

Additional Frequently Asked Questions (May 8, 2013)

Since the last major set of frequently asked questions released on February 7, 2013 a wide range of additional questions have been posed to CIC that are concentrated in four broad areas: the Call for Proposals; the British Columbia office of CIC; Settlement programming; and General Immigration/Citizenship questions. In some instances the questions were answered in the last round of FAQs, but they remain so persistently top of mind for the sector that they are repeated here.

Calls for Proposals (CFP):

Q1: Who is eligible to receive direct settlement services funded by CIC?

A1: Permanent residents, protected persons as defined under Section 95 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), and persons whose applications for permanent resident status are being processed in Canada. Temporary residents, international students and citizens are not eligible to received CIC-funded settlement services.

Q2: Can we learn who the successful applicants were for the CIC settlement programs in those provinces who applied for the 2012 National CFP?

A2: In accordance with the Government of Canada's proactive disclosure policies, a list of all funding recipients whose contribution agreements are valued at more than \$25,000 can be found at <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/disclosure/grants/index.asp>

Q3: Would it be possible to see proposals from a northern community?

A3: Proposals are protected once submitted to CIC. Applicants seeking this kind of information would need to connect directly with organizations of interest. AMSSA has agreed to try to assist their membership in identifying potentially similar agencies in other jurisdictions.

Q4: Does CIC have any specifications about organizational constitutions/mandates regarding their ability to respond to the CFP?

A4: We request that organizations submit a copy of either their constitution, by-laws, articles of incorporation or other document that can attest to the bona fides of the organization.

Q5: How do we get hard data to substantiate our communities' needs in our applications?

A5: Applicants are encouraged to provide third party information to substantiate their needs assessment. CIC also posts immigrant landings data annually in "Facts and Figures" (<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/menu-fact.asp>).

Q6: Does CIC do any forecasting for settlement in terms of projected landing numbers or country of origin of settlement clients?

A6: No.

Q7: Does an applicant have to deliver all streams of settlement programming?

A7: No, just those streams for which you can demonstrate need and capacity.

Q8: How does CIC allocate settlement dollars across regions?

A9: CIC doesn't establish regional envelopes for settlement. We strive to have complete geographic coverage of settlement services where numbers warrant, but applicants need to articulate community need in their applications and demonstrate capacity to meet that need.

Q10: Will CIC make a draft CFP available in advance of the actual call?

A10: CIC will not be making a draft CFP available in advance of the launch of the actual call. On May 8, 2013 CIC will be meeting with SPOs via Webinar to present CIC's CFP process and answer any questions participants may have. This format has been used successfully in the past.

Q11: Will BC regional funding priorities be different than that in Manitoba?

A11: They may very well be. CIC is working closely with BC government to determine the BC funding priorities for the CFP just as we did with the Government of Manitoba.

Q12: Are we restricted to 2,500 characters in our applications to CIC?

A12: Yes. It is important for applicants to be concise in their submission, although applicants can provide additional details in annexes if necessary.

Q13: Can agencies submit more than one application?

A13: Yes, if they are proposing delivery of separate and distinct services. Where proposals may be inter-related, applicants may find it simpler to just put the elements together in one submission.

Q14: Can children be clients of CIC-funded settlement services?

A14: Yes, this would fit within the terms and conditions. However, CIC generally does not fund services (especially language) for school-aged children apart from SWIS as this is in the purview of provincial education systems.

Q15: What duration of proposals will be funded in BC?

A15: To align with the next national CFP, BC projects will be funded until spring 2016.

Q16: Is VIPP outside CFP?

A16: Yes, existing provincial contracts will be transitioned to CIC contribution agreements with as much consistency as possible.

Q17: Will the Early Years Refugee Program be covered under the VIPP exemption from the CFP?

A18: No, it is a separate line of programming that must apply to the CFP, but it does fit under the settlement programs Ts and Cs so it is eligible.

Q19: How will CIC assess submissions?

A19: A copy of the last National CFP can be found on the CIC Web site [here](#). The AMSSA Web site has both the [national](#) and [Manitoba](#) CFPs posted with accompanying detailed documentation.

