



ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025



EMPOWERING JOURNEYS
FOR A STRONGER COMMUNITY



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SUMMARY

This report is a time capsule. It records how TIES has demonstrated the power of unity and collaboration through its journey of providing assistance and support to our community. It showcases our achievements and continuous exploration to better help our community, reach higher financial sustainability, expand our public presence, empower our team, and implement research initiatives to address the evolving needs of new immigrants in Canada. Looking forward, we anticipate new opportunities and challenges that will further foster growth, connections, creativity, mindfulness, and teamwork. These are the building blocks on the road to achieving our vision. This moment in time is full of hope and excitement, a keepsake to look back in the future.

OUR IMPACT (2024-2025)



31,644
Clients Served



277
Staff



14,178
Volunteer Hours



50+
Programs



95+
Countries of Origin



263
Volunteers



140+
Community Partners



Vision

An inclusive and pluralistic society.



Mission

To provide innovative language education, customized employment training and placement, and integration services to newcomers and Canadians based on best practices.



Values

Togetherness

We prioritize relationships and respect for each other

Inclusion

We welcome and embrace pluralism

Empowerment

We instill confidence and strength in ourselves and others

Service

We serve and build our community


WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

8,293 **8%** ↑
 **FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS**

8,264 **36%** ↑
 **LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS**

2,250 **46%** ↑
 **INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS**

601,329 **24%** ↑
 **WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS**

7,878
 **NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

As we reflect on another remarkable year, I am proud to share the significant strides The Immigrant Education Society (TIES) has made. Our theme “Empowering Journeys,” reflects our unwavering commitment to supporting individuals and creating a lasting impact in our community.

In 2024-2025 fiscal year, we not only empowered newcomers and financially challenged Canadians to succeed on their journeys, but we’ve also strengthened the foundation and capacity of our organization by empowering staff and volunteers through a variety of professional development opportunities. This has been a year of transformation, collaboration, and growth, setting the stage for an even brighter future.

Priorities

TIES continued to embody the Strategic Priorities set out in our 2023 to 2025 strategic plan. These priorities: Impactful Services, Financial Sustainability, Empowering People, Growing Community Profile, and Enhanced Research, build on TIES's legacy, guiding us to continue empowering individuals on their journey to thrive in Canada.

Governance

We are proud of the governance structures we’ve put in place at TIES, ensuring that we maintain the highest standards of accountability and transparency. Our Board of Directors plays a vital role in shaping our direction, providing oversight and ensuring that we are effectively meeting the needs of our clients and stakeholders. This governance framework allows us to operate with agility, ensuring that we remain responsive to internal needs and external challenges.

Growth

Our client base continued to expand, reaching a total of 31,644 individuals served in this 2024-2025 fiscal year. We are proud of our increased service offerings, which included the addition of 40 LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) classes. These classes helped support about 500 additional newcomers on the waitlist in improving their language skills and integrating successfully into Canadian society. TIES Free Tax Clinic has expanded to serve over 1,978 clients, a 52% increase (from last fiscal year). To meet this growing demand, the clinic now offers more hours and support in additional languages.



Dr. Sally Zhao
TIES President & CEO

“THE FUTURE IS FULL OF PROMISE AND WE ARE DETERMINED TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF AN INCLUSIVE AND PLURALISTIC SOCIETY.”

The **Centre for Immigrant Research** officially launched in April of 2024 and has already made a significant mark on the newcomer community in Calgary and beyond. The **Voices in the Art** project encouraged 2SLGBTQIA+ newcomer youth to explore their intersectional identities, and the **Child Language Brokering** project, marked with an official Book Launch, created spaces for important conversations and support for language brokers.

We also had a successful **TIES Climb for New Beginnings** Fundraiser in October 2024, tackling the iconic Calgary Tower to raise awareness and funds for essential TIES programs.

In December of 2024, the **Grow Together** holiday event brought together staff and partners alike to celebrate the amazing partnership and collaborative work being done to serve newcomers and financially challenged Canadians in Calgary and beyond.

Achievements

In 2024-2025 fiscal year, we had a lot to celebrate. TIES staff were honoured at the 2024 Alberta Immigrant Impact Awards, for their outstanding contributions to immigrant integration and community development. Our **TIES Newsroom** has also become a more robust platform, sharing powerful stories from our community that amplify voices and draw attention to important issues.

The **TIES & ME** videos series continues to be a dynamic way to celebrate partners and showcase TIES’s involvement in the community. We interviewed some TIES leaders, Calgary CEOs and other community leaders.

Looking ahead, we are energized by the opportunities before us. The 2025-2026 fiscal year will be one of continued growth, reflection, and innovation. We will prioritize the implementation of three key focuses to further strengthen our organization and the services we provide:

- Fostering a Healthy Work-Life Balance by continuing to offer a flexible hybrid work model and competitive benefits that support the well-being of our staff.
- Enhancing Professional Development by creating a culture of continuous learning, offering mentorship, and facilitating knowledge-sharing opportunities.

- Strengthening Staff Well-Being & Safety by prioritizing mental health resources, staff training, and ensuring an inclusive, supportive work environment.

Future

The future is full of promise, and we are determined to be at the forefront of shaping an inclusive and pluralistic society.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, clients, partners, funders and donors for their continued support and dedication. Together, we are empowering journeys and making a meaningful difference in the Calgary community.

Dr. Sally Zhao
TIES President & CEO



With a special thank you to **Ava Waugh**, Partnerships & Public Relations Specialist

TIES CLIMB FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

TIES reached new heights on October 5, 2024 with the Climb for New Beginnings, a peer-to-peer fundraising campaign held at the iconic Calgary Tower. The event proved highly successful, boosting both fundraising and organizational visibility.

Sixty-five climbers, forming nine teams, successfully ascended the 802 steps to the tower's observation deck. Top fundraisers included TIES President & CEO Sally Zhao, TIES CPO Suman Khanal, and Board Secretary Marilyn Magnan. Among the participants who bravely took on the 802-step challenge were TIES Board Member Nalini Plesche, and staff representatives from TIES, ENMAX, Gallagher Benefit Services (Canada) Inc., WK Family Lawyers, and Magnan family.

The event was made possible by the support of staff, volunteers, and several sponsors, including Charlesglen Toyota, RBC Foundation, CTV, Monster Mini Golf, and ENMAX. The Calgary Tower was illuminated in red for the event, and media coverage was provided by CTV Calgary, Global News Calgary, and Fairchild Radio.

TIES was deeply grateful for the support from the community and other immigrant-serving organizations, as this successful Climb for New Beginnings truly embodied our commitment to empower newcomers as they build their new lives in Canada.



TIES GROW TOGETHER HOLIDAY PARTY

The TIES Grow Together holiday party, held at the Croatian Canadian Cultural Club, celebrated a successful year of collaboration with 145 staff, 51 business partners, volunteers, and board members.

This special evening marked the first time TIES staff celebrated the holidays alongside our valued business partners. Many of these partners were prominently featured in the "Grow Together" videos, which showcased their collaboration with TIES. Attendees were also able to capture the evening's beautiful moments at a photo booth and win prizes in both a raffle draw and a best dressed competition.

TIES SHINES AT ALBERTA IMMIGRANT IMPACT AWARDS

TIES proudly celebrated a remarkable achievement at the 2024 Alberta Immigrant Impact Awards on October 3, 2024, with three of our exceptional colleagues receiving prestigious honours.

Suman Khanal, our Chief Program Officer, was recognized as a "Newcomer Champion" for his extensive experience empowering newcomers. Katerina Palova, Director, Research & Immigrant Wellbeing, received the "Inclusive Workplaces" award for her dedication to advancing diversity and inclusion. Latifa Majidi, a BENCH Case Counsellor who arrived in Canada as a refugee in 2022, was honoured with the "Women's Newcomer Impact" award for her crucial work supporting Afghan women and families in Calgary.

We extend our warmest congratulations to all three winners for this well-deserved recognition of their significant contributions to our community.



PREMIER'S ROUNDTABLE

TIES and Action Dignity co-hosted a roundtable discussion at McDougall Centre, in collaboration with the Alberta government. About 45 attendees participated, including representatives from community grassroots leaders, and Premier Danielle Smith and her team. Dr. Sally Zhao (TIES) and Dr. Francis Boakye (Action Dignity) presented insights on the service impact, challenges, and opportunities facing the sector. We are grateful for everyone's dedication to finding the best ways to support newcomers and build a thriving Alberta for all.

FOUNDER'S SCHOLARSHIP WINNER: ERIC BRIAN GAMBOA

The 2024 TIES Founder's Scholarship was proudly awarded to Eric Brian Gamboa, a student pursuing a Master of Science degree in Chemical Engineering at the University of Alberta. His essay, "Overcoming Language Barriers: A Bridge to Success for Calgary's Newcomers," explores how language barriers impact newcomers' daily lives, job prospects, and social connections. The scholarship honours the Society's principal founder, the late Mr. Salim M. Sindhu.



TIES MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL 2024

Over 450 clients, staff, volunteers, and partners joined TIES for its annual Multicultural Festival at Westwinds on June 27, 2024, celebrating Canadian Multiculturalism Day. The event commenced with special remarks from key figures including Minister Muhammad Yaseen, Councillor Raj Dhaliwal, TIES President & CEO Sally Zhao, and Board Treasurer Nalini Plesche.

