



## Welcome to the first edition of the Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership (VLIP) Monthly Newsletter.

### What's New?

- Vancouver Immigration Partnership is back! Except we're reconvening as the Vancouver **Local** Immigration Partnership.
- City of Vancouver is passing the Management Torch to South Vancouver Neighbourhood House and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House.
  - A word from the City of Vancouver and a brief history of Local Immigration Partnerships below.
- A word from our new organizers – Koyali and Nova
- Our Open House on Feb. 10 was a great success! Keep reading for a recap.
- Our 1<sup>st</sup> Council Meeting is scheduled for Feb. 24 from 3-4:30PM.

### A Word from the City of Vancouver

The City of Vancouver is passing the torch of the Vancouver Immigration Partnership to South Vancouver Neighbourhood House and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House.

Both Nadia Carvalho and Dr. Mumbi Maina were among the driving forces behind the past VIP. They had a chance to speak at our recent Open house.

## CONTINUING THE LEGACY OF THE VIP

### Nadia Carvalho



“We started this journey in 2014 but the Vancouver Immigration Partnership was built upon decades of collaborative work together. The Vancouver Immigration Partnership provides a vehicle for organizations supporting the settlement of immigrants and refugees to come together across sectors to improve that experience.

*When I tell residents what I do, what my role is at the city, it gives them great confidence in these times that people and organizations are coming together; that we are working across sectors; that we are collaborating for greater change. These types of initiatives are not only impactful, but they also contribute to our overall community well-being.*

### THE EQUITY FRAMEWORK

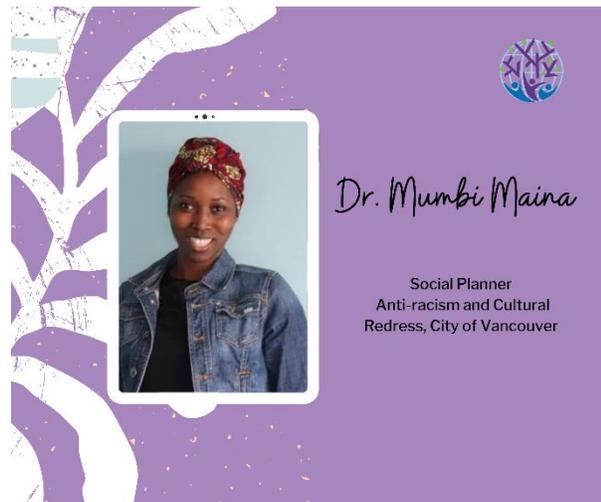
One of the last projects we worked on was the Equity Framework. Led by Dr. Mumbi Maina, the Equity Framework realigns our internal systems around equity. The Equity Framework responds to one of the overarching goals of the Vancouver Immigration Partnership’s New Start Strategy, which is to equip the City with equitable access to services.

Adopted by Vancouver City Council in July, 2021 following a few years of development the Framework centres on four approaches: Indigenous Rights, Racial Justice, Intersectionality, and a Systems approach. Dr. Aftab Erfan is leading the Equity Office to coordinate implementation of this Framework across all City business units. I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Vancouver Immigration Partnership Members who helped to lead the work through the External Leadership Advisory that:

- Donna Chang – Executive Director, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House
- Angie Osachoff – Senior Regional Program Manager in B-C, Equitas
- Dr. Cissie Fu –Faculty Member and former Dean of Culture and Community, Emily Carr

Thank-you on behalf of VIP and the partner organizations for helping to develop the Equity Framework and other City processes.

“We are working on some really critical pieces to address racism and move towards cultural redress at the city of Vancouver. This is a process of acknowledging past harms and thinking about how the City can right and prevent the wrongs that have been committed through City planning, policies, procedures, and processes previously and currently in place.”



The Equity Framework will be an anchor to the work that we will do now to address anti-racism. Many of us saw, and have continued to see, during the pandemic, the rise of anti-Asian hate, and hate crimes, and racist incidents.

We have also seen how the pandemic has disproportionately impacted newcomers, migrant workers, students, refugees, families and undocumented people, particularly with the boarder closures.

As we move into recovery, we know that it will be absolutely critical to support immigrants and refugee families that are coming to Vancouver. The work that we are embarking on as a community is much more important now more than ever, and will require prioritizing those who have been most impacted.

#### *On the Access Without Fear Policy*

The development of the Access Without Fear Policy was led by Baldwin Wong and is currently in progress across various community partners. This policy ensures that people, families, and communities that are undocumented or have a precarious status can still access city services without fear of intimidation and deportation. We are currently working with community partners to finalize the development of implementation guidelines to ensure that everyone, regardless of their immigration status, can access all City of Vancouver services without fear.

The partnership that we have formed and the work that each community organization is doing is helping us move towards making Vancouver a place where we all strive to enhance community wellbeing.

