

# 2021/2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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**IMMIGRANT MIGRANT WOMEN'S  
ASSOCIATION OF HALIFAX**

[WWW.IMWAH.ORG](http://WWW.IMWAH.ORG)



# Land Acknowledgement

IMWAH acknowledges that our work takes place in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are grateful to the L'nu'k for their knowledge and deep connection with this land that continues to guide IMWAH in the next phase of our growth.

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# Message from IMWAH

IMWAH welcomed six new Board of Directors in October 2021. In the last six months, the Board has continued to work remotely to deliver the Capacity building project and other project initiatives.

Guided by a feminist and intersectional lens, the new Board conducted an internal policy review on IMWAH's governance manual and identified areas for improvements in the following areas: meeting process, human resource management and media relations. After countless hours of research and revision, we are proud to head into the new fiscal year with an updated Meeting Guide and Protocols, a comprehensive Human Resource Manual, and our first media statement policy (currently under development).

Programming wise, we concluded the Art and Storytelling project Phase 3, which brought together 12 immigrant migrant women across Nova Scotia to reflect on their relationships with *names* through conversations and writing. In response to community feedback from the Immigrant Migrant Women's Support Group project, we are working to develop a Gender-based Violence prevention booklet series for immigrant and migrant women.

Virtually and in-person, we have supported a number of conversations provincially and nationally to advocate for the equality and well being of immigrant migrant women and girls. This included organizing community consultations with the Nova Scotia Office of Equity and Anti-Racism, with the Office of African Nova Scotia Affairs' Race-Based Health Data Collection project, and providing input to the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants on forming the first national advisory committee for racialized immigrant migrant and refugee women.

As we move into post-pandemic recovery, IMWAH stands behind its commitment to build a strong and resilient organization, to advocate for the collective voices, and respond to the unique needs of immigrant migrant women and girls in Nova Scotia.

We look forward to connecting with you in 2022, virtually and in person!

IMWAH Board of Directors

# About Us

**The Immigrant Migrant Women's Association of Halifax (IMWAH)** is a culturally diverse and feminist-based non-profit organization in Nova Scotia. It is committed to the holistic integration of immigrant, migrant women and girls in the province.

## MISSION

IMWAH celebrates the contributions and responds to the challenges and unique needs of immigrant and migrant women and girls.

## VISION

A Community free of barriers where immigrant and migrant women and girls flourish and belong

## OBJECTIVES

- Support immigrant migrant women access existing support systems by providing public workshops and resource navigation support
- Support immigrant migrant women and girls build social connection through art and wellness programs
- Conduct community-based research into the needs of immigrant migrant women and girls and the social conditions affecting their wellbeing and make the results of that research publicly available.
- Celebrate the voices of immigrant migrant women and girls through public presentations of their experiences and accomplishments

## APPROACH

IMWAH's approach to advance gender equality in the economic, social and democratic life of Canada is informed by feminist, intersectional and anti-racist values. IMWAH seeks to operate from a holistic and integrated empowerment model to promote women and girl's leadership. It seeks to engage in achieving gender equality as a sustainable development goal.

To fulfill our mission, IMWAH Board of Directors actively works with a wide range of government and community-based organizations, coalitions and research networks to promote women's equality and to facilitate positive policy and social change.

# Board of Directors 2021-2022



**Joanna Strzelec-Stewart**

Board Chair



**Nancy Zhang**

Co-Chair



**Neny Kwasi**

Treasurer



**Haruka Aoyama**

Secretary



**Maria Jose Yax-Fraser**



**Evgenia (Jenny) Ashin**



**Sarvat Nawaz**



**Rana Zaman**



**Shweta Pai**



**Emma Lang**



**Jubanti Toppo**  
(former)



**Kothai Kumanan**

# Committees

## IMWAH's initiatives are driven by the following Project Committees:

**Capacity Building Committee** oversees the planning, delivery and evaluation of the Capacity Building Project with the support of a project coordinator. This project is funded by the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) and takes place from 2019-2023. To date, this project has completed Capacity areas in Board Development and Strategic Planning. Fund Development and Advocacy is the focus of the 2022/23 fiscal year.

