



Settlement News

Strengthening the Settlement Sector

Issue 3 August 2003

Update on the VSI National Working Groups and upcoming National Settlement Conference

Published Jointly by Government and Sector

About This Issue

Most of this newsletter is devoted to a description of the program for the upcoming National Settlement II (NSCII) conference. The Program Committee finalized the NSCII program early in July 2003.

General News – NSCII

The NSCII will take place at the Westin Hotel in Calgary, Alberta from October 2 to October 5, 2003. The goal of NSCII is to enhance the contribution and participation of immigrants and refugees in Canadian society by strengthening government partnerships with the settlement sector. We expect about 400 participants at the invitation-only conference: 350 from the voluntary sector and 50 from government (federal/provincial). Regional umbrella organizations have completed the selection of sector delegates for their respective provinces. If you have any questions about the delegate selection process, please contact your provincial umbrella organization.

General News – Canadian Heritage

Canadian Heritage and the Voluntary Sector Forum have developed 'tools' for the use of government and sector organizations involved in the Voluntary Sector Initiative. Government departments can order these 'tools' from the Voluntary Sector Affairs Directorate of Canadian Heritage, 12 York Street, 3rd Floor, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 5S6, telephone (613) 998-7207. The voluntary

sector can order these 'tools' from the Voluntary Sector Forum; please visit their web site at <http://www.vsi-isbc.ca>.

Joint Planning Committee (JPC)

Bill Walters, Director of Settlement and Multiculturalism in British Columbia, is temporarily replacing Roz Currie on the JPC until Roz's replacement has been hired. Thanks to Roz for her active participation in the Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI) project. We wish her well in her new job with the B.C. government.

Interest Group Meetings

NSCII interest group meetings will be held Thursday October 2, late in the afternoon, before the official conference activities begin. These meetings will provide an opportunity for delegates to network and to exchange ideas on an informal basis. Agendas for these meetings will be flexible – with JPC members serving as moderators – and attendance is optional. There will be

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seven different meetings covering the issues of Health, Employment, Language, HOST/Volunteer/Community Bridging, Refugees, Partnership Building and Education & Youth. If key recommendations emerge at these meetings, they will be recorded and included in the proceedings.

Plenary Sessions

The opening plenary session, *Effecting Change For Your Community*, will take place on Friday, October 3. Naomi Alboim, the conference moderator, will be the facilitator for this plenary session. A four-person panel will give advice on how to influence government policy-making in a meaningful way. Discussions are intended to provide information that has a general use – they will not be aimed solely at settlement policy. Some materials will be sent out to delegates in September for their review prior to the conference.

At the closing plenary session on Sunday, October 5, JPC co-chairs, Rosaline Frith and Reza Shahbazi – along with facilitator Naomi Alboim – will present the conference's key recommendations, achievements and next steps. VSI Working Group co-chairs will present the key recommendations from their particular sessions as well. Further, there will be a discussion of ways to continue the policy dialogue, carry on the momentum of NSCII and continue the good work done under the VSI project after the conference.

Workshops

Forty workshops are planned for Friday, October 3 and Saturday, October 4, 2003. The number of panellists in each workshop will be limited to four to allow sufficient time for questions and audience participation. Some workshops will be 90 minutes, while others will be three hours in length. A description of each workshop was included in the registration package mailed out to delegates in July. Workshops will focus on health, policy, employment, language and the settlement sector.

Registration is being done through Prime Strategies, the company contracted to handle logistics for NSCII. Please note that if less than ten persons are registered for a workshop, it will be cancelled. The key recommendations of each workshop will be recorded and included in the proceedings. **Delegates are encouraged to register for workshops as soon as they receive their registration packages.**

The VSI Working Groups

In March 2003, working group participants and the JPC came together in Toronto to launch the VSI working groups. Since March, the working groups have held regular conference calls and prepared discussion papers. These discussion papers will be sent to delegates in September so that they have a chance to read them before the conference. Each group will present their respective workshop(s) on Saturday. **Delegates are encouraged to read the discussion papers before the conference to ensure enriched discussions during the workshops.**

Group 1 Report

How to Maximize Current Settlement Work

This working group will offer a workshop at NSCII – the presenters will be Bill McMichael, Joan Texeira, Claudette Legault and Brenda Lohrenz. They will table the discussion paper *Promising Policies and Practices for Maximizing Settlement Work*. The paper will address policy issues such as settlement funding and pre-arrival information, and include the results of first-language community consultations conducted in various

immigrant and refugee communities across Canada. The research focused on exemplary settlement practice from the perspectives of newcomers and service providers. Brenda Lohrenz, who co-ordinated the development of a National Network for LINC/ELSA, MIIP-ESL Providers, will present an overview of the network. Brenda will also co-moderate the interest group meeting on Language Issues with Alison Norman, co-chair of English

Language Services for Adults (ELSA) in British Columbia.