The event featured multicultural performances that showcased the vibrant diversity of our community. The festival also hosted a variety of booths from community partners, including CEMA, Calgary Library, RCMP, Fire & Police and TIES programs like Healthy Minds, Little Beginnings Childcare, and TIES Entrepreneurship. A special thank you to our sponsors, BMO, Costco, and Walmart, for their generous support that made this event possible.



HONOURING OUR DEDICATED STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

TIES held a combined Staff and Volunteer Appreciation Event at the Croatian Canadian Culture Centre on June 20, 2024. This special occasion recognized the tireless efforts and invaluable contributions of both our dedicated staff and our passionate volunteers. Their collective dedication fuels our initiatives and is fundamental to the profound difference we make for immigrants in Calgary.

Certificates of Appreciation were presented, acknowledging their commitment and the meaningful difference they make.

TIES UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

Our annual United Way fundraiser in November 2024 was another success, exceeding our target through the dedicated involvement of TIES staff and volunteers. Fundraising initiatives such as "Build-a-Basket" and direct donations, alongside contributions from Jeans Day and our bake and plant sale, helped us support the United Way of Calgary and Area's vital efforts to address critical social issues.





15

Language Programs

358

Classes

6,498

Clients Served

TIES Language Programs: Expanding Our Reach to Help More Newcomers Succeed



The past year marked a period of significant growth and impactful development for Language Programs at TIES, particularly the cornerstone **Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)** program.

A pivotal moment was the July 2024 expansion, fueled by additional Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) funding to meet the growing demand for LINC classes and reduce the existing waitlists.

As part of this expansion, 40 new classes were added and successfully integrated alongside our core offerings, with every seat filled shortly after launch.

By the end of the fiscal year, the **LINC Program** was offering a total of 132 classes, including **LINC Blended** and **LINC Literacy**.

The **LINC Home Study Program** also grew considerably, adding 40 seats to its initial 120 at the beginning of the year. This growth not only increased our service capacity but also enhanced accessibility for learners with varied needs and circumstances.

Beyond traditional classroom settings, LINC continued to innovate in its delivery models. The provision of Stage 2 (CLB 5/6) classes and six Provincial Online Model (POM) classes further extended our reach across Alberta, offering crucial language support to adult immigrants and refugees from any part of the province.

Throughout the year, LINC classes benefited from a wealth of supplementary learning opportunities, with a total of 262 presentations delivered by staff from TIES programs and 21 community partners.

LINC 2024-25

132

Classes

47% ↑

3,771

Clients Served

59% ↑

74%

Advanced to next level upon course completion

LINC Blended Program

The LINC Blended program offers a free and flexible learning option for CLB 5, 6, & 7 students, combining in-class instruction (50%) with online activities (50%) through our Learning Management System.

78

Clients Served



LINC Home Study Program

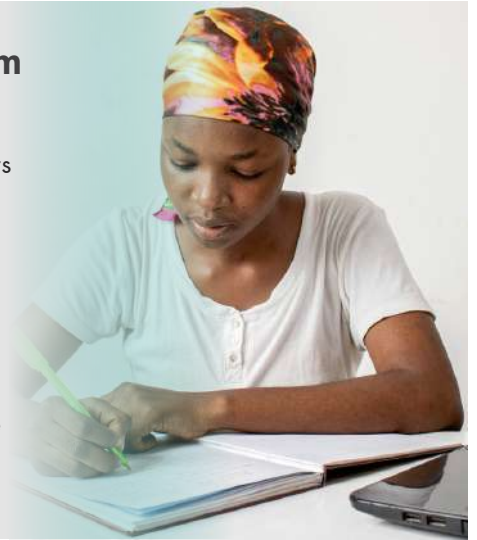
LINC Home Study offers online, one-on-one English classes for newcomers unable to attend class in person due to disability, family commitments or conflicting schedules.

239

Clients Served

80%

Progression Rate



Care for Newcomer Children (CNC)

Since 2003, TIES has proudly offered its Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) support service, also known as Childminding, to support newcomer families. This free service is available to LINC students who have children between the ages of 1 and 11, allowing parents to attend English classes without incurring additional childcare costs.

The CNC support service provides a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment where both children and parents can begin to feel at home in Canada.

Recent accessibility upgrades at the Forest Lawn CNC, made possible through ESDC funding, ensure an inclusive environment for all children, including those with disabilities.

204

Children Served

150

Parents Served





Drop-in ESL

Drop-in ESL program offers affordable and high-quality English language classes taught by volunteer instructors where students can learn how to speak, read and write in English.

320

Students Served

3640

Volunteer Hours



Bridging the Gap: Accessible and Flexible Language Pathways

Recognizing that individuals often face waiting periods for more comprehensive programs or require flexible support, initiatives like the Drop-in ESL, Literacy and Basic English, and the Reading Room offer timely and varied pathways to language acquisition and integration. These programs are open to citizens and PR holders, with some spaces available for refugee claimants and work permit holders.

The Literacy and Basic English

Literacy & Basic English offers literacy-level classes to beginner English learners who lack sufficient exposure to literacy concepts in their first language.

Many participants sought out the program due to its flexible schedule, affordability, and ability to bridge the gap while awaiting other English language programs.

65

Clients Served

The Reading Room

The Reading Room program provides quality reading instruction to ESL adult foundational learners. This is delivered through a 1-on-1 tutorial by an experienced Reading Room instructor, with additional volunteer support available either in-person or online.

53

Clients Served

100%

Reported that the program helped them with their reading

Computer Access for Literacy Learners (CALL)

The CALL program equips literacy-level learners with the basics of using a computer. The program provides 30 hours of digital literacy instruction to adult learners, supplemented with tutoring and volunteer support.

134

Clients Served

95%

Improved computer skills and had reached their learning goals

Intensive English Course for Newcomers (IECN)

Designed for Permanent Residents and Temporary Residents (CUAET, MOME 2023) aged 18+, the Intensive English Course for Newcomers (IECN) provided 8-week online English language instruction. It helped adult learners advance their personal and professional English skills while transitioning into further ESL programming.

149

Clients Served

TIES Open Doors Survival English Language Training (SELT)

This program provides short-term, intensive survival English for eligible Ukrainian evacuees (CLB 1/2, 3/4, and 5/6). These classes are designed for those awaiting longer-term language instruction.

The curriculum covers basic English for daily life and work in Alberta. Topics include introductions to Canada, health, employment, housing, banking, finance, and basic grammar.

176

Clients Served



Attending English language courses has been an invaluable experience for me. The lessons are always engaging and well-structured, making learning both effective and enjoyable.

Our instructor is highly professional, knowledgeable, and incredibly supportive.

Open Doors SELT Student

E-Learning Programs

Complementing the growth of our LINC programs, our E-Learning programs also played a vital role in supporting newcomers and adult learners across Canada. These online initiatives offer accessible and flexible learning pathways, catering to individuals who may face waiting periods for more comprehensive programs like LINC or require immediate, self-paced support.

English for Employment: Job Search (EEJS)

EEJS is a self-paced online course hosted on our learning management system, which helps newcomers improve their English and job search skills. This course includes topics such as interview preparation and how to access job markets.

421

Clients Served

Newcomer Introduction to Classes Online (NICO)

NICO is a self-paced digital literacy training program designed to equip newcomers with the essential skills for successful online learning. The foundational knowledge empowers participants to fully engage in online educational and employment opportunities.

263

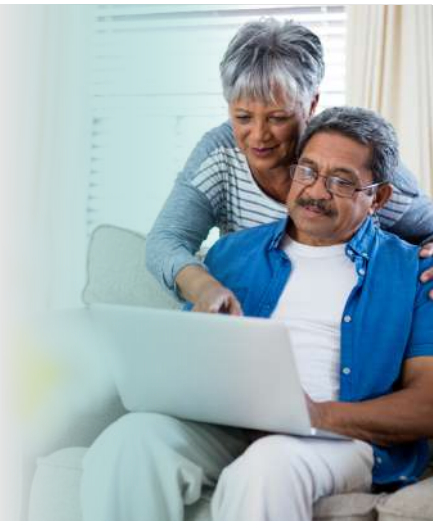
Clients Served

Workplace Online Retention Class (WORC)

WORC is a self-paced program designed to enhance workplace communication skills and prepare English language learners for success in the Canadian job market.

205

Clients Served





9,000+

Learners reached through LCE events and presentations

23

LCE presentations delivered

900+

Attendees in LCE outreach activities

500+

Registrants at the annual LCE conference

22,427

Unique website visitors

210,368

Page views (44% increase)

Literacy Centre of Expertise (LCE)

The LCE is dedicated to developing high-quality, ready-to-use literacy resources to support instructors working with adult EAL learners and the literacy community.

Resource Development

This year, the LCE team expanded their module collection, now ranging from Literacy Foundation to Literacy 4. Each module offers practical, real-world content for newcomers, with topics such as Using Email, Bylaws in the Community, Going to the Optometrist, and School Supplies.