Q20: In addition to using iCARE, will service providers be asked to do other performance reporting on client outcomes?

A20: In addition to the data service providers will provide through iCARE, CIC has introduced a standardized Annual Project Planning Report format that includes a standard set of narrative questions that service providers will be asked to answer.

Q21: Can there be more than one contract per district/community?

A21: Yes, this is often the case in other jurisdictions. Applications must clearly demonstrate identified needs within their proposed service area as well as the organizations' capacity to address those needs. In addition, strong applications will also reflect other services already available in the same area and avoid duplication.

Q22: Does CIC fund programming for vulnerable youth?

A22: Yes.

Q23: Does CIC fund services for late arrival youth (e.g. older youth) who arrive in the school system?

A23: A proposal for programming that targets late arrival youth who arrive in the school system could be eligible for funding provided it fits within the program's terms and conditions and clearly demonstrates need, the service gap exists and the expected outcomes to be achieved.

Q24: What are the differences between CFP and RFP processes used by CIC and province?

A24: One of the major differences between the contractual model used by the Government of British Columbia and the contribution agreement model used by CIC is that in the BC model all parameters are developed before the Calls/Requests for Proposals and service providers then bid to provide the listed services, whereas in the CIC model, the service providers are required to respond to priorities and identify needs and propose services to address those needs.

A second major difference is that in the current BC model there is little room for negotiation once bids have been received. In the CIC model, there is significant room for negotiation of the exact services to be provided after the proposal has been accepted in principle.

Q25: Are partnership/consortium proposals allowed/encouraged?

A25: Yes, they are allowed, however the 15% cap for administrative costs would apply to the total value of the contribution agreement.

Q26: Can one region apply on behalf of other smaller communities?

A26: Yes.

CIC BC Regional Office

Q27: How will BC/Yukon settlement team be organized?

A27: Not yet decided, but CIC is leaning towards a geographic division.

Q28: If the CIC settlement staff are all new, what is the plan for professional development?

A28: Not all CIC settlement staff in BC will be new. Already, staff from other grant and contribution program areas (e.g.: multiculturalism, RAP and francophone programs) have joined Sophia Lee's BC Settlement Team. Going forward, we expect to have some former CIC employees return to the department, and to move some staff from the rest of our network. All of our settlement staff will undergo CIC's mandatory training on contribution agreement management, which will be augmented with a mentoring process that will match more experienced settlement staff from other regions with officers in the BC office. We will also work with BC provincial staff to learn from their experience.

Settlement Programming

Q29: If a client accesses services at multiple agencies, what information can each agency access on that client?

A29: iCARE will enable subsequent agencies to "see" the client's profile collected by the initial settlement agency.

Labour Market

Q30: Will CIC fund Skills Connect or a similar model in BC? Is there a similar model offered nationally?

A30: The CIC-BC Transition Team has identified Skills Connect as a promising practice warranting further evaluation. It has been extended until March 31, 2015, during which time it will be managed by the Province. CIC and BC will develop a partnership and funding model for the labour market component.

Q31: Can CIC provide information about whether there will be alignment of programs with respect to skilled immigrants, immigrant employment, Labour Market Information, Foreign Credential Recognition and Workplace Essential Skills? How will these services be funded in the future?

A31: This question is significantly broader than CIC's mandate alone. CIC has been working to ensure that its immigration and integration programs are more closely aligned. For example, the Foreign Credential Referrals Office and the Integration Branch are in the process of merging to bring the department's labour market supports into closer alignment. In addition, CIC continues to work with other federal departments like HRSDC and Service Canada as well as our provincial counterparts to align our labour market programming as much as possible. Budget 2013 has proposed some new initiatives that will likely impact some of our programming in the future.

Q32: Is there a cap on labour market program funding?

A32: No, there is no cap. At present labour market programming represents approximately 10 per cent of total settlement expenditures. This proportion can vary depending on the needs identified by applicants.

Q33: Is Enhanced Language Training (ELT) funded from a separate envelope?

