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**DISTRIBUTED ON BEHALF OF THE SPORT MATTERS GROUP**

For the past 2 years we've been involved in the Working Together Initiative (WTI), a collaboration that brings together 9 different federal departments, the Ontario government, and numerous sport and physical activity organizations with the assistance of the Public Policy Forum as a facilitator.

Within the WTI, we've had the chance to work closely with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) on what sport can do (and does) to assist newcomers to Canada in their settlement process and integration into community life, including a small pilot project in Brampton lead by CAC and CAAWS. Of course, the evidence is well established on how effective inclusive sport participation can be in facilitating and welcoming immigrants. Conversely, we know that we have much to do in generating a more inclusive environment and finding ways for sport groups to reach out to ready (and not so ready) newcomer coaches, participants, volunteers, youth, families, and local settlement agencies. Future work at the WTI will focus on how settlement systems and newcomer networks can more effectively connect with sport systems and sport leadership networks, and vice versa.

The collaboration with CIC's team (an exceptional lot, in our experience) has proven fruitful on many fronts. New thinking, new relationships, and new opportunities. In fact, the first very tangible opportunity has just been released/updated on April 30th. CIC (Ontario Region) has launched a call for proposals (see [http://atwork.settlement.org/sys/atwork\\_library\\_detail.asp?passed\\_lang=EN&doc\\_id=1005008](http://atwork.settlement.org/sys/atwork_library_detail.asp?passed_lang=EN&doc_id=1005008).) The call is for "Initiatives that Support the Settlement of Newcomers" in the province of Ontario. The deadline for applications is June 21st, 2010. There are a series of workshops scheduled to help you prepare your application which you will find online.

For the first time, this call from CIC draws specific attention to sport as a priority element within its program:

- Enhancement of newcomer youth awareness of sports (see the Youth Programming section in the Priorities document)
- Engagement projects that seek to involve newcomers directly in the community, such as through sport and recreation activities (see the Within Welcoming Communities - Community Connections in the Priorities document)

There is also scope for new kinds of work which clearly align with directions within our sport system:

- to support innovative service delivery models
- many references to new "partnerships"
- a specific focus on persons with disabilities
- an interesting opportunity for coaching/coaches as part of the women's program related to internships and employment
- innovations related to serving children and youth in schools
- a consideration of "non medical models of mental health support and partnership"
- "academic or community based research on topics related to settlement in Ontario"
- "development of tools, practices and models that may be used to enhance knowledge and improve the delivery of services in the settlement field"

Of course, you will want to take a more holistic view of the call for proposal as a whole and to ensure that your efforts are aligned. Community based planning and youth-driven development strategies are seemingly relevant.

I'm certainly hopeful that many of you will take up this opportunity directly and/or will share it amongst your sport or sport-related networks. It would be not only strategic but also productive to collaborate with each other and with a settlement organization (see sport info from OCASI [here](#)). If we can demonstrate our ability to assist in achieving the policy priorities of our immigration systems while strengthening the settlement and sport experience of newcomers, we will have achieved something valuable for our communities. Some of you of an academic persuasion may want to help us learn and develop through participatory evaluation methods.

Last word is of thanks to the Trillium and McConnell Foundations who have, sometimes with more than good faith should allow, supported the Sport Matters method of (slowly) working at these kinds of system changes and innovations. We're very fortunate to receive their patient financial support and the guidance of Doug Gore and John Cawley, respectively.

If Liz or I can be of further help, please don't hesitate to give us a call. Erin Kasungu, who has some direct experience in this field, returns on June 1st when she will also be able to assist you.

All for now,

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