In alignment with their ongoing commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, the LCE released a Literacy 3/4 module titled Going to a Powwow. All modules include a printable PDF Student Resource, an Instructor Guide, interactive digital activities, and audiovisual supports.

Building on the success of the Centre's Adults Learn to Print Capital Letters, the LCE launched Adults Learn to Print Lower-case Letters. This one-of-a-kind digital interactive tool, paired with a workbook, helps learners develop the foundational skill of handwriting.

“

So incredibly and wonderfully done. Thank you for your great work on behalf of all Literacy Learners and the Teachers that serve. — English as an Additional Language (EAL) Literacy Instructor

Outreach

The LCE team delivered 12 presentations at various TESL/ATESL conferences and to service providers, reaching over 600 attendees and potentially impacting the learning experience of more than 6,000 students.

In addition, the LCE hosted monthly online gatherings for literacy instructors, facilitating knowledge exchange and amplifying diverse voices on topics such as Queering the Literacy Classroom, Empowering Non-Native English Speaker Teachers, and Indigenous Content for the Literacy Classroom.

With over 300 total attendees and a potential outreach to more than 3,000 students, the LCE continues to build on the success of its Let's Talk About sessions.

“

Excellent work! I had the opportunity to pilot this resource, and I truly enjoyed working with it. The videos and instructions are very clear for students. Moreover, they enjoyed the activities, even though they were challenging. After the explanations and preparatory activities provided, students were able to work with them easily. — EAL Literacy Instructor

For the Love of Literacy 2025

The Literacy Centre of Expertise successfully hosted its 3rd Annual Online Conference, For the Love of Literacy 2025. The event sold out with over 500 registrants, highlighting the growing demand for professional development in the EAL literacy sector.

Featuring 22 presenters, the conference showcased research-based best practices and practical strategies for supporting multi-barriered learners—particularly refugees who often face trauma, interrupted education, and language barriers.

It served as a vital platform for educators working with newcomer adult literacy learners to enhance their skills, exchange best practices, and build community connections across the sector.

You can stay up to date with LCE events and resource development by visiting their LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), and Facebook pages.

“

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the organizers of the conference for literacy professionals. Your hard work and dedication to creating a platform for sharing knowledge and best practices in literacy education have not gone unnoticed. The well-structured sessions, professional presentations, and opportunities for collaborative learning made this conference an invaluable experience. — Conference Participant



2024 Carolyn Dieleman Award Recipients: The LCE team (Donna Clarke, Jana Ciobanu, Jeremy Wilson, and John Vasquez) received the prestigious 2024 Carolyn Dieleman Award from ATESL. This award recognizes their impactful contributions to innovative and high-quality language and ESL literacy programs in Alberta, acknowledging their dedication to both learners and educators through their innovative resources.



Canadian Indigenous Curriculum Development

In alignment with TIES’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, we are proud to highlight our work this year on the development of Indigenous curriculum content for LINC classes. A key achievement was the creation and piloting of "Going to a Powwow". This initiative not only supports language learning but also aligns with broader reconciliation goals and community integration efforts. It represents a significant step in promoting awareness of Indigenous cultures within the newcomer community. The module is adaptable and designed to meet the diverse needs of LINC classes.

TIES also partnered with ATESL to host a professional development session, “Let’s Talk About Going to a Powwow.” This event introduced educators to the module, emphasizing vital collaboration with Indigenous experts for cultural accuracy and respect.

320+

Classes Served

LANGUAGE SUCCESS STORIES



Marite Rojas

As a young child in Bolivia, Marite Rojas was glued to the television. Not just for the entertainment value, but for the educational value as well. "I learned how to speak English watching movies and television back home," she says.

Marite's journey to a new life started about two years ago when she moved to Calgary to be with her husband.

She was eager to fit in and embrace the culture, but first she had to learn the language better. A journey in itself.

"Every person had a different accent, and they speak too fast. It was overwhelming. I need my husband for everything," she points out. Tired of relying on others, she enrolled in LINC classes at TIES. A year later, she got in!

A lot of hard work and hundreds of hours later, Marite graduated with her CLB (Canadian Language Benchmark) 6. She's now waiting to get into a higher-level class, so she can eventually go to university and hopefully continue her studies as a musician.

Marite is appreciative for the opportunities LINC and TIES have given her, adding she doesn't believe you can live "successfully" in Canada until you can connect with those around you.

"Communication is the key for everything. If you cannot communicate with people, you are alone. You are isolated from everything. I'm so grateful."



Rose Victor

Rose Victor's first time ever stepping into a classroom was in September 2021. She had just fled South Sudan hoping for a better life in Canada and had no schooling whatsoever.

"In my country I cannot go to school," she says. "I was a farmer in my country."

A farmer and an orphan, she says, with no opportunity for an education after her family passed. So, it was quite the shock – culture and otherwise – when she started LINC classes at TIES.

"My first teacher, Donna (Clarke), asked, 'Rose, how are you?'" she recounts. "I'm scared to talk. I'm scared. I'm quiet."

The classroom setting was completely alien to Rose. She had never even held a pencil or pen. "I write like this," she demonstrates. "My teacher helped me a lot."

Rose persevered through online classes during the pandemic and in-person classes since and is now in Literacy 3/4 full-time. Her accomplishments may seem small to some, but to her they're huge.

"I can go to bank. I can go to my children's school. Doctor appointments. I can fill out forms," she says proudly. And she's not done yet. She plans to continue her education and eventually get a job.

As for her English language skills..."I now talk too much," she laughs.

LANGUAGE SUCCESS STORIES



Najibollah Nazari

A new year, a new start for Najibollah Nazari in January of 2023. That's when he fled his home country of Afghanistan, to make a new home in Canada.

"My country is fighting. Not safe. Every day is fighting," he says.

Arriving as an adult, he already had work and language experience. Unfortunately, English wasn't among the many languages he could speak.

"I went to the bank – I need a translator. I went to the doctor – I need translator." Then he found TIES and LINC. His Literacy 3/4 instructor Monica Mehta says he's a "sincere" and "helpful" student.

"He is also very respectful in class and appreciates the learning opportunities," Monica says. "Teacher has helped. Talking with his classmates every day has helped. Every day is better," he says.

Najibollah plans to continue his studies and eventually go to a post-secondary institution to get a certificate as either a plumber or electrician.

He says he's beyond grateful he made the move. "Canada is safe. Canada is a beautiful country."



Yvo Tchalom

Like all newcomers, Yvo came to Canada in 2023 in search of a better life for her family.

Able to speak both English and French, the nurse from Cameroon was eager to care for patients in a new country. But it turns out, she would need a lot of "patience" when it came to the job search.

"It was challenging," she says. First challenge — get her nursing license recognized. Second — get her resume along with her English and interview skills up to Canadian standards. That's when she turned to TIES and its LINC classes.

"She had said that she was nervous during interviews and didn't get callbacks despite submitting her resume often over the past year and a half," LINC instructor Abigail Prasad says.

Abigail says Yvo "worked diligently" on her resume skills with her. She brushed up on her knowledge of Canadian culture and practiced her pronunciation. Practice — that paid off.

"She gave me some tips, some advice on how to make it (resume) better," Yvo says. "I went to the interview with no stress because she really prepared me."

Yvo was so prepared and confident — she got the job! She is now working as an in-home care nurse in Calgary.



16
Employment Programs

2,568
Clients Served

75+
Community Partnerships

TIES Employment Programs: Empowering Job Seekers and Expanding Opportunities

TIES continued to demonstrate its commitment to addressing the evolving needs of job seekers, particularly newcomers and youth, through key programs, strategic employer partnerships, and a focus on holistic client support.

Two new programs were launched to address specific needs. The **Job Readiness for LINC Learners (JRLL)** addresses the language learning needs and employment readiness of CLB 3 & 4 learners who are on the LINC program waitlist for 3 months or more.

The **New Beginnings: Ukrainian Employment Support (NBUES)** program, which provides immediate employment support to Ukrainian evacuees by addressing language barriers and readiness training.

TIES provided ongoing dedicated support for youth, fostering their success through programs like **Empowering Youth Through Employment (EYE)** and **Enhancing Youth Possibilities (EYP)**.

Job Search Support remains a cornerstone program, which focuses on one-on-one support and building strong employer partnerships. Notably, BMO, consistently supported our events and clients. They facilitated numerous job placements by conducting job interviews directly with our clients.

TIES also hosted successful career events, effectively connecting job seekers with meaningful opportunities and strengthening our business partnerships.



The TIES Networking Event in August 2024 at Genesis Centre drew over 400 participants and 25 employers. Building on this success, the Employer Appreciation and Youth Networking Event in February 2025 connected over 300 clients with valuable career opportunities and resources.

TIES also participated in events like the Embracing Inclusion & Advancement in the Evolving Workplace Roundtable to promote inclusive hiring practices.



Job Readiness for LINC Learners (JRLL)

JRLL addresses the language learning needs of CLB 3 & 4 learners who are on the LINC program waitlist for three months or more. It aims to aid learners in preparing for future LINC classes while prioritizing language support for employment readiness.

113
Clients Served



Surveyed participants reported increased confidence after taking the class.

