

ANNUAL REPORT

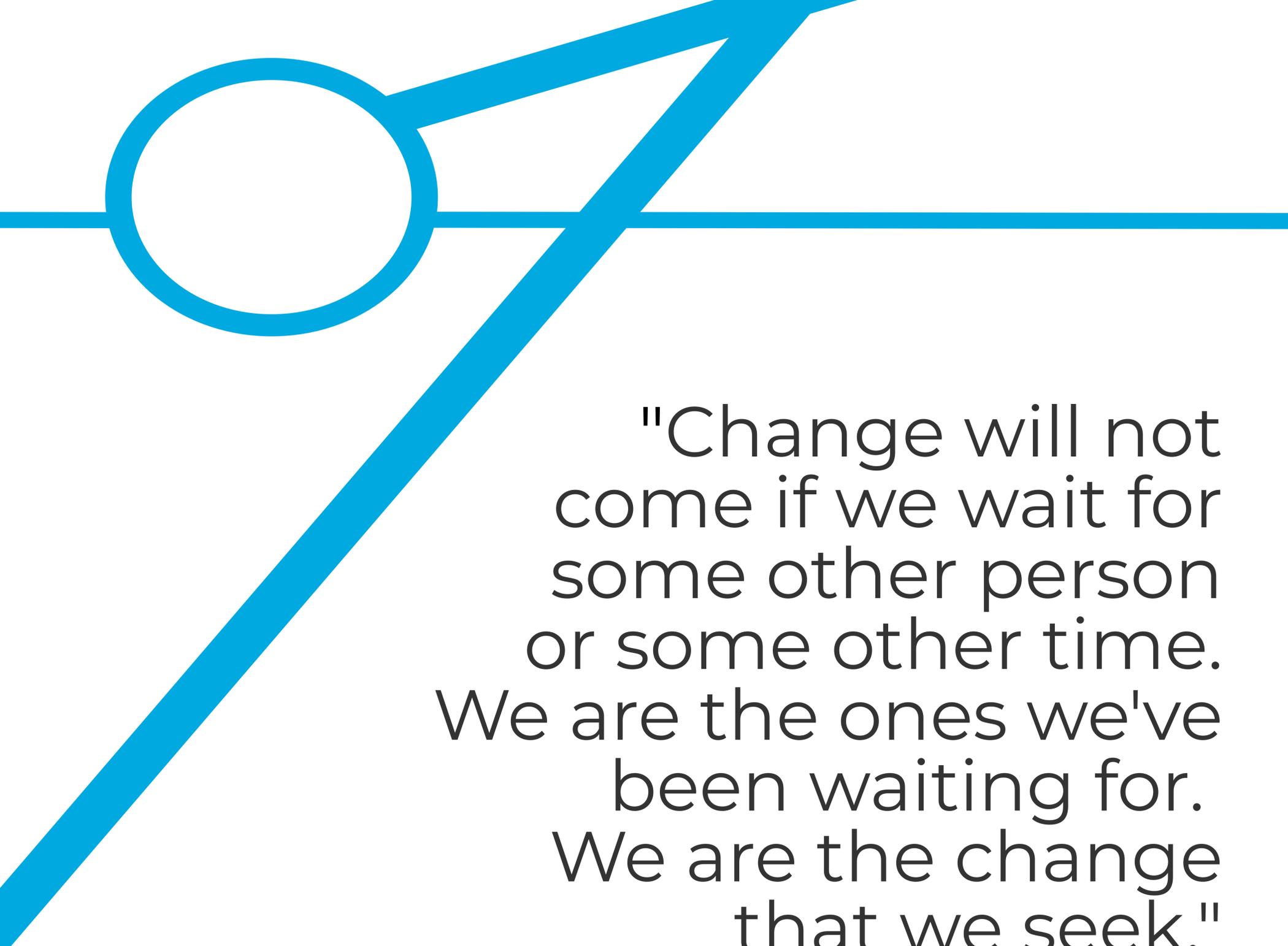
2017-2018



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#aaisaAGM





"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

--Barack Obama





MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This is the time of the year we take pause from the hustle of deadlines and deliverables to truly reflect on the past and envision what the future will hold. While the Settlement and Integration Sector faced a challenging external environment— from rising sentiments of xenophobia, a struggling economy, and a global refugee crisis, today and everyday my esteemed colleagues across organizational lines continuously remind me that we are moving towards a better Canada.

This letter comes about at a time of transition for AAISA, but based on the successful movements across Alberta from our member organizations, and the aspirant talent at the AAISA organizational and board level, I'm energized to see what's next. Through the work of this dedicated staff, distinguished board leadership, and committed professionals across the province, AAISA celebrated many significant steps forward to advance Alberta's interests. I am left inspired and hopeful for a stronger Alberta voice on the national stage, stronger influence and collaboration with key policy makers, and a stronger AAISA.

