Assessment

Dalhousie University professors who conducted the evaluation concluded the following:

- 1) The program accomplished more than the original objectives.
- 2) Facilitation and hands-on exercises were important for the success of the program.
- 3) The program created leadership for a more open and tolerant community.



2016 Independent Evaluation: Recommendations

In terms of further development, they recommended the following:

- 1) The program should be repeated and made available to more community leaders.
- 2) The program can be expanded to look at more diverse groups of refugees and newcomers.
- 3) Adjust the amount and focus of information to tailor for diverse audiences.

- 4) ISANS should pursue opportunities to follow up and share information among alumni of the program.
- 5) ISANS should be encouraged to develop the program nationally and for other cities and towns.



Pandemic Squared



We're Growing our Program!

- Newly developed workshops, either stand-alone or in conjunction with our Welcoming Communities program.
 - Power and Privilege
 - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) 101
 - Micro-Aggressions
 - Unconscious and Implicit Bias
 - The Newcomer Experience
 - (Intergenerational) Trauma (still in development)

- More tailored EDI/anti-racism
 workshops to help professional
 development, with particular emphasis
 on newcomers.
- These training sessions can be offered either online or in-person, depending on the size of the group, and (COVID) comfort-level of the participants.



Key Pieces for the Welcome Ambassador Program

- Needs a very skilled Facilitator
- Relevant rural/remote areas
- Relevant urban centres of all sizes
- Template replicable
- Adaptable
- Activities practice
- Applicable
- Action



Examples of Welcome Ambassador Action

- Coffee and chats
- Hosted discussion groups (books, videos)
- Conversations
- Workshops
- Lunch and learns/Brown-bag lunch series
- Tutors
- Volunteers
- Joining of private sponsorships
- Art and conversation groups



Becoming Change Agents

- Now that you know, what are you going to do about it?
- Speaks to accountability and responsibility to build a better, safer community through conversations and engagement





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Thank you!