



Innovation Strategy and Roadmap: Canadian Newcomers 101-Pathways to a Successful Life

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The Idea Behind Canadian Newcomers 101

The program I would like to implement is the Newcomers 101 series at the Brampton Public Library. Rather than offering general life skills programs for adults, this series would focus on the unique needs of newcomers to Canada. Many newcomers face challenges related to finding employment, securing housing, accessing education, using public transportation, understanding Canadian laws, building social connections, navigating citizenship and permanent residency processes, accessing health care, government benefits, developing digital literacy skills, learning English as a second language, and adjusting to a new culture (Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, 2019). To address these needs, the library will offer a three-month program series that provides settlement information, community resources, and opportunities for social connection.



Program Goals and Objectives

- ❖ **Participants will gain confidence in accessing Canadian systems and services.**
- ❖ **Participants will become familiar with local community resources and service providers.**
- ❖ **Participants will build social connections and develop a support network.**
- ❖ **Participants will experience a stronger sense of belonging and inclusion within their new community.**

Brampton Library's Mission & Vision

MISSION

Brampton Library's mission is to create opportunities for everyone to discover their full potential. The library aims to do this by fostering literacy, inspiring learning, and building community.

VISION

Their vision is to inspire connections amongst the community they serve.



Institutional Context

Brampton Public Library has nine locations in Brampton, Ontario. I chose to implement the program in this library system because the city has the fifth largest immigrant population in Canada and the third largest in Ontario. According to the City of Brampton (n.d.), 59% of Brampton residents were born outside of Canada. Given the city's large and growing newcomer population, implementing a program specifically designed to support newcomers would address an important community need.

Many newcomers to the City of Brampton are international students and temporary foreign workers, two groups that often face unique challenges during the settlement process. These individuals may experience discrimination, exploitative employment practices, wages below the legal minimum, denial of overtime pay and employment benefits, fraudulent practices, and difficulties securing safe and affordable housing (Yadav, 2024). As a result, this program would provide an important opportunity to educate participants about their legal and safety rights.

The library currently offers programs such as English conversation circles, employment information sessions, and Canadian citizenship workshops. While these services are valuable, a more comprehensive and structured program series could better support newcomers as they adjust to life in Canada. Consistent with Stephens (2004), the program would be designed with the needs and experiences of newcomers at the center of the planning process, ensuring that the content remains relevant, practical, and responsive to the community it serves.



Action Brief Statement

Brampton Public Library will convince the newcomers of Brampton city that by attending the Canadian Newcomers 101 series at our library they will find numerous resources about Canada which will help them settle down in their new city because our library's mission is to create opportunities for everyone to discover their full potential by learning and building community.

Inspiration

The Canadian Newcomers 101 series was inspired by the *Adulting 101* programs conducted at public libraries in the United States, including the North Bend (Oregon) Public Library (NBPL) and the Forsyth County Public Library (FCPL) (Ford, 2018; Vanderhage, 2018). It was also inspired by newcomer programs implemented by the Philadelphia Public Library (Knology, 2023) and the Toronto Public Library (Canadian Immigrant, 2022). The idea was to combine the formatting of *Adulting 101* programs with important topics for newcomers.



Adulting 101

Basic How-To's for Ages 16-25



Sat. February 25: Bare Essential Cooking
4:30 PM North Bend Public Library Conference Room
How to cook easy recipes, and how to creatively cook in dorm rooms (Ironic grilled cheese, anyone?)





Sat. March 18: Financial Know-how
4:30 PM North Bend Public Library Conference Room
How to balance a checkbook, set a budget, file your own taxes, and build credit





Sat. April 22: Getting a Job
4:30 PM North Bend Public Library Conference Room
How to write a resume and cover letter, and how to interview





Sat. May 20: News and the Like
4:30 PM North Bend Public Library Conference Room
How to find and understand real news on the Internet





Sat. June 17: Moving Out?
4:30 PM North Bend Public Library Conference Room
How to live with roommates, find an apartment, and talk to your landlord





Sat. July 22: Odds and Ends
4:30 PM North Bend Public Library Conference Room
How to check and refill your oil, use a breaker box, reset an outlet, clean an oven, and anything else you want to know how to do!