During my inaugural year as AAISA Board Chair, I'm pleased to publicly recognize the response of AAISA to sector needs. The growth of AAISA's Strategic Engagement team proved a powerful force through expanded sector and community involvement— amplifying the voices of our provincial small centres, leading the Calgary and Edmonton caucuses, facilitating widespread crucial conversations on the Survivors of Daesh, and welcoming seven new members to our network. The agility of the AAISA Professional Development team did not go unnoticed either during 2017-2018. Their move towards producing quality training for the sector with a new regional lens, and increasing widespread availability through online learning demonstrated continued commitment to professional excellence.

While this upcoming year feels like a new chapter for AAISA, embarking on the pathway towards an ambitious multi-year strategic plan, we honour those that contributed to building the foundations for our success. Without their efforts, our vision for the future would not be possible. On behalf of the current Board of Directors, I thank and congratulate Fariborz Birjandian for his 24-year involvement with the AAISA Board, including his terms served as the previous Board Chair, and as the AAISA representative on what is now the National Settlement Council. We additionally recognize Antonio Samayoa for his seven years with the AAISA board, and fulfilling his two terms of two years as he retires from his position with the Board of Directors.

To all of AAISA's staff, board members, funders, community partners, and all those who have committed time and energy to the success of AAISA and the settlement sector as a whole, I humbly thank you. I look forward to this next year, working side-by-side with my esteemed colleagues and friends with compassion, resilience, a shared sense of purpose, and a unified voice for inclusion.

Let's move forward, together.



Erick Ambtman
Board Chair



MESSAGE FROM AAISA STAFF

To our Board, Members and Stakeholders,

We are optimists.

While this report will explore impressive statistics, tell a story of forward motion and business accomplishments—providing tangible proof of our successes for the year, AAISA staff prefers that each reader walks away with one thing:

We are optimists.

Twelve of us form the AAISA staff, and twelve of us are ordinary people that are engaged, involved, and eager to demand change and progress for the settlement sector. Although political upset, transition, and the rise of hateful rhetoric could demoralize a group of idealists— or an entire sector for that matter— we found the opposite to be true. Instead, we witnessed our colleagues come together across the nation at the National Small Centres Conference to voice their concerns, and collectively work together to share their ideas, resources, and connect to a create a more inclusive Canada.

We took part in lively, passionate discussions with 300 of our colleagues at AAISA's Annual Alberta Integration Summit to define sector priorities, and share a wealth of knowledge with one another. The enthusiasm and passion permeates through the day-to-day— hosting calls, attending meetings, unrolling professional development courses, editing reports, extrapolating sector data. Our work is not always glamorous, or always easily distilled into bite-sized factoids, but we remain optimistic that each task in our daily grind makes an impact on the lives of newcomers now and in the future.

This upcoming year will be tale of evolution for us, as our team moves to raise AAISA's profile nationally. We are setting unprecedented standards of excellence internally, and aiming to exceed the expectations of our board and funders. We have a job to do as a collective, unwavering, unstoppable force of energy. We must strive for continuous growth and improvements, voicing the needs of our sector and of newcomers— as we cannot grow complacent with the status quo. With the support of our board, funders, members and community partners, we are committed to progress now more than ever.

Let's get to work.

AAISA Staff





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ABOUT AAISA

WHO WE ARE

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) is an umbrella organization that represents immigrant-serving agencies and organizations that work with newcomers across the province.

MISSION STATEMENT

Facilitate collaboration and leadership within the settlement serving sector.

VALUES

Integrity. Collaboration.
Proactivity. Accountability.

VISION

An inclusive, welcoming and engaged society.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: Erick Ambtman

Vice-Chair: Anila Lee Yuen

Treasurer: Aftab Khan

Secretary: Frank Bauer

Director: Alice Colak

Director: Carol Gil

Director: Antonio Samayoa

Director: Beba Svirigir

Director: Sally Zhao

AAISA STAFF

Manager: Leslie Cramer

Manager: Sarosh Rizvi

Daniella Bagmeijer

Rhianna Charchuk

Cynthia Chima

Leesha Kanbour

Sami Khiami

Angelica Lambert

Jana Miller

Michelle Riccetto

Nada Starcevic

Pradnya Yadav

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Professional Development

AAISA leads and facilitates professional excellence in the Alberta settlement sector through the provision of diverse professional development opportunities. Over 2017/18, AAISA proudly offered a multiplicity of training through online, in-person, and blended learning options to settlement professionals in Alberta, and across the Prairie and Northern Territories region. Moving forward, AAISA is eager to broaden the online delivery of courses across the region, expand courses for the forthcoming Pre-Service Certificate Program for Career Development Practitioners, and continue to champion the growth, professionalism, and standards of excellence in the settlement and integration sector in Alberta and the region at large.