The New Beginnings: Ukrainian Employment Support (NBUES)

NBUES Program is dedicated to assisting Ukrainian evacuees with CUAET Visas in entering the workforce. Trainees in the full-time program attend 10 weeks of classes, followed by 6 weeks of practicum to gain hands-on experience.

40
Clients Served



Empowering Youth Through Employment (EYE)

Empowers youth (ages 15 - 30) with essential employability skills through 8 weeks of in-class instruction, and an opportunity for a paid 12-week work experience. Participants receive a living allowance while attending the program combined with childcare, transit, and other supports.

50
Clients Served



Empowering Youth Possibilities (EYP)

EYP is a fast-track initiative providing two weeks of online employment skills training followed by 80 hours of paid practicum, with transit and childcare reimbursements. This program supports youth, particularly newcomer and racialized individuals under 30, by combining employability skills, Canadian work experience, and coaching to overcome employment barriers.

24
Clients Served



One-on-One Job Search Support

118
Clients served

87%
Found Work

TIES employment counsellors offer job search guidance, encouragement and referrals to programs for newcomers facing challenges in navigating the Canadian job market.

Employment Skills Training (EST)

139
Clients Served

80%
Found Work

EST programs, offered in both full-time and part-time formats, empower newcomers with the necessary employment skills and confidence to secure meaningful employment and thrive in Canada.



Advanced Childhood Educator Training (ACET)

In collaboration with Bow Valley College, the ACET program empowered underserved and underrepresented women with comprehensive training in early childhood education, leading to Level 2 Early Childhood Educator Certification and enhanced career opportunities.

40
Clients Served

Top Countries of Origin:
India, Pakistan, and
Philippines

Childcare Training

TIES partnered with Bow Valley College to prepare participants for Level 1 Early Childhood Educator certifications to launch their careers in childcare. There is currently a long waitlist due to high demand in the program, driven by government initiatives.

43
Clients Served

92%
Found Work

Warehouse Logistics Training

Offered in a flexible hybrid format, this program provides participants with comprehensive knowledge of warehouse operations, logistics, and essential safety protocols, alongside valuable opportunities for employer networking.

47
Clients Served

83%
Found Work



Alberta Basic Security Training

Offers integrated language instruction and job-specific training based on the Alberta Justice Ministry's guidelines for Security Guard training. Receiving a completion certificate from TIES qualifies individuals to write the Alberta Basic Security Provincial Exam.

125
Clients Served

85%

Success rate on the Alberta
Provincial licensing exam

75%
Found Work

EMPLOYMENT IMPACT STORIES



Anna Goglidze | Empowering Youth Through Employment (EYE)

When Anna arrived in Canada from Georgia, she brought with her a wealth of knowledge, a master's degree in architecture, and years of experience as an interior designer.

Still, Anna found herself struggling to reignite her career in design in Canada. Then she discovered the EYE program.

Over the course of four weeks, she participated in intensive Employability Skills Training, where she gained vital tools to build her confidence and adapt her professional skills to a Canadian context.

But the program didn't just prepare Anna for employment—it connected her to it. Anna was placed in a practicum position with YYC Flooring, an innovative floor design company. The practicum allowed Anna to showcase her creative flair and technical expertise, working on real projects that brought her love for design to life.

"I feel like I've finally found my place again," Anna says. "For the first time since coming to Canada, I get to do what I love. I get to be creative, solve design challenges, and contribute meaningfully to a team."

"The EYE program didn't just give me skills – it gave me my confidence back." Through a blend of training, mentorship, and real-world experience, Anna not only re-entered the workforce – she reclaimed her professional identity.

Abdallah Omar Ibrahim | Empowering Youth Possibilities (EYP)

Abdallah Omar Ibrahim landed in Canada with an impressive resume. With a background in engineering and an eagerness for learning, the Syrian native was ready to hit the ground running. Instead... he came to a full stop.

Abdallah struggled with language barriers and a lack of local job experience. Then, he discovered the Enhancing Youth Possibilities (EYP) Program at TIES.

EYP provides two weeks of employability training and a paid practicum of 80 hours. It helps clients with language training, cultural orientation, job readiness workshops and tailored career counselling. For Abdallah, it was the confidence boost he needed.

He was hired at Calgary ice cream shop Rollz Ice Cream where he eventually became a supervisor. This experience provided him with a strong foundation for his future career, and he continues to aspire to work in his field of engineering.

The support he received from the Enhancing Youth Possibilities Program was instrumental in his journey, helping him turn a challenging transition into a story of "sweet success".

EMPLOYMENT IMPACT STORIES



Viktoriia Yefymova | One-on-One Employment Support

When Viktoriia arrived in Calgary, she wasn't new to Canada. The Ukrainian native had already been living in another province since 2019. But it was like she was starting over.

"I faced the challenge of not having a professional network in my new location," she says. While her goal was to secure a job as quickly as possible, she also wanted it to be meaningful and aligned with her field of study. She says that's where TIES, and employment counsellor Nabila Ghaffar, really helped.

Viktoriia says Nabila helped her create a highly effective resume, prepared her for interviews, and helped connect her with potential employers. But above all, she says, Nabila provided the support she needed at that crucial time.

"She took the time to listen to my job criteria and understand my specific needs," she says. "Beyond her practical support, she also provided encouragement, reassuring me to stay patient and trust that the right opportunity would come."

"Her guidance and positivity made a significant difference in my job search experience."

Viktoriia has successfully secured a job in an administrative role at the University of Calgary, where she is looking forward to growing her current role.



Donnatien Zabika | One-on-One Employment Support

Despair.

That's how Donnatien describes his mindset when he set out to find a job in Canada.

Donnatien arrived in 2023 from Congo, where he had previously worked as an auto mechanic. He was referred to TIES and its one-on-one counselling service through another student.

He credits Employment Counsellor Nabila Ghaffar for helping him create a successful resume and prepare him for interviews, adding that she even met with him after working hours!

"Nabila did the most important thing for me," he says. "She helped me to overcome despair and find hope. Her kindness and support are precious."

Donnatien is now working on upgrading his education at Bow Valley College before joining the petroleum engineering program at SAIT.

"Donnatien is a remarkable individual who always responds quickly and is willing to assist others," Ghaffar says.

EMPLOYMENT IMPACT STORIES



Behnaz Toopchinezhad | Employment Skills Training

It was a struggle when Behnaz moved to Canada from Iran in March of 2024.

"I really didn't know where to start," she says. "I was lost."

"I wanted to become a part of society, but as a newcomer, everything seemed different compared to what I was used to at home."

Behnaz contacted various agencies for help and says TIES was one of the very first to respond. Among the courses TIES offered, Behnaz says EST was the closest to what she wanted to achieve for her career.

She adds not only did the course "greatly" help her, so did her teacher, Juanito Gegajo. "His sense of empathy and kind manner were a great aid," she says.

"The topics he discussed in class helped calm and focus my thoughts. He really helped me to find myself. He really helped me to find my abilities."

Those abilities are now being showcased at TIES. Behnaz is a LINC (Language Instruction for Canadian Newcomers) instructor, helping others find their path in Canada.

Yetunde Yemisi | Employment Skills Training

Coming to Canada as an immigrant eight months ago, Yetunde Yemisi knew very little about the system, particularly the job market.

The newcomer from Nigeria, had previously worked in a bank and hoped to do the same here in Calgary, but the struggle was real. Despite applying to more than 10 job postings a day, Yetunde says she wasn't getting any response.

Tired of feeling like she wasn't "good enough", she heard about TIES and soon afterwards joined an EST class.

"Joining the class was an experience I never knew I needed," she says. "Meeting other newcomers facing similar challenges was incredibly reassuring."

Yetunde says she not only learned how to create a strong resume and cover letter, but she also learned to understand the Canadian work culture and how to prepare for interviews.

Shortly after revamping her resume using the format taught in class, she started getting interviews and eventually secured a job in her desired field!

"I was beyond excited because, in the end, the wait was worth it," she adds. "All thanks to TIES and their career coaching program."

Bindia Karwal | Childcare

Bindia Karwal has always had a passion for working with children.

But like many immigrants, she faced many employment challenges including cultural adjustment, language barriers, and navigating the Canadian job market.

Then she found TIES, where she enrolled in the Early Childhood Education Level 1 program, and her fortunes changed!

"While studying, I was fortunate to secure a job and was able to apply what I was learning in real time," she says. "I worked hard, earning a 90 percent grade in my courses."

On graduation day, Bindia was honoured with kind words from her teachers and received her Certificate of Completion, marking a significant milestone in her journey.

Bindia now works as a daycare worker at Summit Kids Calgary, fulfilling her dream of contributing to children's early development.

"Your support has been life-changing!" she says happily.

EMPLOYMENT IMPACT STORIES

Meseret Asheber | Job Readiness for LINC Learners (JRLL)

When Meseret came to JRLL she had a part time job, but she had found that it was not enough to sustain her life in Canada.

The immigrant from Ethiopia had been trying to find a second job, but barriers such as not knowing where to look effectively or not getting calls from employers, were significant challenges.

During her time in JRLL, her instructor was able to teach her about different methods of searching for work, including volunteering, and targeting her search to companies that aligned with her skill set and transportation situations.

