



January 2022

Reducing Racism in the Housing Sector

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Land Acknowledgement

NPI would like to acknowledge the First Peoples on whose traditional territories we live and work. NPI is grateful for the opportunity to have our offices located on these lands and thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land.

Our main offices:

- Thunder Bay on Robinson-Superior Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg and Fort William First Nation.
- Sudbury is on the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnaabeg as well as Wahnapiitae First Nation.
- Kirkland Lake is on the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of Cree, Ojibway, and Algonquin Peoples.
- Each community is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

We recognize and appreciate the historic connection that Indigenous people have to these territories. We support their efforts to sustain and grow their nations. We also recognize the contributions that they have made in shaping and strengthening local communities, the province, and Canada.



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Author's calculations are based on data available at the time of publication and are therefore subject to change.

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About the Northern Analyst Collective

The Northern Analyst Collective, a project of Northern Policy Institute, will allow members to “time share” a professional policy analyst. By merging our collective resources we can ensure that the smallest municipality or local charity can access high-end skills at an affordable price.

About Northern Policy Institute

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NAC Partner



Sudbury Local Immigration Partnership

The Sudbury Local Immigration Partnership (SLIP) focuses on the development of different initiatives to ensure that Greater Sudbury continues to be a welcoming community for newcomers of all walks of life. The SLIP fosters an inclusive, engaging and collaborative environment with local stakeholders to identify issues, share solutions, build capacity and preserve collective memory for the purpose of ensuring the attraction, settlement, inclusion and retention of newcomers in the City of Greater Sudbury.

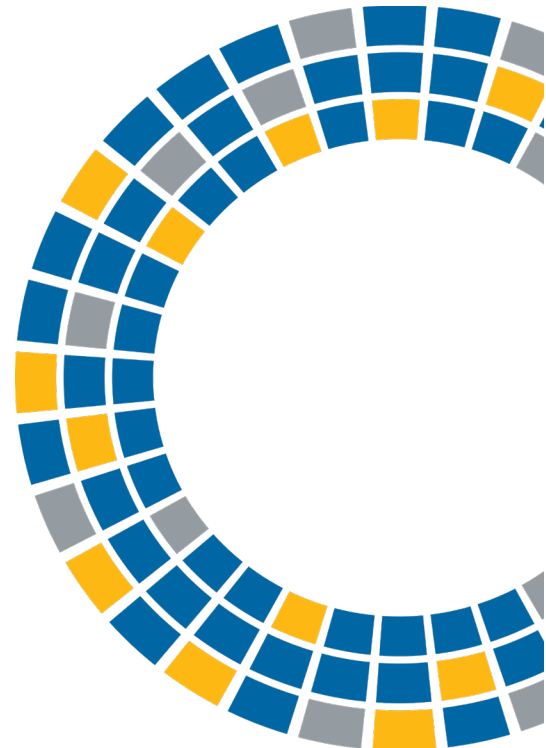
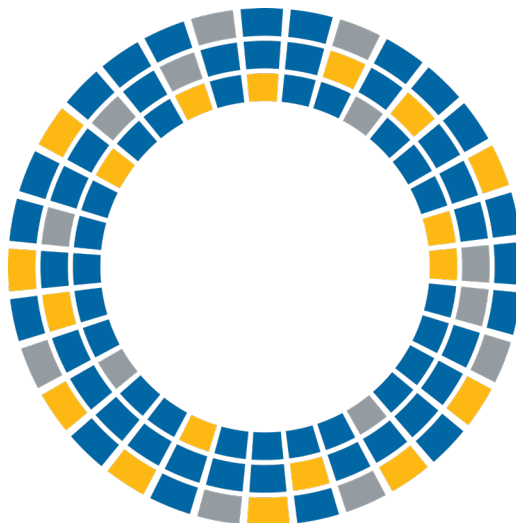


About the Author

Larissa Yantha



Larissa Yantha is a prior former analyst/NOHFC intern at Northern Policy Institute. During her BA in Global Studies and MA in Religion, Culture and Global Justice, she became interested in Indigenous capacity and innovation, immigration, and community-driven approaches to anti-racism. Larissa currently acts as the Special Projects Coordinator at the Municipality of West Nipissing where she applies her interdisciplinary knowledge and intersectional research approaches. When not buried in research, Larissa can be found in her hometown of Englehart, volunteering with local initiatives, and roaming Northern Ontario.



Notes

This case study is a part of a larger series of initiatives that analyze anti-racism and discrimination initiatives across Canada. Borne out of a partnership with Northern Policy Institute, this anti-discrimination and racism work is but one of several efforts the Sudbury Local Immigration Partnership is undertaking.

Please refer to the full report for other case studies and lessons that not only the City of Greater Sudbury can employ, but other communities across Ontario's northern regions as well.