1800 Sherman Ave. North Bend, OR 97459

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Canadian Immigrant. (2022, November 25). *How libraries can help newcomers adjust to life in Canada*. <https://canadianimmigrant.ca/settlement/how-libraries-can-help-newcomers-adjust-to-life-in-canada>

Ford, A. (2018, May 1). *Adulting 101: When libraries teach basic life skills*. *American Libraries Magazine*. <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2018/05/01/adulting-101-library-programming/>

Knology. (2023, July 24). *Respecting and integrating newcomers: How libraries support welcoming communities*. *Programming Librarian*. <https://programminglibrarian.org/articles/respecting-and-integrating-newcomers-how-libraries-support-welcoming-communities>

Vanderhage, G. (2018, September 14). *Adulting 101 programs at the library*. *Librarian to Librarian*. <https://librariantolibrarian.wordpress.com/2018/09/14/adulting-101-programs-at-the-library/>

Program Content



Each weekly session will feature guest speakers with expertise in the week's topic to provide practical information and guidance for newcomers. Sessions will combine hands on activities with presentations and discussions. Each session will have a duration of two hours.

❖ **Week 1: Introduction to Brampton city**

Topics: Brampton library branches, community centres, and emergency services

Activity: Group work on locating libraries, community centres, emergency services on Brampton map



❖ **Week 2: City transportation (Brampton & Toronto)**

Topics: Travel routes, buses, trains, Uber, taxi services, obtaining driving licence, and traffic laws

Activity: Planning travel routes using online Google maps

❖ **Week 3: Employment in Canada**

Topics: Job searches, work permits, worker rights, job agencies, writing a resume, cover letter, interview process, customer service tips

Activity: Mock interviews with partners



❖ **Week 4: Housing in Canada**

Topics: Housing agencies, buying a home, real estate, mortgage, lease agreements, tenant rights, and utilities bills

Activity: Review sample rental listing and lease agreements

❖ **Week 5: Health and Mental Wellbeing**

Topics: Getting a health card, finding family doctors, hospitals, walk in clinics, mental and physical health awareness

Activity: Mental wellbeing questionnaire

❖ **Week 6: Digital Skills and Canadian Websites**

Topics: Navigating government websites, Microsoft applications, conducting web searches, identifying online scams and phishing mail, Wi-Fi Hotspot lending program, and Canadian internet providers

Activity: Identify phishing e-mails

❖ **Week 7: Educational Institutions (Brampton & Toronto)**

Topics: Applying for educational institutions, finding academic resources, student loans, and student accommodations

Activity: Educational pathway planning and goals



❖ **Week 8: Learning Languages**

Topics: Learning English and French, public speaking, language learning resources, and writing skills

Activity: English conversation with partners and role-playing activities

❖ **Week 9: Canadian Citizenship**

Topics: Pathways to citizenship, preparing for the Canadian citizenship test and how to apply for permanent residence.

Activity: Canadian citizenship mock exams

❖ **Week 10: Financially Smart**

Topics: Canadian financial institutions, how to get a bank card, maintaining good credit scores, budgeting, filing taxes and saving money.

Activity: Budgeting exercise and reading financial statements

❖ **Week 11: Meeting Your Neighbours**

Topics: Socialising, networking, community volunteering opportunities, local recreational activities and events.

Activity: Series wrap-up party with games and potluck



Guidelines & Policies

- ❖ **The program will be developed and implemented using a community-led model (Barbakoff & Lenstra, 2024; California State Library, n.d.). Program planning will begin with consultations with newcomers, local settlement agencies, and community organizations in Brampton to identify the information, resources, and services that would be valuable to participants. As Stephens (2012) emphasizes, libraries should remain flexible and create opportunities for participants to shape their own learning experiences.**
- ❖ **Brampton Public Library will also collaborate with the Toronto Public Library (TPL), as many newcomers travel to Toronto for employment and educational purposes. As one of Canada's largest public library systems, TPL can provide valuable expertise, resources, and best practices related to newcomer settlement services.**
- ❖ **Registration for the series will be completed in advance, with each session accommodating approximately 25 participants. Accessibility supports, equipment, and interpretation services will be available upon request. The program will be delivered in accordance with Brampton Public Library's policies, including its Customer Code of Conduct and Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) (Brampton Public Library, n.d.).**

Timeline for Implementation

Because the series will run for approximately three months (11 weeks), planning will begin seven months before the program launch date.