She was also given the opportunity to research questions and practice interview- appropriate answers.

After her application, she received a call for an interview and she was later offered the part-time job, which was exactly what she had hoped for.

Kateryna Zinher | Job Readiness for LINC Learners (JRLL)

When Kateryna entered the class, she was concerned about finding a job in Canada.

As many newcomers experience, the Ukrainian native was worried she wouldn't be able to express her ideas in English – in both a culturally appropriate, and professional way.

During her time in JRLL, she was able to get the practice she needed.

She learned not only how to improve the writing on her resume, but also how to be diplomatic and polite in the Canadian workforce.

She was given the opportunity to use these lessons in-person, in real-life situations while attending career fairs with the class.

By the end of her time with JRLL, Kateryna applied for a retail position at Zara – which she got!

Taras Romaniuk | The New Beginnings: Ukrainian Employment Support (NBUES)

Like many Ukrainians in Canada, Taras came to Canada with several years of job experience.

However, his experience in IT (information technology) was overlooked, and he was passed over, time and time again.

He then applied to NBUES, where he was mentored and referred to a volunteering project for newcomers trained in Computer Science. Upon completion of the volunteering project, Taras joined NBUES, Cohort 4, to refine his communication and job interview skills.

As a result of his networking activities, he received a job interview and is now working as an IT Technician at SWAT Consulting, an oil and gas company.

Accounting and Computer Skills Training

Basic Accounting

This program provides a foundation for individuals new to accounting or those seeking a refresher, covering fundamental concepts like the balance sheet, income statement, and double-entry bookkeeping.

329
Clients Served

Top Countries of Origin:

China
Ukraine
India

79%
Found Work



Advanced Accounting

For those seeking advanced training, our Advanced Accounting program delves into complex topics such as payroll systems, taxes, pension plans, and financial instruments.

122
Clients Served

78%
Found Work

Clerical and Computer Skills Training

Through 15 weeks of training and an 80-hour practicum, this program enhances the business skills of landed immigrants and refugees, preparing them for employment in administrative support roles.

75
Clients Served

75%
Found Work



Accounting Softwares

Through specialized training in Sage 50 and QuickBooks, TIES empowers learners to enhance their career prospects in accounting with in-demand skills for managing key financial tasks, such as managing the general ledger, accounts payable and receivable, payroll, and inventory.

138
Clients Served

77%
Found Work

Integrated Women's Entrepreneurship Project (IWEP)

A free 9-week online program for women entrepreneurs in Alberta to start, establish, or grow a business. Includes group classes, one-on-one sessions, mentoring, networking, and peer support.

82

Clients Served



Building Bridges

A collaboration with CCIS and Momentum, Building Bridges supported new entrepreneurs in adopting technology and navigating business challenges. This project delivered needs assessments, expert advising sessions, and workshops, and connected participants to Calgary's entrepreneurial network.

65

Clients Served



TIES Entrepreneurship Program: Empowering Women in Business

Through initiatives such as the Integrated Women's Entrepreneurship Project (IWEP), TIES provided vital support to entrepreneurs, with a specific focus on women, in partnership with SUCCESS in British Columbia.

The third edition of the TIES Inspiring Showcase, held in November 2024, was a notable initiative that brought together over 150 individuals. The showcase featured a vibrant Christmas Market with 25 TIES client vendors, provided a platform for six TIES clients to compete in a pitch competition, and awarded \$4,000 in prizes. The event was made possible by the generous support of sponsors like ATB and Easymax by ENMAX.

TIES also continued to invest in innovative collaborations to enhance our program offerings. We partnered with SAIT on two Capstone projects, with students developing a business guide for immigrants in Calgary. These projects not only provided valuable resources for our clients but also offered students practical experience and contributed to the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Additionally, the "**Building Bridges**" project, a collaboration with CCIS and Momentum, supported new entrepreneurs in adopting technology and navigating business challenges. Four students from the University of Calgary's Experience Ventures were also involved in the project and developed a Business Directory for Building Bridges featuring 50 clients.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP IMPACT STORIES



Calgary Author Pens Path to Success with the Help of TIES

Maureen Juma knew her journey from Kenya to Canada would be an adventure. But she didn't know just how much of an adventure it would be!

Maureen had always dreamed of telling stories and becoming an author. She set out to pursue that dream by enrolling in the IWEP (Integrated Women's Entrepreneurship Program).

"Walking into the IWEP Program, I knew I was stepping into an opportunity for growth," she says. "But I never imagined just how transformational this experience would be."

She says the program equipped her with practical skills, from financial planning and branding to marketing and business strategy. It also helped her build meaningful relationships as well as build up her confidence.

Maureen is now the self-published author of "Adventures of Mama" – a series of books for parents with children aged four-to-10 years old.

The captivating book series brings children into the world of cooking, gardening, farming, storytelling, and even learning Swahili. So far, she has written seven books – which have sold around the world!

Talk about a dream becoming reality. "Today, I stand not just as a mother, but as a self-published author and entrepreneur, ready to inspire the next generation," she says proudly.



Keyla Marmol: Renovating Spaces and Renewing Hope for a Home

Keyla Marmol, from Venezuela, was handpicked by an oil and gas manufacturing company in 2009 to relocate to Canada.

But, in 2022, her career took a turn as she embarked on an entrepreneurial journey starting Kainos Renovation with her spouse.

That's when she turned to TIES Entrepreneurship Program/NIWBE (New Immigrant Women Becoming Entrepreneurs).

Keyla says the program was instrumental in her journey as an immigrant woman entrepreneur, adding it provided her with invaluable resources and support to address the unique challenges she faced.

She says from the training sessions and workshops to the mentorship and networking opportunities; the program fostered a sense of community and belonging.

"Being part of a network of like-minded women who shared similar experiences and challenges was incredibly empowering," she adds.

"It gives me the confidence to persevere and the motivation to succeed." Keyla has now started a non-profit social enterprise, where she brings together experts to teach people how to own their own homes one day.



Expanding Mental Health Support for Newcomers and Vulnerable Populations

TIES Mental Health program continued its growth and strengthened key partnerships this past year, enhancing its capacity to support newcomers and vulnerable populations.

A notable area of growth was the **Healthy Minds** program, which witnessed a 21% increase in counselling sessions from 4,324 in 2023 to 5,238 in 2024, demonstrating the growing need for culturally sensitive mental health support.

The **Thrive Together** program expanded its reach through the successful launch of new initiatives and the adoption of flexible service delivery, fostering valuable community connections.

Similarly, the **Tools for Mental Wellness** project exceeded its targets and the Mindfulness Hut saw consistent community use, highlighting the increasing demand for accessible well-being resources.

Strategic collaborations were pivotal, such as the **LACE project's** partnership with ISC, CFN, and Action Dignity, which connected with 20 schools through its Youth Specialist role. **The Ukrainian Family Outreach and Wellness (UFO)** project also played a vital role, engaging clients through collaborative events and workshops to address their unique mental health and well-being needs.

The **BENCH** project, a pioneering collaboration with CCIS and Distress Centre Calgary, addressed gaps in crisis support for newcomers, securing continued funding.

Furthermore, the **Tapestry** project built vital bridges with ethnocultural communities through partnerships and outreach. These collective efforts underscore the team's commitment to collaborative partnerships and impactful service delivery to meet the evolving mental health needs of our diverse communities.

Healthy Minds

The Healthy Minds program offers culturally and linguistically responsive services to newcomers and vulnerable Calgarians. It has expanded its capacity to meet growing needs through low-barrier access to multilingual professional counselling, available both online and in person.

851

Clients Served

5869

Sessions



Linking All Cultures Equitably (LACE)

LACE is a collaborative effort by TIES, ISC, CFN, and Action Dignity to improve mental health support for newcomers. It addresses ongoing barriers to access by making services more available and encouraging help-seeking.

LACE encourages systemic change by addressing linguistic, cultural, and organizational barriers through various forms of mental health programming and services.

4000

Clients Served Across the Four Agencies

200

School Staff Reached Through Presentations

Tapestry Project

The Tapestry project is a community development effort that was created along with the Regional Outreach Program at CCIS.

The project focuses on mental health outreach to ethnocultural communities, working closely with six communities in 2024 to raise mental health awareness and connect individuals with services when they are ready.

323

Clients Served

Building Equitable Newcomer Crisis Help (BENCH)

A pioneering pilot project in Canada, the BENCH project directly addresses the underutilization of mainstream helplines by newcomers. This vital collaboration brings together TIES, Centre for Newcomers, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, and Distress Centre Calgary.

Recognizing that factors like limited social support, language barriers, and isolation heighten their crisis risk, the partnership's core aim is to build the capacity of participating agencies and the broader sector. This will enable them to deliver culturally sensitive crisis response tailored to the unique needs of this vulnerable population.

Top Countries of Origin: Clients primarily originated from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Syria, Eritrea, and Nigeria.

668

Clients Served

THRIVE TOGETHER

Thrive Together is a holistic, family-centered initiative that supports newcomers and other vulnerable families by strengthening their resilience, resourcefulness, and strengths.