A33: No, all settlement funding is in one funding envelope.

Q34: What kind of documentation is required to demonstrate partnerships?

A34: Agencies involved in a partnership require signed letters committing to their intent to work together.

Q35: Can SPOs mix and match funding from other funders in order to provide stipends for newcomers accessing labour market programming?

A35: While direct transfers to clients are not possible under CIC settlement program terms and conditions, it may fit with the terms and conditions of other funders' programs.

Q36: What is the optimal balance of material in application to CFP and annexes?

A36: More details will be provided at the May 8 webinar. In short, applicants are expected to provide succinct proposals that clearly demonstrate needs and capacity while not overwhelming settlement officers with superfluous information.

Q37: How can we find out more about Job Search Workshops?

A37: Evaluation of Ontario job search workshops and job search curricula can be found on www.settlement.org.

Q38: How does an agency determine if settlement proposals are complementary with other programming?

A38: CIC's settlement program is not prescriptive. We look for agencies to demonstrate need, including how the proposed programming fits in with other services already available within the community.

Q39: Does CIC have specific outcome targets (e.g. rates of employment) for labour market programming?

A39: No, CIC funded agencies are required to complete iCARE modules which are primarily focused on outputs. If agencies are collecting employment data, this can be submitted as part of the Annual Project Planning Report. Recognizing that employment will often be an intermediate outcome rather than an immediate one, CIC will seek to measure employment outcomes through a client survey.

Language

Q40: Since ESLSAP does not align with the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), how will the smaller centres be able to issue a certificate for CLB4 to learners for citizenship requirement?

A40: Citizenship applicants in communities where CLB-based programs are not available will have to submit another type of evidence such as third party test results or a diploma from a secondary or post-secondary program, in English or French, in Canada or abroad.

Q41: Will the smaller centres be able to use the Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA)?

A41: While language instructors in all sorts of contexts may elect to use some version of a portfolio approach to aid their teaching and routine assessment of student progress, CIC's PBLA assessment protocol has the CLB framework as its foundation. Teachers employing PBLA must be proficient in task-based instruction and task-based assessment as they are defined in the CLB's core documents. Therefore, only language training programs that are CLB-based will be able to employ CIC's PBLA model.

Q42: Will there be any CIC-funded ESL programs available in the future to assist those immigrants who are already Canadian citizens and are currently receiving WelcomeBC ESL services, in order to assist them in bettering their English for employment?

A42: Canadian citizens are not eligible clients for federal settlement program funding. There are currently no plans for CIC-funded ESL programs for Canadian citizens.

Q43: Are workplace language programs eligible like accent reduction?

A43: While the bulk of language training is CLB based, it is possible to apply for pragmatics (e.g. accent reduction, pronunciation, etc.) programming where need can be demonstrated.

Q44: TESL certification. What types of certification are acceptable?

A44: At this time, CIC strongly encourages language teachers to have TESL certification or accreditation.

Q45: What levels of CLB are funded?

A45: CIC will fund language training at all CLB levels as well as pre-literacy levels. However, CIC currently has no contribution agreements for CLB 10.

Q46: Does CIC have a specific list of deliverables that they would like to see in language programming?

A46: Yes, programming should be: CLB-based, instructor-led and curriculum-guided; produce exit Benchmarks for clients; and provide CLB achievement certificates at all levels (especially CLB 4, which can be used by citizenship applicants).

Q47: Will there be levels caps?

A47: No. CIC will allocate project funding according to its CFP priorities. At present this means first ensuring general purpose training up to CLB 4, then moving to higher CLB levels and purpose-specific programming such as Occupation-Specific Language Training (OSLT). Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals for all levels and types of training, provided they are able to demonstrate a need in their community.

Q48: Can organizations providing Enhanced Language training, and who are not providing ELSA training, apply to the CFP?

A48: Yes.

Q49: In smaller northern communities, some organizations are doing BOTH language assessment and program delivery, is this allowed?

A49: Generally no, although applicants are welcome to make a case for CIC to consider this kind of funding arrangement.

Q50: Does CIC fund part time language training?