Special Thanks to:

Sandra Singh – General Manager, Arts, Cultural and Community Services

Mary Clare Zak – Managing Director, Social Policy and Projects

Wilma Clark – Assistant Director, Social Policy and Projects  
Baldwin Wong – former VIP lead  
Zahra Esmail – VIP representative and former South Vancouver Neighbourhood House Director

## Our History

### A Brief History of the Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership

The Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership (VLIP), previously known as the Vancouver Immigration Partnership, is a community council with a rich history of helping strategically collaborate across sectors to optimize and prioritize efforts for newcomer settlement and integration in Vancouver.

First introduced in Canada in Ontario in 2008, LIPs are mechanisms through which IRCC supports the development of community-based partnerships and planning around the needs of newcomers. They actively engage and encourage strategic partnerships between different stakeholders; provide a collaborative framework to raise awareness about newcomers' needs; engage a wide range of local actors in fostering welcoming communities; support community-level research and strategic planning; and improve accessibility and coordination of settlement and mainstream services that facilitate newcomer settlement and integration.

The need for support for input and policy recommendations on immigration related issues in Vancouver was identified as early as 2005, when the Mayor's Working Group on Immigration was established. This group set the foundation for this movement in Vancouver in what would later become the Welcoming Communities Initiative, that eventually launched in 2013.

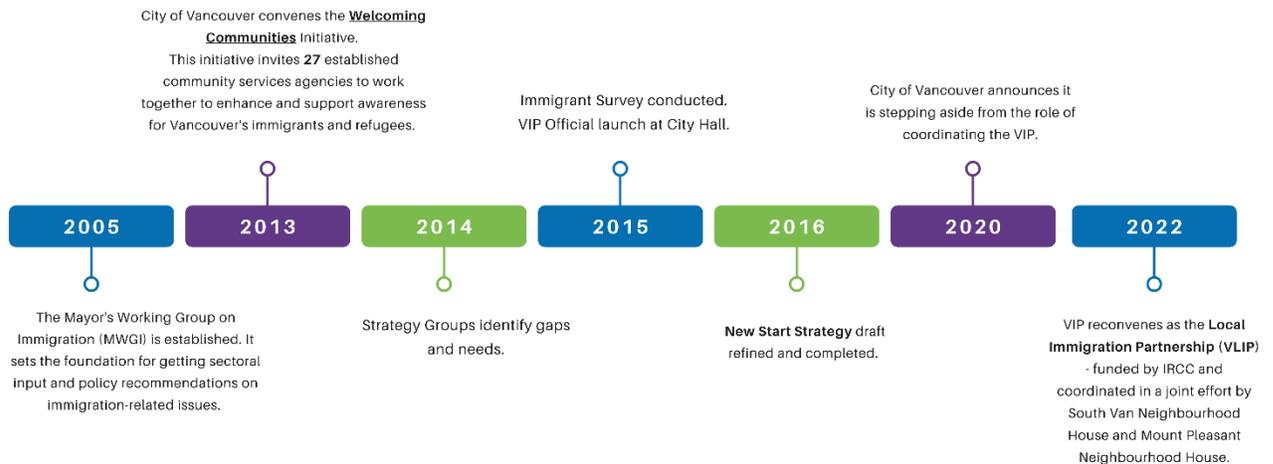
Over the next 6 years, from 2014-2020, the Vancouver Immigration Partnership developed a local settlement strategy identifying key priorities for the community, conducted research on newcomer needs and community assets and gaps, developed action plans to implement the community's strategic priorities, and supported the implementation of these action plans.

In 2020, the City of Vancouver announced that it would be stepping aside from its role of coordinating the VIP.

In 2021 – South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, in partnership with Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, and funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), coordinate a feasibility study and determines there is a high need and high support for a VIP to continue.

And here we are in 2022 – Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership reconvenes after a 2 year hiatus.

# History



## Open House Recap

A special thank-you to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada for funding the Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership Initiative and the important work that is so crucial in our society. We are grateful for their continued support.

Local Immigration Partnerships are well-collaborated, multi-sectoral partnerships designed to optimize local approaches to newcomer settlement and integration. In Canada, we have more than 80 Local Immigration Partnerships.

The LIP model was first introduced in Ontario in 2008, and didn't come to BC until 2014. It was at that time that the City of Vancouver took on the lead role in convening the Vancouver Immigration Partnership (VIP).

The City of Vancouver is passing the torch of convening the partnership to South Vancouver Neighbourhood House and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House. We are pleased to introduce **Koyali Burman** and **Nova Chamberlin** as Co-Managers of this initiative.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> Council Meeting is scheduled for **Thurs. Feb. 24** from 3-4:30PM. We are asking previous and prospective members to fill out an application. Are you ready to get down to business? Click [here](#) to skip to the VLIP Council Membership Application.