Members: Maria Jose Yax-Fraser, Joanna Strzelec-Stewart, Nancy Zhang, Haruka Aoyama, Kothai Kumanan, Sarvat Nawaz, Evgenia (Jenny) Ashin, Rana Zaman, Jubanti Toppo (former)

**GBV Resource Booklet Committee** oversees the development of the Immigrant Migrant Women's Gender-based Violence Prevention booklets. This project was devised in response to participant feedback from the Immigrant Migrant Women's Support Group project (2020-21) that emphasized a growing need for GBV prevention resources tailored to immigration migrant women.

Members: Maria Jose Yax-Fraser, Shweta Pai, Nina Zhang, Hina Ansari

**Art and Storytelling Committee** oversees the planning, delivery and evaluation of the Art and storytelling project. The first two phases offered in-person art sessions to immigrant migrant women and their children a space to explore creativity and storytelling. Phase 3 offered online creative writing sessions to 12 Nova Scotia based immigrant migrant women to explore the topic of personal name. Funders for this project include: the Nova Scotia Office of Immigrant and Population Growth, the 4Cs Foundations, the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage. Planning of phase 4 is underway in collaboration with the Mount Saint Vincent University Alexa McDonough Institute for Women and Gender Justice and Understory Magazine.

Members: Maria Jose Yax-Fraser, Emma Lang, Rohini Bannerjee

# Capacity Building Highlight

2022-23 marks the final year of IMWAH's **Capacity Building project**. The objective of the multi-year Capacity Building fund is to increase the capacity of women's organizations and organizations with initiatives that advance gender equality and women's movement in Canada. With the goal of enabling IMWAH to achieve long term viability, the project is carried out as four capacity building activities: Board Development, Strategic Planning, Advocacy and Fund Development. We are pleased to report the following highlights:

Since our first GBA+ introduction workshop (April 2021), the Board has applied a GBA+ lens to the following internal policy work:

- Updated IMWAH's **Meeting Guide and Protocols** to incorporate a consensus decision making model. This model will introduce language and procedures to our meeting process that feel inclusive, collaborative and align with our values as a feminist and culturally diverse community organization.
- Developed IMWAH's first **Human Resource Manual** to ensure hiring, management and evaluation of staff follow Nova Scotia labour standards and responds to the evolving gender-specific and culturally diverse needs of current and prospective employees.
- In response to the recent global crisis, we identified the urgent need to develop a **Media Statement Policy** to ensure IMWAH's consistent and timely response to events impact the wellbeing of immigrant migrant women and girls near and far. This policy is currently under development.

In addition, we recognize that a major roadblock to IMWAH's long term viability is continuous funding. As a preparatory step, we submitted an application to **register IMWAH as a Charitable organization**. Through this application, we had the opportunity to review IMWAH's organizational objectives to clarify funding and programming priorities. We attended a Revenue Development workshop hosted by WAGE where we received valuable resources on diversifying funding sources. In the coming months, we will be working to develop an annual fund development plan to guide IMWAH to secure short and medium term funding.

We have a full year of activities planned and look forward to providing future updates on our Capacity Building work!

Thank-you to the Department of Women and Gender Equality for your recognition and continued support!

# Programming Highlight

The **Art and Storytelling Project** began in January 2020 as a 12-week in-person project at IMWAH's former office location on Kempt Road in the Halifax North end. The project aimed to provide a space for immigrant migrant mothers and children to gather and connect through artmaking and storytelling. Due to COVID-19, the project was put on hold in March 2020. The remaining sessions were delivered in October 2021 at Wonder'neath Art Society.

Inspired by the storytelling from early phases, IMWAH launched a 10-week virtual creative writing program in Fall 2021. This program brought 12 women together through weekly writing sessions and discussions on the topic of Personal Names. At the end of the program, participants were invited to submit short stories to be published in an upcoming issue of the Understory Magazine. The project committee is currently reviewing submissions. The publication featuring short stories from the program will be launched at the MSVU International Girls Conference 2023.



IMWAH would like to thank Dr. Rohini Bannerjee for her volunteer contributions during recent phases of this project. IMWAH would like to thank the Alexa McDonough Institute for Women, Gender and Social Justice and Understory Magazine for this partnership.

## Community Engagement Highlight

### **Innovating for Impact | 2 Innover pour impacter**

IMWAH Board representative (Secretary) sits on the Advisory Committee to provide strategic guidance, new knowledge, and perspectives to support the participants from the settlement sector in building capacity to adapt, design, and implement innovative solutions and measure the effectiveness and efficiency of existing and new programming.