This past year, the program achieved significant impact marked by the successful launch of five key programs: **Circle of Security Parenting**, **TIES Online Support for Newcomer Families**, **TIES Women's Empowerment Group**, **Online Support for Moms with Special Needs Kids**, and the **TIES Single Moms Group**. Furthermore, the program expanded its reach through virtual and hybrid options.

269

Clients Served

723

Contacts



It was a great privilege to be part of the program which opened my eyes to areas I never thought of in parenting. The program content was well-aligned with current needs in parenting, providing participants with valuable and actionable insights.

Circle of Security Parenting Participant

Finding a group like this where I can pour my whole self and get all the support I need, plus the activities and games I always look forward to our moms moment. Thank you, Remi for all you do.

Moms Group Participant



200
Clients Served

61
Sessions

The Ukrainian Family Outreach and Wellness (UFO)

UFO project supports Ukrainian families in Canada by addressing their mental health and well-being needs, focusing on family wellness, social connections, and access to support services. The project leverages a strong network of volunteers and partnerships with cultural, educational, and mental health entities.

The project engaged numerous volunteers and partnered with diverse cultural, educational, and mental health organizations in the city, including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Calgary Fort, Bow Station, and 4-H Alberta,

Tools for Mental Wellness

By providing practical tools that strengthened mental well-being and resilience, the Tools for Mental Wellness project supported the social recovery of Albertans, particularly newcomers and vulnerable populations.

Using a community-based approach, the project addressed cultural, accessibility, systemic, and language barriers, helping to break the stigma surrounding mental health interventions and improve access to services for depression, anxiety, and stress.

400
Clients Served

32
Sessions

TIES WELLNESS SPACE

The TIES Wellness Space at Westwinds offers a free, multi-sensory environment dedicated to mindfulness and relaxation. Accessible to everyone, it can be booked easily and as often as desired through an online system.

200

Available Bookings Per Month



4680
Clients Served

126
Group Sessions

90% Improved Their
Financial Literacy Skills

Outreach and Partnerships

Strong collaboration and partnerships enable TIES to expand its reach, access specialized knowledge, and provide comprehensive support to its clients. TIES actively partners with various organizations, including:

- **Richardson Wealth:** A Lunch and Learn session on retirement planning was delivered in partnership, leveraging their expertise to educate the community.
- **Service Credit Union and ERP College:** These organizations were involved in community outreach during events like the Stampede.
- **ATB and RBC:** Financial literacy sessions were provided in partnership with these financial institutions.
- **CRA:** TIES also worked with CRA representatives to offer vital information and support to clients and volunteers.

TIES Money Smart Expanded Services as Demand for Financial Literacy Support Surged by 61%

TIES Financial Literacy Program empowers individuals and families to make informed and confident financial decisions that will contribute to their long-term stability and success in Canada.

This fiscal year, TIES witnessed a substantial rise in demand for financial literacy support in Calgary. Client numbers surged from 2,898 in the 2023-2024 fiscal year to 4,680.

Free Tax Clinic: The TIES Free Tax Clinic significantly expanded its services, notably through extended operating hours and enhanced language support.

The clinic now operates seven days a week, with in-person services available Monday to Saturday, and virtual clinics offered in the evenings and on weekends. Highly trained, multilingual volunteers, (fluent in 18+ languages, helped clients navigate the tax system and secure entitled benefits and refunds.

RESP Sign-Up Event: During Financial Literacy Month, the team hosted a successful Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) sign-up event, bringing together representatives from 12 Calgary banks, Service Canada, and the CRA to assist approximately 258 clients in securing their children's educational futures.



MEDIA COVERAGE

TIES Money Smart initiatives made a notable impact by attracting significant media attention, elevating community awareness of valuable financial resources.

Specifically, our RESP event and Free Tax Clinic received media coverage, with interviews featuring Program Manager Noha El Tanahi and our clients on **CTV, CBC Radio, and Global News (TV and radio)**.



“

Amazing program this year. Very organized and accommodating for the volunteers and clients. Staff are very knowledgeable of tax, friendly, helpful, great customer service, and are all amazing team players.

Micheal Pho,
Tax Clinic Volunteer



Samira S. | Money Smart

For Samira S. her journey to Canada, was a journey to hope. “In Canada, I have freedom,” she says. “Everything is good here. It was not safe for me back home. I was scared living there.”

Originally from Ethiopia, Samira came to Canada in 2019. Like many newcomers, she struggled with finding stable work, a place to call home and learning the language.

“Life not easy. I not have a house, I stay in (numerous) shelters. I not have a job,” she points out. “Me, not good English. I no go to school.”

Navigating all of this was a challenge. But another daunting task was still ahead. The single mother needed to file her income taxes. She came to the TIES Tax Clinic for help with what she thought was a simple tax filing. Turns out, it was anything but.

Samira had previously filed for bankruptcy, a situation outside the scope of TIES’ services.

Understandably, Samira was deeply distressed. The weight of her financial situation (stemming from debts incurred during a previous relationship), coupled with the language barrier, triggered immediate panic and tears.

Recognizing Samira's distress and drawing upon her own familiarity with Arabic, TIES Settlement and Financial Literacy Manager, Noha El Tanahi, sprang into action – going above and beyond to help this devastated client.

Noha and her team dug through massive amounts of paperwork, located and contacted all of the necessary parties and never took no for an answer. Eventually, they found a solution, and Samira was able to go on her way!

As Samira left the TIES office that day, the tears had been replaced by a genuine smile of relief and hope for herself along with her children.

Connecting Newcomers with Vital Community Resources

Building on its established role as a support guide for newcomers and low-income individuals, TIES continued to deliver comprehensive settlement services through the WRIP and settlement programs.

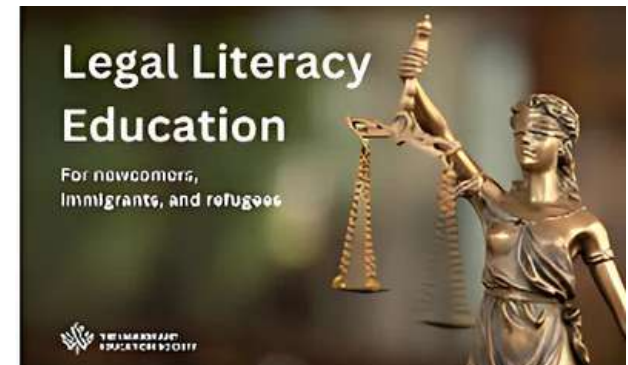
The team helped newcomers learn about life in Calgary by sharing information on essential services, resources, and community programs. They also organized welcome events to help newcomers connect with each other, established community members, and potential mentors.

The TIES Open House was a valuable opportunity for newcomers to explore the programs and resources TIES offered, connect with TIES Employment and Financial Literacy Counsellors, enjoy interactive budgeting activities, network, and tour the Westwinds campus.

Top Countries of Origin: Clients primarily originated from Afghanistan, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and India.

In collaboration with key community partners, the team organized community events and targeted information sessions with:

- **ENMAX**, on utility bill management and practical tips to reduce energy consumption and save money
- **Calgary Police Service**, on community safety and legal matters
- **Calgary Firefighters**, on home safety
- **Alberta International Medical Graduate Association (AIMGA)**, featuring experts addressing various health-related topics, COVID-19 and flu vaccination



Grand Prize Winner in the 2024 Field Law Community Fund Program

TIES was honoured to be selected as the grand winner of the \$10,000 Legal Literacy Education program by the Field Law Community Fund.

This award enables TIES to expand vital services, providing more newcomers with the knowledge and resources they need to understand the Canadian legal system.

Welcome Resources and Information Program (WRIP)

The WRIP, in collaboration with different organizations in Calgary, provide free guidance for newcomers to access essential city resources. They cover topics such as life in Canada, Canadian culture, laws, rights and responsibilities, government services, and practical aspects of daily living.

2007
Clients Served

25
Group Sessions





Fathiya J. | Settlement Support

Fathiya J.'s arrival in Calgary from Ethiopia in 2023, was meant to be the start of a new "dream" life with her husband, who had sponsored her.

However, just four months later the dream was shattered. The two separated, and she was alone in a strange country.

Determined to build a life for herself, Fathiya started LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) classes and worked as a cleaner. But the struggle to survive and the threat of homelessness continued until TIES stepped in.

TIES was able to negotiate short-term financial help for Fathiya from her former husband, her landlord and the Muslim Council of Calgary. It also helped her secure a part-time job and connected her with the Calgary Food Bank and WINS (Women in Need) for help with food and clothing.

TIES also facilitated access to reliable transportation and aided Fathiya in filing her tax return, enabling her to get access to various assistance programs.

The anxiety Fathiya felt throughout this journey – grappling with language barriers, financial insecurity, and the trauma of her past – was visible. Yet, the consistent and multifaceted support from the TIES team and the wider community, has brought about a remarkable transformation.

Today, Fathiya faces the future not with fear, but with a burgeoning sense of hope and a quiet strength. A strength she didn't even know she had.

Vaccine Clinics

The settlement team organized six COVID-19 and flu vaccine clinics at various times with AIMGA across three TIES locations. This effort aimed to make preventative healthcare accessible to all clients and promote the health and resilience of the newcomer community.