## Meet the Team

As Co-Managers of VLIP, Koyali Burman and Nova Chamberlin have their hands full. Their roles revolve around coordinating and facilitating all aspects of the partnership: from the managing, hiring, training, development and supervision of the VLIP team.

They oversee and support the various groups within the Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership, including the Council itself, the Immigrant Advisory Committee, and the Strategic Working Groups; with an emphasis on developing and managing the many stakeholders involved at the partnership level. Koyali and Nova keep us in line and make sure the deliverables and goals of the VLIP are met!

Koyali specializes in stakeholder engagement, community economic development, research, and evaluation.

*“Across the country, the outbreak of COVID-19 has accelerated widespread digital adoption in all sectors. The global pandemic disproportionately affected immigrant families, the scale of migration, and the nature and scope of integration initiatives more broadly. There is an increased levels of anxiety and stress and the sense of isolation in newcomers.*

*At the same time, however the digital divide between those who can access digital technologies and those who cannot remains a big gap. Marginalized individuals who faced barriers accessing digital technologies prior to the pandemic-including newcomers encounter obstacles that are now even more pronounced. It's important now, more than ever, that we continue the high-level of cross-sectoral collaboration previously lauded at the Vancouver Immigration Partnership.*

I am excited to be a part of this initiative because I see the value Local Immigration Partnerships have for the community. LIPs support community-based research to help identify potential barriers for newcomers, and then address them strategically through collaborative partnerships among organizations in Vancouver.

At one time, being new to Canada herself, I can say safely say that “every newcomer’s wish is to enjoy a smooth and worry-free transition throughout their settlement experience.”



Nova specializes in policy analysis, gender equity, and social and economic development.

*“The VLIP is a unique opportunity to play a leadership role in supporting the growth and enrichment of Vancouver’s capacity to welcome and nurture newcomers.*

*It’s also a very unique partnership in that it extends beyond direct settlement service providers and really aims to bring together a diverse, wide range of stakeholders from various sectors – everything from settlement*

*to healthcare to education to business.*

*We really want to make sure that VLIP is an impactful and unique partnership – there are many extremely valuable planning tables and information-sharing venues for various service providers and institutions, and a key aspect for our team is that we don’t want to reinvent the wheel – but instead ensure that the VLIP is really action-oriented and focused on leveraging our collective capacity to be greater than the sum of our parts.*

*Multi-sectoral partnerships are key to moving forward policy and systemic change, and the more collaboration we can foster, the stronger our city and our communities become.”*

## The VIP Feasibility Study

Prior to SVNH and MPNH taking on this coordination role, a Vancouver Immigration Partnership Feasibility Study was conducted to understand the need and desire to continue the VIP and assess municipal and local sector support for co-ordination of the VIP. The study also sought to understand the key functions that the VIP should serve moving forward.

The study employed a multi-method research approach, which included a document review, online survey, and key informant interviews.

In the end, the study recommended that the LIP model should continue in Vancouver, with several key reasons identified, such as:

- VLIP provides a venue for stakeholders to work collaboratively across sectors, leveraging each other’s strengths and capacities – through this, we can identify gaps and opportunities and develop shared strategies to improve services for newcomers;

- it provides a venue for members to engage in collaborative research using theoretical approaches to identify newcomer trends and provide recommendations for policy and systemic change.
- As one of the top destinations for newcomers to BC, Vancouver needs to be prepared to receive increasing number of newcomers, not only this year but for the foreseeable future. Having a body like VLIP that convenes around higher-level strategy collaboration remains critically important.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted many of the challenges and inequities faced by immigrants, refugees, and migrants in our communities, in addition to the heightened racism. There is a need for the VLIP to play a role in shaping / influencing research and policy development and making Vancouver more welcoming and inclusive community.
- There is an opportunity for the VLIP to engage meaningfully with Indigenous communities, and also to ensure that newcomers to Vancouver learn about the First Nations whose land we are on.

### What's new with this VLIP?

Given all we learned in the VIP Feasibility study, we're planning on carrying on the legacy and continuing the work on the foundation laid by the previous VIP, while still making sure to engage with existing stakeholders to ensure we are leveraging each other's strengths and supporting the unique challenges faced by immigrants, refugees, and migrants.

So, we are doing a few things *a little* differently around here.

### Membership Application Form

We're asking everyone to submit a membership application. Applications are ongoing – this means we don't have a cutoff date – but the sooner you complete your application, the sooner you can join in on the collaboration.

