



Immigrant Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday August 14, 2025

5:15pm-6:15pm

Zoom (online) | Biggings Room, Level 3, Civic Centre, 99 Foster Drive, Sault Ste. Marie

In Attendance	Regrets
Masi Mozaffari (Chair)	Ngozi Ebele
Aaron Smith (Co-Chair)	Rina Cuison
Marlene Henry-Smith	Nicole Rahaman
Yiqi Wang	Aishwarya Jariwala
Cynthia Ima-Osagie	Ani Ramos
Syed Islam (ex-officio)	
Nara Dapilos (ex-officio)	

1. Meeting Called to Order by Masi Mozaffari Time: 5:34pm

Land Acknowledgement

I acknowledge, with respect, that we are in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory, that the land on which we are gathered is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe and known as Bawating. Bawating is the home of Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Metis Council.

2. Approval of June 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Mover: Marlene Henry-Smith

Second: Aaron Smith

Due to lack of quorum, motion was deferred to be conducted via e-vote between August 15 to August 20.

E-vote: Majority vote in favour. **Carried.**

Resolved that the Meeting Minutes of the Immigrant Advisory Committee for June 4, 2025 be approved as presented.

3. Approval of Agenda

Mover: Yiqi Wang

Second: Aaron Smith

Due to lack of quorum, motion was deferred to be conducted via e-vote between August 15 to August 20.

E-vote: Majority vote in favour. **Carried.**

Resolved that the Agenda of the Immigrant Advisory Committee for August 14, 2025 be approved as presented.

4. Old Business

a) **Multiculturalism Day debriefing**

- Overall, the event was well-attended and well-received. LIP received positive feedback from various partners and community members
- Few food vendors - many were not able to secure their Algoma Public Health permit. This is one of the main barriers LIP has noticed.
 - LIP will be collaborating with Millworks, Harvest Algoma, and APH to facilitate an information session targeted towards local food vendors and businesses in the Fall.
- LIP plans to host the festival next year on June 27th (the official day for Canadian Multiculturalism Day).
 - Will aim for more diversity and variety in the performances and vendors
- The IAC presentation was helpful for raising awareness of what LIP is working on
- Members agreed that having a buddy system for each task was helpful and effective when organizing the IAC booth and presentation.
- Communication within IAC could be improved, as relying on e-mail was not the most efficient way to communicate leading up to the event.
- Members discussed the following platforms for communication:
 - Whatsapp
 - Google Chat
 - Facebook Messenger
 - Telegram

Action item: Nara will reach out to the whole group to gather input on preference for the above communication platforms.

b) **Storytelling Project with The Borderline Radio Soo**

- Syed met with the owner of Borderline Radio Soo, who is opening the floor for newcomers to come on the show as guests (podcast/interview style)
- An internet radio platform (not FM)
- Musicology episode with Georgie's Shawarma:
<https://theborderline.ca/musicology-georgie-al-khoury-shawarma/>
- Members suggested that the group sign up to be the first guests for the show, ideally in a roundtable style interview with all IAC members sharing their stories and covering specific topics.
 - This can help set the precedent for more newcomers to consider being guests on the show to share their stories.
 - IAC members can continue discussing this project in between meetings, and plan a structure for how the conversation will flow

Action item: Nara will reach out to the group to collect initial interest for who would like to participate in the radio project.

c) **Social Media presence**

- Nara will be reaching out to all IAC members if they would like to provide a brief bio and photo (if you wish), to post on social media platforms and also on the LIP website.

5. New Business

a) **Newcomer Mental Health**

- LIP was approached by Strong Minds SSM (<https://www.strongminds.co/>) for opportunities to collaborate
 - Strong Minds SSM understands the need for providing trauma-informed, culturally responsive counselling and wellness services to immigrants and newcomers in our region
 - They offer a variety of wellness services. One of their core counselling providers is a registered social worker who is also a recent immigrant to Canada.
 - Their proposal: They can be a counselling referral resource for LIP and its partners agencies. Clients in need of emotional or psychological support could be referred directly to Strong Minds for culturally responsive counselling.
 - Syed had a brief phone call with a representative of Strong Minds. At the moment, they do not yet do any outreach information sessions.
 - LIP will continue meeting with Strong Minds to gather more information (such as pricing, language accommodations, etc.) and report back to the group to further discuss.
- Canadian Mental Health Association
 - The challenge for international students is availability and accessibility to CMHA services
 - They are currently trying to work with partners such as Algoma Public Health for awareness programming, develop cultural sensitivity training, drug use information, etc.
- Members discussed the idea of IAC meeting with the leaders of each cultural association in Sault Ste. Marie to discuss ways of creating spaces within their respective communities to support newcomers. Such spaces can help fill the gap of connecting newcomers and international students to communities where their dignity, identity, and culture is validated.

b) Intercultural Competency Training

- LIP has been approached by two businesses willing to facilitate intercultural competency training sessions
- Members agreed that as we are setting the tone for what we'd like to see from the community, it is important that we take part in these training sessions as well
- LIP will continue collecting information from each of the businesses to understand the time commitment and modules to ensure it aligns with IAC's goals and timelines. Once LIP has gathered the information, a decision can be made amongst the group for how to proceed.

c) IAC Workplan – deferred to next meeting

6. Meeting Adjournment Time: 6:30pm

Next meeting date: October 2025 - date TBD

- **Action item:** Nara will send out a Doodle Poll