Reducing Racism in the Housing Sector

London, Ontario

LUSO Community Services is a Southwestern Ontario-based nonprofit neighbourhood resource centre that services Northeast London. It was originally funded by United Way but is now mostly funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) (Rodriguez 2021). It is dedicated to promoting inclusiveness and the well-being of all demographics in the London community. LUSO believes in diversity and the benefits it can bring to cities, so it celebrates the cultural differences that make up London. It recognizes the unique needs and circumstances of newcomers and thus focuses on providing educational programming that can improve lives, reduce poverty, and reduce unemployment (LUSO n.d.).



The Initiative

LUSO has a variety of educational programming that focuses on overall community improvement, many of which are intended to ensure that newcomers feel welcomed and supported. Its support services and programming include a cultural awareness and sensitivity program. Introduced in 2016, the program targets representatives of the housing and rental sector in London to provide better support, resources, and training so that the sector is able to create and maintain positive relationships with newcomers (LUSO n.d.). The program works directly with landlords, superintendents, and other housing representatives to help them develop awareness of the needs of the newcomer community to prevent discriminatory practices (LUSO n.d.).

This program was developed based on feedback provided by the housing and rental sector. It was found that many newcomers are unfamiliar with tenant rights and laws. Landlords and other related personnel were unfamiliar with working directly with newcomers and those who speak little English. To combat this, the program developed a series of sensitivity trainings and resources to aide both parties. Translation cards were created to help landlords and tenants communicate their needs and allow them to communicate more smoothly when questions or issues arise (Rodriguez 2021). The translation materials are currently in Arabic, Spanish, and Mandarin, but LUSO has also created a non-verbal booklet with pictures that can facilitate effective communication. The sensitivity training also helps landlords understand the unique needs of newcomers and how best to support them while refraining from discriminatory practices (LUSO n.d.).

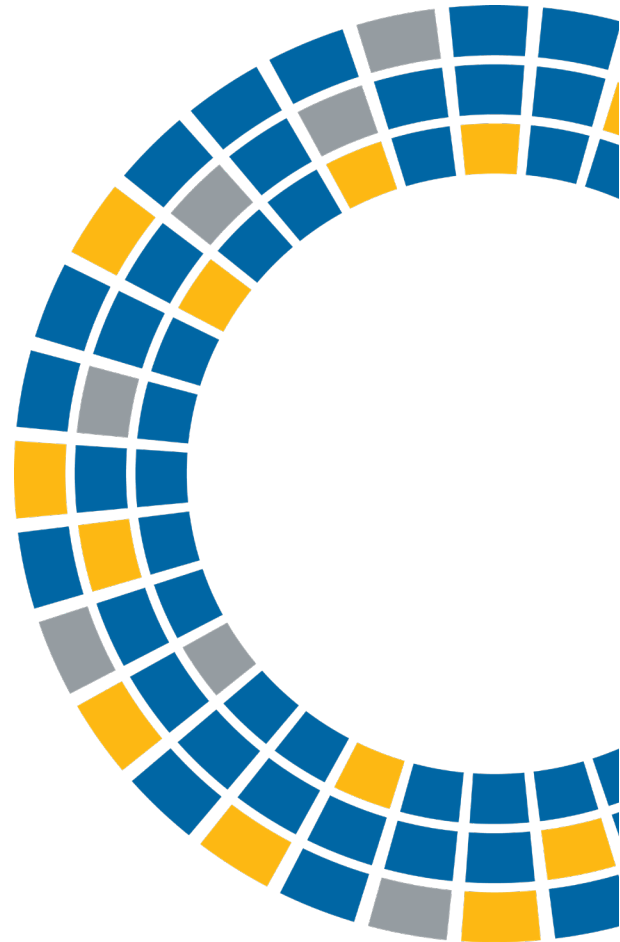
Successes & Achievements

Currently, LUSO is working with 24 housing companies and is providing training to 466 housing representatives. Fifteen unique communication and informational tools have been developed, which have benefitted 1,600 newcomers in London (Rodriguez 2021). Three cultural groups in particular have benefited from this programming—the community's growing Syrian population, Latin American communities, and, more recently, Nepalese and Bhutanese refugees (LUSO n.d.). The program has been so successful that it has garnered the attention of others and received an additional \$100,000 from the IRCC to continue and to expand its programming (Rodriguez 2021).



Key Lessons

Newcomers to Canada have many hurdles that they must overcome in order to settle into our communities and make their new locations feel like home. One of the most challenging barriers is tied to housing and this is exacerbated when there are language barriers and discrimination in the housing and rental sector. Access to adequate housing and welcoming neighbourhoods is not just an indicator of a welcoming community; it is a determinant of whether newcomers are likely to stay or leave (Esses and Carter 2019). A report by Esses and Carter (2019) found that inadequate housing coupled with racism and intolerance increases the likelihood that newcomers will move away. Unfortunately, when landlords do not understand newcomers, and newcomers cannot effectively communicate with their landlords, it is more likely that the housing experience will be negatively impacted. LUSO aims to minimize the possibility for confusion, insensitivity, and discrimination between those in the housing sector and newcomers. This program is necessary as it curbs racism and intolerance while also ensuring that newcomers have a positive settlement experience (Esses et al. 2010).



References

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Related Research

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