A50: Yes.

Q51: How will CIC manage supply and demand of language classes?

A51: This issue is under active discussion between CIC and province at present.

Local Immigration Partnerships

Q52: Should we submit a LIPs application separate from our application for direct services?

A52: Yes, although in a small community where the Welcoming Communities Program contract holder is the only provider of settlement services, it might be possible to submit only one application. However, for performance measurement and contribution agreement management, it is easier to have the LIPs as stand alone contribution agreements.

Q53: Since the Welcoming Communities Program contracts will only be six months old when we need to apply for LIPs under CIC's CFP, how will we know what to apply for?

A53: Applications to CIC would need to be focused on how to evolve to broader scope of a LIP, what process is needed to broaden partnership, how the community intends to gather data/consult with newcomers, etc.

Q54: Do LIPs coordinate distribution of settlement funds in a community?

A54: No, LIPs are funded as an indirect service.

Q55: Does CIC prioritize municipalities as LIP contribution agreement-holders?

A55: Municipal, regional or county administrations currently hold 17 out of our 38 contribution agreements for LIPs. CIC's expectation is that each community will decide which organization would be most appropriate to hold the contribution agreement.

Q56: Can you describe the connections between local research organizations and LIPs?

A56: In Ontario the Welcoming Communities Initiative was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council at the same time CIC was funding LIPs. This resulted in some valuable synergies. In British Columbia it will be important to identify the key means to obtain economies of scale on research necessary to support successful outcomes. This could include the role of AMSSA, WCICC, P2P, etc.

Q57: Does CIC intend to engage BC municipalities before the CFP?

A57: We met with the Intergovernmental Steering Committee at the beginning of May. CIC will work closely with the province and municipalities to determine the best way all three levels of government can work together moving forward.

Q58: Can other ministries (federal and provincial) participate on LIPs councils?

A58: Yes, we encourage you to involve the appropriate ministries.

Q59: Should LIPs build on work of pre-existing tables? Can they build on Welcoming Communities Program work?

A59: All LIPs build on pre-existing foundations in the community. WCP work is clearly a key foundation in the 51 communities where this work is underway.

Q60: Are there any referral protocols developed by any of the existing LIPs?

A60: Not that we are aware of, but how to manage referrals is a core topic of conversation for all LIPs.

Q61: Are community-led consultations a direct service under CIC model?

A61: No, they are a component of developing a LIPs strategy and all LIPs are indirect services.

Q62: Can the private sector and foundations be involved in LIPs?

A62: Absolutely we encourage participation from employers and funders.

Q63: Is there a separate LIP funding envelope?

A63: No, CIC has one overall settlement envelope.

Settlement Workers in Schools

Q64: Is there a separate SWIS template for the CFP?

A64: No, one general template for all settlement programming.

Q65: Does a SWIS provider need to demonstrate access to the school system?

A65: Yes, since, amongst other things, SWIS is a means to reach school-age newcomer children and youth as well as their families in order to connect them to the broader supports available in their community, thus the school connection is vital.

Q66: Is SWIS solely under community connections or can it cut across all streams?

A66: While it is necessary to indicate where the primary focus is in the CFP, and SWIS would be under community connections, the ethos of the modernized approach to settlement is to mix and match to meet the real needs of eligible clients. In this vein, applicants can include information/orientation or needs assessments in the programming mix.

Q67: For a SWIS application involving partners should one application be submitted jointly or should each partner apply for their part of the work?

A67: Across the country we have both kinds of approaches. Whatever makes the most sense to the applicant(s), keeping in mind the maximum allowable of 15 percent for administration costs.

Sector Capacity Building and Professional Development

Q68: What is CIC's position on funding settlement support like AMSSA?

A68: This falls into the 10 percent of indirect services and CIC is actively considering policy directions for these funds. In addition policy frameworks for capacity building and the broader multi-lateral partnership work under way at the FPT level should be finalized by the fall.

Support Services

Q69: Is child-minding part of direct services?

A69: Yes.

Q70: Will the recently negotiated policies for childminding licensing in BC hold under a federal procurement system?