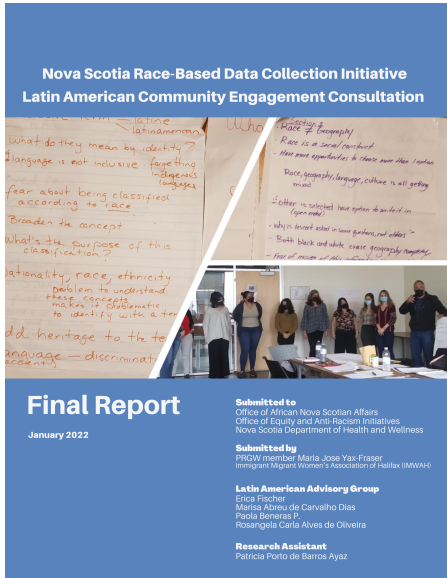
This Advisory Committee is coordinated by the ARAIS and Inspiring Communities, which are launching *Innovating for Impact | 2 Innover pour impacter*, a 2-year bilingual capacity building training program for the settlement agencies in Atlantic Canada.



# Research and Advocacy Highlights

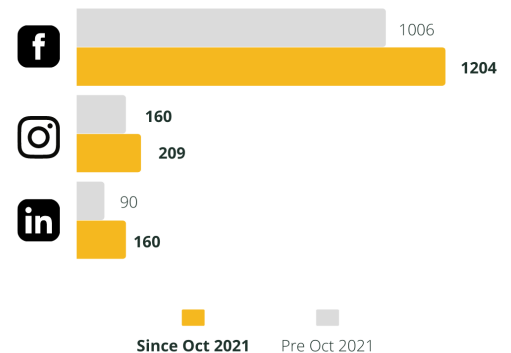
## Nova Scotia Race-Based Data Collection Initiative

In April 2021, the Nova Scotia government established a community-based working group known as the Primary Reference Working Group (PRWG) to lead the collection of race-based data in the Nova Scotia health system. IMWAH’s Board of Director Maria Jose Yax-Fraser was identified as one of the six PRWG Members to lead data collection. Maria Jose, in coordination with the Latin American Advisory Group (LAAG) members listened to a full range of feedback from Latin American-identifying Nova Scotians over the course of six Community Consultations from September - November 2021. The findings were compiled in a report submitted to the Office of African Nova Scotia Affairs in January 2022. IMWAH would like to thank Maria Jose, the Latin American Advisory Committee members and Research Assistant Patricia Porto De Barros Ayaz who provided input, support and advice throughout this research.



## Digital Presence

We have continued to use our social media and website as the primary communication channel. Our social media planning calendar has helped to streamline the process to share information, announcements and commemorate cultural and awareness occasions.



## Sector Engagement

Over the last six months, IMWAH was invited to a number of sector engagement opportunities. These opportunities allowed us to meet and learn from organizations and service providers on the municipal, provincial and national level to bring the voices and concerns of immigrant migrant women to the table. A selection of highlights include:

- Participation on ARIASA/Inspiring Community Advisory Committee - Innovating for Impact
- Engagement with Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants on their Racialized, Refugee, and Im/migrant Women's National Alliance Project
- Invitation for input on the Halifax Regional Municipality's 2022 Anti-Asian Racism Report
- Partnership with Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives NS on upcoming research project with immigrant migrant women front line workers.
- Organized community consultation for Office of Equity and Anti-Racism Initiatives on the in-progress Equity and Anti-Racism Legislation.

# Financials

## Financial Standing As of March 31, 2022

<b>Fiscal year</b>	<b>2021/2022</b>	<b>2020/2021</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$61,776.01</b>	<b>\$122,662.39</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$124,349.55</b>	<b>\$80,759.61</b>
Salaries and payroll	\$43,557.62	\$39,279.69
Honoraria & professional fee	\$24,185.55	\$7,258.50
Program delivery	\$46,495.73	\$28,265.01
Administration	\$10,110.65	\$5,956.41
<b>Net income</b>	<b>(\$62,573.54)</b>	<b>\$41,902.78</b>

# Thank You

We thank the following funders, partners and supporters for making 2021-2022 projects and initiatives possible:

Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)  
Nova Scotia Department of Community, Culture and Heritage  
Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs  
Office of Equity and Anti-Racism Initiatives

Rohini Bannerjee  
Monica Romero  
Paroo MacKinnon  
Nina Zhang  
Hina Ansari

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902-580-2678

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