78
Children Served

13
Family Events Hosted

66
Professional
Development Sessions

25
Certified Educators

32
Educational Field Trips

43
Graduates

LITTLE BEGINNINGS URBAN OASIS (LBUO): NURTURING GROWTH, EMBRACING DIVERSITY

Since its launch on March 6, 2024, Little Beginnings Urban Oasis (LBUO) has been central to TIES's commitment to providing high-quality, inclusive childcare for families, especially newcomer children aged 0 to 6 years.

Understanding the diverse needs of these families, our centre proudly offers extended hours, operating weekdays from 7 AM to 10 PM and weekends from 8 AM to 5 PM, to accommodate varying work schedules and personal needs.

We are also proud to be one the first childcare program in our region to fully integrate sensory learning environments within standard classrooms. By engaging the five senses, we help children overcome language barriers while developing confidence and communication skills in English.

Celebrating every child's unique identity is at the heart of our childcare program.

Our staff truly reflects the rich diversity of our families, with 98% speaking a language other than English at home, enabling communication in English, Tagalog, Arabic, French, Vietnamese, Nepali, Tamil, Punjabi, and many other languages.

The program is thriving with an 89% enrollment increase, and we provided 9,210 nutritious meals prepared on-site throughout the year.

At Little Beginnings, every child is seen, valued, and respected. We are building more than just school readiness—we are cultivating belonging, resilience, and opportunity.





Our vibrant calendar of events, from Literacy Nights to the Family Carnival, creates meaningful experiences and strengthens our community. Our Parental Engagement Series—“Building Better... Connections, Brains, Bodies”—actively encourages family involvement, strengthens community ties, and enriches parenting practices.

“

We want to say a big thank you to all the teachers who work with our child. We are very happy that we came to your kindergarten. Your professional work helps our child grow and learn.

Our little girl really likes the activities in the kindergarten and outside. Thank you very much for your love and care for the children. Your work is very important.

Svitlana Kapustniak - Parent

“

We absolutely love Little Beginnings! We truly appreciate the focus on our child’s overall development—emotionally, socially, and academically. The healthy, tasty meals are a big bonus and give us peace of mind. Most of all, the genuine love and affection shown by the staff makes this place feel like a second home. Thank you for creating such a nurturing and joyful environment!

Neha and Abhishek - Parents

“

Such a wonderful child care center. The educators are always cheerful, warm and welcoming. They provide healthy and nutritious food as per the child’s demand. I like the way they provide daily report of what and how much the kids ate, when and how many times diapers changed, and all the daily overall activities of your kids. My daughter is lucky to have them. Thank you. Your work is very important!

Pragatima Pun - Parent

“

I truly appreciate the care and support my baby receives at Little Beginning Urban Oasis. The caregivers are warm and dedicated, and I feel assured knowing he is in safe hands. I’ve noticed positive development in Abru since joining your center.

Muhsina Fathima and Poovathungal Abdul Assiz - Parents



Building Communities Through Evidence and Action

In partnership with community partners, academic institutions, industry experts, local governments, and ethnic and grassroots organizations, Centre for Immigrant Research strives to lead in research, evaluation, innovation and the development of new programs to better address immigrants' evolving needs and improve existing services and supports.

Voices in the Art (VIA)

The VIA project employs **Arts-Based Engagement Ethnography** to explore the intersecting identities and experiences of gender-based violence (GBV) among newcomer **2SLGBTQIA+ youth** (ages 14-24).

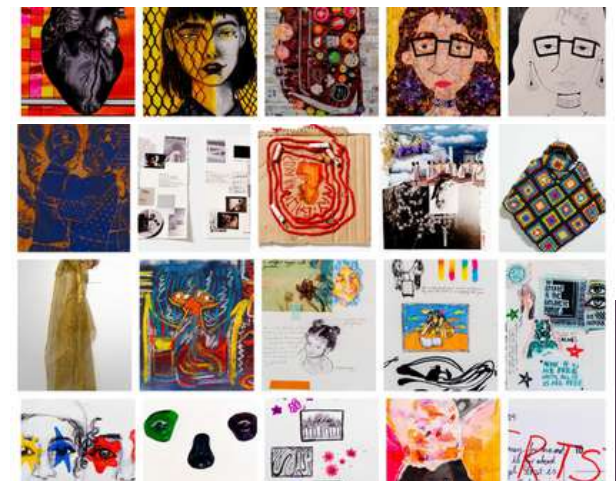
The project served 33 clients and proudly contributed to scholarly discourse. Specifically, VIA's Scoping Review was published in the **British Journal of Social Work**, and preliminary manuscript findings were presented at two academic conferences (National Metropolis and Metropolis Summit) and in a public webinar.

VIA also held exhibitions at the University of Calgary's Little Gallery and at the Calgary City Hall, showcasing artwork from the project's first two cohorts. The project also garnered media attention, being featured in prominent outlets like **Global News** and **CTV News**.

Centre for
**Immigrant
Research**



Centre pour la
**recherche sur
les immigrants**



PATHWAYS TO INCLUSION CONFERENCE 2024

The conference, which took place at the Central Public Library, brought together over 250 attendees, including experts, researchers, community leaders and newcomers to explore topics such as Climate Adaptation, Professional and Skilled Immigrant Support, Inclusion and Diversity of Immigrant Youth and Children, and Education and Digital Literacy.

A significant highlight of the conference was the launch of the **TIES Centre for Immigrant Research**. This initiative, a vision of Dr. Sally Zhao and the late Dr. Cesar Suva, aims to establish evidence-based programming for immigrant clients. The event also garnered media attention, including coverage from **Global News** and **Livewire Calgary**.



LONGITUDINAL EXAMINATION OF NEWCOMER-SERVING SOCIAL ENTERPRISES (LENS)

LENS examines how Employment Social Enterprises (ESEs), including Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISEs), help newcomers and BIPOC communities overcome socioeconomic barriers. In partnership with the University of Michigan, TIES will assess the effectiveness of these enterprises in supporting the settlement and integration of immigrant, Black, and other racialized Canadians.

The project is one of the 11 funded projects across Canada and was presented at the 2025 Work Integration Social Enterprise (WISE) Research Program Hybrid Workshop on February 21, 2025.

REAL-WORLD INSTRUCTION FOR SUCCESSFUL ENGLISH (RISE)

RISE Program delivers in-person ESL instruction at lower proficiency levels (CLB 1-2 and Literacy Foundation/1), using practical, real-world activities. It supports newcomers awaiting LINC placement, addressing a critical gap for those who might otherwise experience long delays in accessing language education.

The program has demonstrated significant impact, earning strong support from its funder, which has led to program expansion. The program now offers three classes daily (morning, afternoon, and evening) across 10-week cohorts, with classes held three times a week.

100
Clients Served

Top Countries of Origin
Afghanistan, Eritrea, Syria

GROWING WITH NEWCOMERS (GWN)

GWN project was a new initiative focused on education, specifically designed to target newcomers and immigrants in Calgary. The project team collaborated and consulted with TIES leadership and local experts in climate, gardening, and food security to develop educational content tailored to Calgary's unique environment.

This phase led to the creation of an eight-part instructional video series, translated into Punjabi, Tagalog, and Mandarin.

The educational resources were disseminated to LINC classes of five immigrant service providers across Calgary, including Centre for Newcomers (CFN), YW Calgary, Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA). In addition to the video series. The project successfully conducted workshops for 318 students across five immigrant-serving organizations, exceeding the initial target of 250 participants.



GROWing with Newcomers

What is GROWing with Newcomers (GWN)?
The GWN project, funded by Alberta's Community Initiatives Program, strengthens community ties and improves settlement for newcomers in Calgary through gardening. The project shares knowledge on Calgary's environment, food security, and gardening techniques via multilingual video tutorials and hands-on workshops. Through collaborations with experts, we created:

- 8 educational videos** Public and translated to three languages (Punjabi, Tagalog, and Mandarin)
- A sprouts activity** How to grow sprouts in a jar. Materials and brochure were given to the learners.
- A teacher toolkit** To help teachers guide students through the educational content.

How did we do?

- 5** immigrant-serving organizations reached
- 318** workshop learners, 164 of which gave feedback
- 21** teachers received the GWN toolkit

GWN contributed to a healthy and vibrant community.

GWN provided opportunities for Albertans to engage in their communities.

- 100% of the surveyed workshop participants liked the gardening videos.
- 70% had prior gardening experience in their home countries.
- 98% reported interest in practicing gardening themselves after watching the videos.
- 88% reported that the videos made them interested in engaging in neighbourhood gardening activities.
- 88% believed that engaging in the gardening activities shown in the videos would make them feel happier and healthier.
- The majority of learners, 98%, were likely to recommend the videos to other newcomers.

GROWing with Newcomers Video Series
www.immigrant.education.ca/see-the-research/
growing-with-newcomers

Alberta | Centre for Immigrant Research and Services | Centre pour la recherche sur l'immigration

Capturing Stories of Child Language Brokering: An Arts-Based Engagement Ethnography with Newcomer Families

Using a Social Justice framework combined with an Arts-Based Engagement Ethnography (ABEE), this study aims to investigate the effects of Child Language Brokering (CLB) insofar as it is utilized to facilitate social integration into Alberta's mainstream culture during newcomer families' acculturation process.

