

# Commitment

**Saskatchewan is more diverse than ever.** It's exciting to see such vibrancy in our communities as we experience diversity and benefit from the economic and social innovation it brings. However, we cannot ignore the challenges posed by our colonial history and recent arrival of many newcomers. Racism, discrimination, stereotyping, and bias not only hurt an individual, but affect the whole community.

**Saskatchewan has been home to many Indigenous cultural groups.** These groups include Cree, Nahkawē (Saulteaux), Dene, Nakota (Assiniboine), Dakota and Lakota nations. Relationships between these groups included trade, conflict, alliance building and peaceful coexistence (see additional resources for more information on Indigenous history, culture and organizations).

The French and British initially arrived as fur traders and contact with Indigenous groups began the course for relationships. The Métis culture was born of the interaction between ethnic groups. Treatment of the original people in Saskatchewan was often discriminatory and aimed to provide privileges to those of European origin. The *treaties* signed by the sovereign nations continue to provide guidance for the relationships.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its final report in 2015. Residential schools were a major instrument of the attempt to destroy Indigenous cultures. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was created to deal with the cultural, social, emotional, sexual and physical abuse. All Canadians are called to engage with the *TRC's 94 Calls to Action*. The TRC refers to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). Canada is now a signatory. The Declaration sets out minimum standards necessary for the "dignity, survival and well-being" of Indigenous peoples.

Saskatchewan has had a rapidly growing and increasingly diverse population largely due to labour market demands. Welcoming and Inclusive Communities, including governments, businesses, organizations and institutions, should involve First Nations, Métis, established immigrants, newcomers, youth and mainstream people (who may not see themselves in any of the preceding groups).

**A Welcoming and Inclusive Community is one that is free from discrimination and where residents feel able to participate in all aspects of the social, economic, cultural, and civic/political life of the municipality.**

The information gathered in the assessment stage will have clarified the needs in your community relevant to your particular circumstances. What commitment can your organization make towards meeting the needs? This does not have to entail taking on sole responsibility. Who else might be taking a similar path?

BRIDGES, (Building Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue and Growing Engagement in Saskatchewan) is a provincial partnership between the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan (MCoS), the Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan (AFCS) and the Saskatchewan Association for Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA).

A pilot was held with local partners in Prince Albert in 2015-16 that resulted in an evaluation report. Youth BRIDGES has been running successfully in Regina since March 2016. With the support of Affinity Credit Union and artsVest, MCoS and its partners continue to support these projects and organizational networking in Saskatoon. There will be growing opportunities for local projects.

MCoS provides consultation and training to community partners interested in starting a BRIDGES in their community. Email: [education@mcos.ca](mailto:education@mcos.ca) if you are interested in details. Read full story here: [mcos.ca/bridges/](http://mcos.ca/bridges/)

## The Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan has created a Welcome Home pledge.

This is one way municipalities, organizations, institutions, businesses and individuals can demonstrate their commitment to making communities more welcoming and inclusive. It includes six specific commitments that individuals and organizations can engage with in ways appropriate to each. There is also space to make a personalized commitment that can be expressed from an individual or an organizational perspective.

Take the pledge to make Saskatchewan more Welcoming and Inclusive for all.

Here's how:

- Download the [Welcome Home Pledge](#) online at [mcos.ca](#)
- Post a photo or video of yourself with the pledge and share on social media, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.
- Use [#welcomehome150](#) on social media
- Challenge your friends to take the pledge

[Municipalities](#), consider joining CCMARD. See the summary of the [CCMARD Toolkit](#). Summary is provided with the physical toolkit.

Source: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/fight-against-discrimination/coalition-of-cities>

## Truth and Reconciliation: Related Calls to Action

### Call to Action 57

#### Education for Public Servants:

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

### Call to Action 92

#### Corporate Sector and UNDRIP:

We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources.

### Call to Action 93

#### Information Kit and Citizenship Test for Newcomers:

We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the national Aboriginal organizations, to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools.

See the full report on TRC: [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca)

# WELCOME HOME

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_,  
(name of individual, business, institution or group)

commit to uphold the Saskatchewan motto  
*From Many Peoples Strength* and actively support welcoming  
and inclusive communities that create a sense of home and  
belonging for all people.

I/We will:

 support equality, respect and dignity among all people in  
my/our community

 learn more about contributions of Indigenous people and  
our treaty rights and responsibilities

 participate in events that include and celebrate diversity

 recognize and reject racism

 develop relationships with people from different cultures

 encourage opportunities for all community members to contribute  
and to be valued

I/We make a personal commitment to

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



**WELCOMING & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES**  
Communautés accueillantes et inclusives



Canada



[Download full size pledge \(pdf\)](#)

## For smaller centres in Saskatchewan - a checklist of potential key-players:

Not everyone will agree that your community needs newcomers; nor do they have to. For any population strategy to work, however, there must be a consensus among opinion leaders and decision makers that the need is there—and significant public support backing the initiative. Strategies designed simply to attract people are never sufficient because newcomers must also be retained; they, or at least a significant number of them, must “stick”. This will depend on the welcome the community extends, which requires a high level of community consensus.

### Checklist of Potential Key-players

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Government                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Faith communities                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Government                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Health-related institutions and agencies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Government                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement agencies                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Métis Locals                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Community service providers              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Councils                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic community groups                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Friendship Centres                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlords and housing associations       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Indigenous Organizations                | <input type="checkbox"/> Libraries, recreation providers          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business, employers and labour organizations  | <input type="checkbox"/> Newcomers established in the year        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English and French language training programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Chambers of Commerce                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrant settlement agencies                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Key unions                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School boards, colleges, universities         | <input type="checkbox"/> Media                                    |

The City of Regina Cultural Plan was unanimously adopted by City Council in the spring of 2016 and identifies three main goals embrace cultural diversity, strengthen the artistic community and commemorate and celebrate the city’s cultural heritage. The Plan defines the City of Regina’s role and sets the direction for moving forward and aligns with the Vision – To be Canada’s most vibrant, inclusive, sustainable, attractive community where people live in harmony and thrive in opportunity. The City of Regina also sits as a member of the partnership council of the Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP). This community initiative examines current community resources and services for newcomers as well as identify local priorities through consultation with newcomers and the general community. The RRLIP will work to facilitate closer collaboration, coordinate activities, create efficiencies and build capacity in Regina. More on [www.rrlip.ca](http://www.rrlip.ca)

Submitted by the City of Regina