



## **Integrating Newcomers with Volunteer Opportunities to add Leadership through Education**

INVOLVE is a new program that was piloted by the Regina Open Door Society (RODS) in partnership with the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan (MCoS) and SaskCulture in 2015. RODS continues to offer the program. A provincial partnership of the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA), SaskCulture and MCoS are now seeking a local partner in a smaller centre for the development of a second pilot program. Incorporating learning from the two pilots, we plan to train facilitators to make it available in numerous communities.

Newcomers have complex challenges in both settlement (the acclimatization and the early stages of adaptation, such as finding somewhere to live, learning the local language, getting a job, and learning to find their way around) and integration. There are fewer integration programs and services, especially in the small centres and rural areas. Successful integration is measured by how well newcomers become equal participants in all the various dimensions of society including the local cultural, economic, social and civic/political systems while preserving cultural identity; integration includes community welcome and recognition of contributions of all members, and reflection of all people and cultures in organizations, institutions, businesses and personal relationships. Integration results in a sense of belonging.

INVOLVE is truly a program in which everyone benefits.

### **Newcomer participants:**

- Gain Canadian Experience
- Contribute to the community
- Develop networks and establish community connections
- Learn to have their voices heard
- Develop leadership skills

### **Community organizations:**

- Gain new perspectives
- Learn from someone with experience as a newcomer, so they can better serve everyone in appropriate and accessible ways
- Increase their volunteer base for the present and future



## How INVOLVE Works

1. Local community organization designates a coordinator. This may be existing staff or a part-time contract.
2. Recruit and select participants (CLB 4 or higher).
3. Trained facilitator offers a series of interactive learning sessions to prepare participants for leadership volunteer roles in many types of community and civic organizations. It is designed as 3 full days plus a final evaluation, celebration and community networking and matching session. It was run on Saturdays in Regina.
4. Engage community organizations of all types who might be looking for board members, committee members, volunteer coordinators, facilitators or other volunteer leadership positions.
5. Organize supported community opportunities.
6. Mentor participants and organizations

SAISIA, MCoS and SaskCulture would like to offer this program across the province by training local facilitators. Local partner requirements:

- Strong connections to newcomers and organizations in the community
- Ability to recruit 12 to 20 participants who meet the requirements of the program
- Space for training
- Staff coordinator or capacity to recruit and manage a contract for a coordinator (4 hours/week for 3 - 4 months).
- **MCoS will offer training for local facilitators in 2017.**



For more information, please contact:

Rhonda Rosenberg, MCoS Executive Director at [exec@mcos.ca](mailto:exec@mcos.ca) or 306-721-6267  
Beulah Gana, SAISIA Director at [director@saisia.ca](mailto:director@saisia.ca) or 306-986-1340