A70: The CIC-BC Transition Teams have identified childminding licensing as an area requiring further examination.

Francophone Settlement Services

Q71: Will there be a future for “La Fédération des Francophones de la Colombie-Britannique”?

A71: As indicated in the recent Roadmap for Canada’s Official Languages 2013–2018, the 13 ‘Réseaux en immigration francophone’ have a key role to play in attracting francophone immigrants and fostering their full integration into Canadian society. These actions will be crucial to the long-term prosperity and growth of OLMCs. To better equip the Réseaux and to enable them to play that key role, CIC has been working closely for the last year with the FCFA and the Réseaux’s coordinators on identifying common strategic activities and short, medium and long-term objectives. Into that context, every regional association will be welcome to play an active role in close collaboration with other local and regional players. The Fédération des Francophones de la Colombie-Britannique will be more than welcome to submit a proposal into the context of CIC’s next call for proposals in June 2013.

Q72: Must agencies include francophone counselors in their proposals to be considered?

A72: This is not an eligibility criterion, although if there is a francophone client population that needs to be served, CIC may seek to include this during negotiations if it is not in the initial proposal.

Other Settlement Questions

Q73: Does CIC fund parenting classes?

A73: Yes, most often as part of information and orientation work.

Q74: Does CIC fund health projects?

A74: To some extent via partnerships (e.g. referrals or interpretation services), but CIC does not fund health services directly.

General Immigration/Citizenship Questions

Refugees

Q75: Can CIC provide information about whether there will be alignment or collaboration between the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program and CIC-funded settlement services in BC?

A75: Organizations (including sponsorship agreement holders or SAHs) and Groups of 5 (individuals) sponsoring refugees are responsible for their welfare. However, these privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) can access settlement services, such as language training and career counselling, that are offered under CIC's settlement program. Like other organizations, SAHs can apply for funding to deliver such settlement services to all eligible clients. However, they cannot provide services to only PSRs.

Economic Immigration

Q76: As CIC puts more emphasis on economic immigration, how will this impact settlement services to these newcomers, such as those immigrants who immigrate under the Canadian Experience Class?

A76: Any changes to immigrant selection can shift the needs of newcomers to Canada and hence the requirement for settlement services. At this time the majority of immigration changes pertain to principal applicants who constitute only a small portion of settlement service users, and at present it is unknown what impact selection changes will have on spouses and dependants who, along with refugees, comprise the bulk of settlement service users. CIC monitors the needs of newcomers and aligns its settlement programming suite accordingly with the assistance of a robust performance measurement framework and with the launch of the iCARE system.

General Immigration/CIC Issues

Q77: With CIC office closures in Prince George and Kelowna, how are we going to be able to assist our clients with regards to testing or ceremony dates with respect to citizenship?

A78: CIC offers itinerant services to many communities that used to be served by these small offices. Clients in these areas will be notified in writing at least two weeks in advance of their test, hearing or ceremony date. If the client has a question regarding their application, they should be directed to contact the Call Centre. In urgent cases, clients are always able to go larger centres, such as Vancouver and Surrey, where CIC continues to have offices.

Q79: How will SPOs in smaller communities be able to work with CIC Vancouver or other CIC offices so we can remain in communication for our clientele? How should we be directing clients?

A79: SPOs are encouraged to visit the new Itinerant Services pages on the CIC website to review the itinerant services calendar: www.cic.gc.ca/english/contact_us/offices/itinerant.asp

Citizenship

Q80: Will citizenship processing times speed up?

A80: CIC is committed to finding ways to ensure timely processing of citizenship applications. Currently, 80% of routine applications for citizenship are processed in just under 2 years. Wait times have fluctuated between 15 months and just under 2 years for the last several years. In 2005, the wait time for citizenship applications to be processed was about a year and a half.

Wait times have increased because, since 2006, Canada has welcomed the highest sustained level of immigration in the country's history. As a result, the number of citizenship applications has also increased by 30% since 2006. Budget 2013 allocated resources to CIC to improve citizenship processing times.