165
Course
Participants

Both online & in-person, delivered in Calgary and Edmonton

6 Different
Courses
Delivered over
8 Sessions

Delivered over this past year, our Professionalism and Ethics course for management explores the nature and values of professionalism, ethics, and reveals the keys to enhancing the professional status at all staff levels of an organization.

Established
3 Key
Committees

This course gave rise to the **Settlement Sector Code of Ethics and Conduct**. Development began in March 2018, and represents a key project to increased professionalization in the settlement and integration sector.

This past year saw the development of a Regional PD Committee in concert with a PD strategy across the Prairie and Northwest Territories Region. AAISA looks forward to continuing to advance professional excellence and growth across the entire PNT region.

94%
Course
Completion
Rate

17 Settlement
Practitioner
Certifications
Granted

AAISA continues to offer Canada's only certification for qualified settlement practitioners.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Research & Policy

AAISA's Research and Policy department empowers member agencies and other relevant stakeholders through conducting and disseminating member-informed research, and by staying on pulse of current and emerging trends and challenges facing the immigrant-serving sector of Alberta.

4 Policy Briefings

These policy briefings focused on a variety of emergent issues and developments that affect newcomers to Alberta including an exploration of the New Restrictions to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program; an Evaluation of the SOGIE Refugee Claim and Hearing Process; an Evaluation of the Fair and Family-Friendly Workplace Act; and exploration of the Changes to the Citizenship Act and Implications for SPOs in Alberta.

Data Sharing Project

Over 2017/18, an environmental scan assessing the current best practices of data management in Alberta was conducted, and AAISA is eager to advance this project into a strategy and recommendations to improve on identified barriers and challenges across the province.

Alberta Settlement & Integration Sector Survey

In January 2018, AAISA disseminated the inaugural Alberta Settlement and Integration Sector Survey to better understand sector priorities. AAISA looks forward to sharing the results of this survey in a forthcoming report as a conduit to providing organizations across Alberta with the tools to offer high-quality, innovative, and adaptable programs and services to newcomers.

Participation in 4 Research Networks

AAISA is proud to participate in the Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRCC) in the Broader Economic, Social and Political Factors research cluster. CYRCC seeks to connect scholars, community partners, and government agencies to promote the successful integration of child and youth refugees in Canada through meaningful policy.

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

The Strategic Engagement team at AAISA is dedicated to facilitating and convening the Alberta settlement and integration sector. Through a multiplicity of activities and initiatives, AAISA provides space for invaluable idea-sharing designed to identify the emergent priorities, and opportunities for Alberta.

30 Site Visits

Through these visits, discussions emerged between AAISA staff and executive leadership of member organizations on surfacing needs, trends, and opportunities, while also highlighting the many achievements unique to each organization. These meetings also provided an invaluable opportunity for AAISA to receive feedback on current engagement work and flesh-out strategies to better advocate for and support members across the province.

Caucuses

The Settlement Sector Caucuses assembles member agencies in the large urban centres to collaboratively discuss systems-level challenges, gaps, and opportunities through a solutions focused lens. These led to a diverse array of exciting projects that have uniquely addressed relevant needs that often extended beyond the Caucuses.

Resettlement Assistance Program Dashboard

The Resettlement Assistance Program is offered by six Alberta organizations to provide resettlement services and resources for government assisted refugees as they arrive in Canada. AAISA supports these organizations through a monthly survey, quarterly teleconferences, and dashboards that serve to share information, best practices, and seek solutions to various challenges.

YYC Caucus

9 Member Agencies

YEG Caucus

7 Member Agencies

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

Survivors of Daesh Response Committee

To address the challenges inherent to serving the complex needs of this population, AAISA launched the Calgary Survivors of Daesh Response Committee in March 2018. Through this initiative, relevant stakeholders provide collective supports to better serve this vulnerable population.

Small Centre Engagement

Small centres across the province come together quarterly to share knowledge, and build a collective voice through a lens that highlights the strengths and ingenuity of the small centres in Alberta's settlement sector.

The Small Centres also completed an annual needs assessment in January 2018. AAISA looks forward to encompassing this assessment into an engagement strategy and a Toolkit to create an interactive and collaborative platform.