Group 1 Co-chairs

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Group 2 Report

Small Centre Strategy

Lynne Belding, from the Prairie Region of CIC, has replaced Jean-Claude Morin as co-chair. Jean-Claude has moved to another job in CIC and we wish him well in his new position! This group's products include a discussion paper on *Small Centre Strategy* and a *Framework for a Toolbox*. Both products will assist communities (outside Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver) in creating a welcoming atmosphere for newcomers to help ensure that they are integrated into smaller centres. The group will offer a workshop at NSCII on Small Centre Strategy, where they will present the *Report on Small Centre Strategy - Regional Dispersion and Retention of Immigrants*. The presenters will be Robert Godkin, Lynne Belding and Tom Denton. Ideas for the expansion of the work currently undertaken by this group

will also be offered. Work on the Small Centre Strategy toolbox is expected to continue after NSCII.

Group 2 Co-chairs

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Group 3 Report

Settlement Accord

Jan Early has left the group; thanks to Jan for her participation in VSI! This working group's discussion paper concerns the *VSI Accord*. The group will be running a workshop at the conference on the *Practical Application of the VSI Codes of Good Practice (you can build the future of the Accord)*. Their discussion document is intended to aid in practical implementation of the VSI codes of good practice on policy dialogue and funding by the settlement sector and government. The discussion document will take the form of an addendum to the VSI accord. The workshop will be interactive so that the working group can improve on this addendum. The

presenters will be Reza Shahbazi and Camille Papanek.

Group 3 Co-chairs

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Group 4 Report

Settlement Standards, Professionalization and Accountability

The title of this working group's discussion paper is *National Settlement Services and Standards Framework*. They will be running two workshops at the conference. The first, *Towards a Common Approach to Develop Outcomes in the Immigrant Settlement Sector* will be presented by Sherman Chan, Teresa Pires, Rob Boldt and Mario Allende. To create a common approach to developing outcomes in the settlement sector, innovative performance measurement and evaluation work is ongoing in three jurisdictions: CIC/National, Alberta and British Columbia. The second workshop is *Do We Really Need Standards – Answering that Million-Dollar Question?* Francis Chan, Miranda Pinto and Paulina Maciulis will present this workshop. They will be discussing the issue of the proposed implementation of performance and professional standards for employees in the settlement sector, and the implication of this on the sector, on individual agencies, and finally, on settlement practitioners.

Group 4 Co-chairs

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Resources Area

There will be a resources area at NSCII where learning and best practices can be shared. Exhibits will be put on by the government and settlement sectors.

Social Events

On Thursday evening, October 2 there will be a reception at the Westin Hotel from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Finger food will be served and a cash bar will be available. There will be a 'fun' social on Friday evening, October 3 at the Roundup Centre, including a sit-down dinner and live entertainment. Delegates must pay the \$50 cost themselves. Persons other than official conference delegates are welcome to attend the Friday night social. Please register for this event when you register for your workshops in order to help conference organizers with their planning.

A recognition event, which includes a sit-down dinner, will take place on Saturday night. Guest speakers are being lined up – details will be provided in the final program. After the dinner, those recipients of the 2003 *Citation for Citizenship* who are attending the conference will be presented with a Citation certificate signed by the Minister and a lapel pin.

Conference Kits

Registration kits, including travel expense guidelines, the NSCII program, workshop descriptions and hotel information, were sent to sector delegates in July. Please register (through Prime Strategies) as soon as possible. The sooner you register, the more likely you will be able to participate in your choice of workshops.

Post-NSCII

Proceedings (including the key recommendations) will be prepared and posted on Integration-Net by the VSI project Secretariat in December 2003.

Post-conference, JPC members have agreed to participate in follow-up conference calls to address various issues and to help maintain the continuity of this Voluntary Sector Initiative!