❖ Seven Months Before Launch:

1. Consult with newcomers, settlement agencies, social workers, and community organizations to identify priority topics
2. Finalize program schedule, learning objectives, and outcomes
3. Find guest speakers and volunteers
4. Select a team of library staff who will conduct the program

❖ Three Months Before Launch:

1. Develop presentations, hands on activities, welcome packages, and resource handouts
2. Design promotional materials and begin advertising the program
3. Provide staff training on program content
4. Reserve program rooms and gather required supplies, equipment, and materials
5. Begin participant registration

❖ Final Week Before Launch:

1. Confirm participant registrations and attendance
2. Provide guest speakers with program schedule and logistical information
3. Test technical equipment and review presentation materials
4. Verify accessibility accommodations and interpretation requests
5. Prepare backup plans for technical or scheduling issues

Marketing & Promotion

The marketing strategy for the Canadian Newcomers 101 series is informed by the recommendations of Lucas (2017). Promotional flyers highlighting the program topics, schedule, and registration details will be distributed throughout the community. The series will also be promoted through Brampton Public Library's social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and X. In addition, marketing efforts will include partnerships with local news outlets, newcomer settlement agencies, and community centers to increase awareness and encourage participation among newcomers. We will emphasize the value this series will bring to newcomers and their settlement journeys.



Staff Training & Readiness

- ❖ **As Stephens (2004) mentions, effective communication among staff at all levels is essential for the successful implementation of a library service plan. Throughout the planning and delivery of the Canadian Newcomers 101 series, staff across all Brampton Public Library branches, from frontline employees to managers, will be kept informed about the program's development, goals, and implementation timeline.**
- ❖ **Staff selected for conducting the program will receive training on the program topics and newcomer resources to ensure they are prepared to support participants. Community newcomers, social workers, and settlement professionals will also be invited to train library staff by sharing their expertise.**

Evaluation & Future Expansion

- ❖ **Program outcome evaluation will include participant survey feedback and attendance statistics. At the end of each session, participants will be invited to complete a survey evaluating the program, including what they found most valuable and suggestions for improvement.**
- ❖ **The program will be considered successful if participants report increased confidence in navigating Canadian systems and accessing community resources. Additional indicators of success include high attendance throughout the series and increased registration requests driven by positive word of mouth recommendations within the newcomer community.**
- ❖ **To support future expansion, participants will be asked to suggest new topics to explore for future series. Based on community feedback and identified settlement needs, future sessions could expand to include topics such as crisis and trauma support, domestic violence awareness, self care, LGBTQ+ services, and focused sessions for children, youth, and senior services related to newcomers (Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, 2019).**

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Image Links In Order Of Appearance

1. <https://www.elginimmigration.com/post/commonmyths>
2. Image generated from ChatGPT using prompt: Create a diversity image for Brampton newcomers for the library. Make it a cute cartoon.
3. <https://thebhive.ca/6-cool-brampton-library-resources-that-can-help-your-startup-grow/>
4. <https://www.brampton.ca/EN/City-Hall/Council-Priorities>
5. <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2018/05/01/adulthood-101-library-programming/>
6. <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2018/05/01/adulthood-101-library-programming/>
7. Image generated from ChatGPT using prompt: With the same cartoon people, make an image of them doing a newcomer related library program in a room.
8. https://www.brampton.ca/EN/residents/transit/plan-your-trip/Documents/Brampton_System_M-F.pdf
9. <https://www.vwlawyers.ca/blog/employment-rights-federally-regulated-employees-rs5n3>
10. <https://www.becitizen.ca/blog/citizenship-ceremony-guide>
11. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/rci/en/news/2213188/how-canadas-big-6-banks-made-a-ton-of-money-in-2025>
12. <https://sapphireoffices.com/canadian-citizenship/>