Recruitment efforts for this project have been successful, attracting more interest than anticipated from both English and French target participants. One additional English-speaking family was added to the original ten in response to the growing interest.

34
Clients Served

Beyond Translation: Mitigating Negative Impacts of Child Language Brokering

This program aims to lessen the negative effects of child language brokering (CLB) by providing comprehensive support to families, youth, and professionals.

To achieve these goals, the project offered family workshops, peer support groups for parents and youth, and educational sessions for practitioners to address the impacts of child language brokering.

The project aims to engage about 140 participants annually.

BOOK LAUNCH: BEYOND TRANSLATION

Exploring Child Language Brokering in Alberta's Culturally Diverse Landscape

The TIES Centre of Immigrant Research, in collaboration with the University of British Columbia and the University of Calgary, launched its new book, **"Beyond Translation: Exploring Child Language Brokering in Alberta's Culturally Diverse Landscape."**

This publication explores the critical role children play in translating and interpreting for their newcomer families, highlighting their experiences and contributions to settlement and integration.

The book's launch event, held on September 26, 2024, at the Calcutta Cricket Club, celebrated this significant research. The event was graced by the attendance of The Honourable Myles McDougall, MLA for Calgary-Fish Creek and Minister of Advanced Education, along with Dr. Chika Daniels and Dr. Anusha Kassin.



IN THE NEWS

"Beyond Translation" also gained notable media attention, including a feature on CTV News Calgary. The CTV segment showcased authors Katerina Palova (TIES) and Dr. Anusha Kassin (UBC), TIES clients Katherine Colorado and her mother Maria Amesquita, who demonstrated child language brokering in action.

Summary of Publications for FY 2024-2025

14 Peer-reviewed Manuscripts	5 Reports and Policy Briefs
2 Webinars & Podcasts	1 Book

Scan the QR code to view the full list.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

From our earliest days, TIES has operated on the fundamental belief that empowering individual journeys strengthens our collective community. This year's theme, "Empowering Journeys – For a Stronger Community," embodies this enduring commitment.

Reflecting on the past year, it's inspiring to see this theme deeply woven into our progress. Beyond providing vital support to newcomers and financially challenged Canadians, we also prioritized strengthening our internal capacity by supporting the professional growth and well-being of our dedicated staff. This investment in our people directly fuels our ability to create greater future impact.

Guided by our strategic priorities, 2024 to 2025 fiscal year marked tangible growth in our community reach. We broadened our support by expanding crucial LINC classes, childcare services, and settlement assistance, including the notable expansion of our tax clinic, mental health support, and the launch of a legal literacy program. Our employment programs continued to empower individuals to secure work and contribute meaningfully.

Furthermore, the launch of our Centre for Immigrant Research significantly strengthens our ability to understand and address diverse community needs.

The success of our Climb for New Beginnings fundraiser and the collaborative spirit of our year-end Grow Together event underscore the strength of our community partnerships.

Looking ahead, our focus remains on cultivating a supportive environment for our team through initiatives that promote work-life balance, professional growth, and overall well-being. We recognize that a strong and thriving team is essential to effectively serve our community.

My sincere gratitude extends to our dedicated Board of Directors, our passionate staff and volunteers, our resilient clients, and our invaluable partners, funders, and donors. Your collective commitment is the driving force behind our achievements.

Together, we will continue to champion individual journeys and build a stronger, more inclusive Calgary for generations to come.

With deep appreciation and fervent hope,

M'Liss Edwards

TIES Board Chair



TIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS



M'Liss Edwards

Board Chair

37 Years at TIES



Gita Boyd

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8 Years at TIES



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Board Treasurer

10 Years at TIES



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11 Years at TIES



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Immigrant Wellbeing

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2 Years at TIES



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Tomasia DaSilva
Media and Relationship
Strategist

2 Years at TIES



Kreisha Hilario
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Immigrant Research

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1 Year at TIES



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Yao Chen
Yub Raj Paudyal
Yuba Tiwari
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TIES CLIMB FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

Our heartfelt gratitude extends to the dedicated climbers and teams who championed our peer-to-peer fundraising campaign by climbing the Calgary Tower. We especially thank all the climbing members of the TIES Team, Magnan Team, ENMAX, Gallagher Benefit Services, Horizon, and WK Family Lawyers as well as volunteers and cheerleaders for their support.

Top Fundraisers:

Sally Zhao
Suman Khanal
Marilyn Magnan
Gallagher
Enmax
David Magnan
Jeremy Wilson
Amanda Hodgins
Fatemeh Kazemi
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Caroline Magnan
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Thank you to our Event Sponsors: Charlesglen Toyota, RBC Foundation, ENMAX, Monster Mini-Golf and CTV (Media Sponsor)



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Achēv	Calgary Public Library	Goodwill Calgary Impact Centre
AGAT Labs	Calgary Stampede	Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC)
AIMGA	CANAF	Inner Louge
Alberta Health Services (AHS)	Canadian Western Bank	International Union of Painters
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Alberta Mind Biotech	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)	JFSC (Jewish Family Service Calgary)
Alberta Mindfulness Association	Centre for Newcomers (CFN)	Kindred
Alberta Routes	CIBC	La Cité des Rocheuses
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Apollo Dental	Cleaning Girls	London Drugs
Aspire	Columbia College	Making Changes
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Ballad Group	Cowork 99 Inc	Maskan - IYLC
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Bow Valley College	ECO Canada	Minuteman Press Beltline
Budget Printing	Edmonton Catholic Schools	Momentum
Calgary Airport Travel Welcome Center	Empower Me	Monkey Ville Child Care
Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth (CBFY)	ENMAX	MRU Residence Services
Calgary Child Care	Enviros	National Bank
Calgary CO-OP	Electronic Recycling Association	NCMCC
Calgary Emergency Management Agency	ERP College	Oculus Inc.
Calgary Fire Department	Fairmont Palliser	Old Motorbike Shop
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Calgary Innovation Coalition	Future Cricket Stars Academy	

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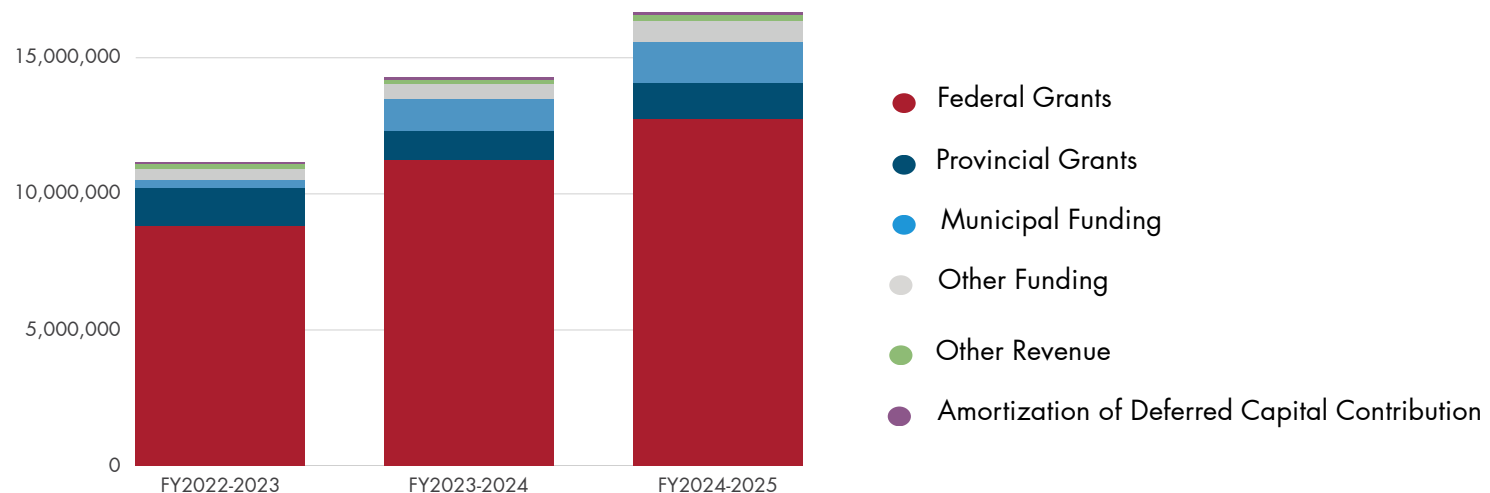


FINANCIAL INFORMATION

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2025

We extend our deepest gratitude to our funders and donors. Your generous contributions have empowered us to make a lasting impact on the lives of countless newcomers and financially challenged Canadians.

REVENUES	FY2022-2023	FY2023-2024	FY2024-2025
Federal Funding	\$8,852,973	\$11,254,014	\$12,762,182
Provincial Funding	\$1,384,052	\$1,080,196	\$1,312,269
Municipal Funding	\$279,144	\$1,162,316	\$1,514,404
Other Funding	\$417,792	\$549,590	\$793,749
Other Revenue	\$182,951	\$148,179	\$201,309
Amortization of Deferred Capital Contribution	\$37,011	\$85,847	\$69,857
TOTAL	\$11,153,923	\$14,280,142	\$16,653,770





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2024 - 2025

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