Helping Immigrants Succeed

Revitalized in February 2018, the Helping Immigrants Succeed initiative convenes three working groups in Language, Social Connections, and Employment. These groups are comprised of front-line managers across the province, and meet quarterly to collaboratively discuss relevant news, specific projects, and strategies for solving provincial challenges.

EVENTS

Alberta Integration Summit

300 Participants

AAISA hosted the First Annual Alberta Integration Summit in fall 2017. This event convened funders, members, and relevant stakeholders to facilitate meaningful conversation around resettlement, settlement, and integration. Over the course of three days, the summit included workshops, discussions, and presentations from various community partners and settlement specific professionals that led to meaningful insights summarized in the report, **2017 Alberta Integration Summit: Summary, Key Recommendations, and Action Plan.**

AAISA's participation and facilitation of a multitude of workshops, consultations, and conferences acts as a key element in empowering productive engagement in Alberta. These invaluable opportunities allowed for relationship-building, information sharing, and priority setting.

National Metropolis Conference

AAISA was presented with a valuable opportunity to volunteer and present during this national conference. From facilitating workshops, coordinating site visits, and running the social media, staff connected with diverse professionals across Canada during this three-day event.

National Small Centres Conference

AAISA proudly participated in the National Small Centres Settlement & Integration Conference hosted by Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E.) in Red Deer. Through this conference, delegates from across Canada's small centres gathered to discuss priorities and best practices unique to smaller urban and rural centres across the country. The lively discourse over three days led to many invaluable insights to inform and contextualize strategies going forward.

MEMBER LIST

Returning Members

ACFA Regionale de Wood Buffalo
Action for Healthy Community
ASSIST Communities Services Centre
Boys and Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Edmonton & Area Society
Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
Calgary Chinese Community Service Association
Calgary Immigrant Educational Society
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council
Canadian Volunteers United in Action
Catholic Social Services
Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association (CAIWA)
Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E.)
Committee Centre Accueil Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones (CANAF)
Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du nord de l'Alberta
Centre for Newcomers
Changing Together: A Centre for Immigrant Women
Edmonton Immigrant Services Association
Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council
Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary
Equilibrium International Education Institute
Immigrant Services Calgary
Indo Canadian Women's Association
Jewish Family Service Calgary
Lethbridge Family Services – Immigrant Services
Multicultural Association of Wood Buffalo
Multicultural Family Resource Society
Rehoboth Alliance
Saamis Immigrant Services Association
Settlement Services in the Bow Valley
Southern Alberta Language Assessment Services Ltd.
The SPEC Association For Children and Families
YMCA of Wood Buffalo - Immigrant Settlement Services

New Members

Bredin Centre for Learning
Columbia College
HIV Network of Edmonton Society
Maple Leaf Academy
REACH Edmonton
The Today Family
Violence Help Centre
YMCA Calgary

FUNDERS & PARTNERS

AAISA is a Member of

Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
 Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
 Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR)
 Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance
 —Alliance Canadienne du secteur de l'établissement des immigrants (CISSA-ACSEI)
 Propellus
 Volunteer Alberta

Community Partners

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)
 Centre for Sexuality (Calgary)
 Critical Service Provider Group
 Emergency Wellness Response Team (EWRT)
 EmpowerMe
 Ignitech Solutions Inc.
 Mount Royal University- Faculty of Policy Studies
 University of Alberta- Faculty of Education, Public Health, Nursing, Medical & Dental
 University of Calgary- Faculty of Social Work

National Partners

The Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRCC)
 Pathways to Prosperity (P2P)
 National Settlement Council

Regional Partners

Alberta Women's Science Network Advisory Committee
 Immigration Research West (IRW)
 Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP)
 TalentPool Hub
 WeEmploy Inc.
 Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA)
 Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)
 Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
 Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA)

AAISA Funders

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
 Alberta Human Rights Commission
 Alberta Labour
 Alberta Culture and Tourism
 Family and Community Support Services Program



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies would like to extend a sincere thank you to our generous funders, visionary Board of Directors, passionate members, driven interns, dedicated volunteers, inspired staff, and collaborative partners. Through your continued support, innovative leadership, and relentless commitment to Alberta's settlement and integration sector, we remain emboldened to tenaciously realize the vision and mission on which AAISA is founded—and for that, we are eternally grateful.



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



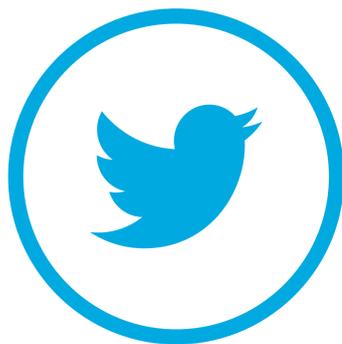
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