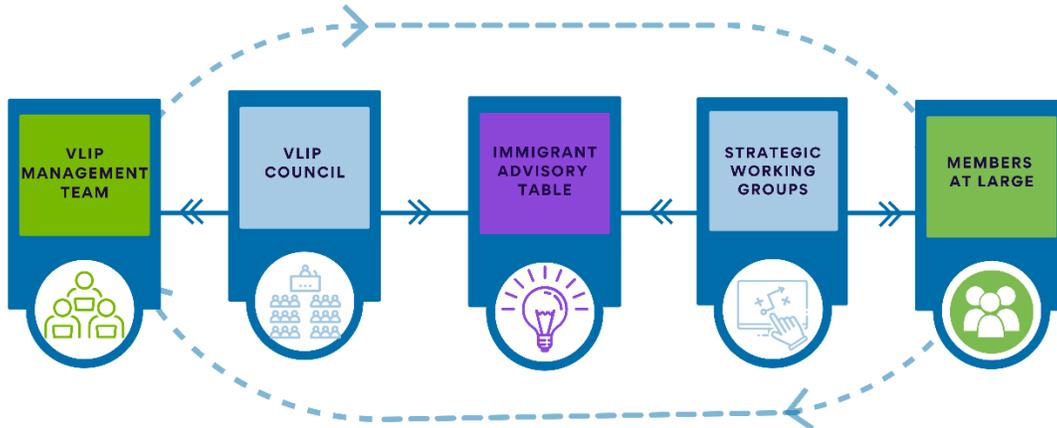
Fill out your membership application at [www.vancouverlip.org/vlip-council-membership-application-form](http://www.vancouverlip.org/vlip-council-membership-application-form)

## Governance Structure

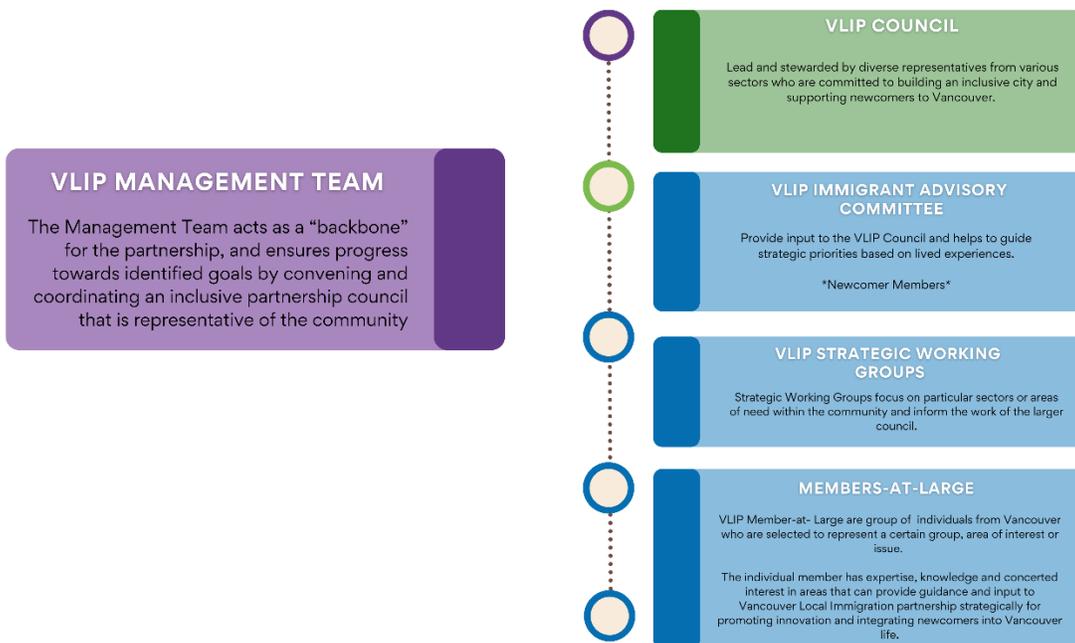


**Vancouver  
Local Immigration  
Partnership**

## Governance Structure



The LIP model is a unique one - VLIP will use a non-hierarchical model – our aim is for these various facets of the partnership to function in a synergistic and interconnected way, with each supporting the others.



**VLIP Management Team** – Our team will act as a backbone and support system for the partnership – our role is to coordinate and facilitate the activities of the council, advisory committee and working groups, and work to ensure progress towards identified goals by convening an inclusive and effective partnership that is representative of the community.

**VLIP Council** – comprised of diverse representatives from various sectors who are committed to building an inclusive city and supporting newcomers to Vancouver. We are welcoming previous members of the VIP, as well as new partners.

**Immigrant Advisory Committee** – We'll also be convening an Immigrant Advisory Committee, which will provide input to the VLIP council and help to guide strategic priorities. This is a critical aspect for us because we want to ensure that VLIP is informed not only by organizational expertise and capacity, but also by lived experience – which in and of itself is an important form of expertise.

**Strategic Working Groups** – once the council and advisory committee have had a chance to meet, we will form strategic working groups focused on particular areas of need, which will inform the work of the larger council.

### Top 3 Reasons to Join VLIP Council

We're not just a Settlement and Community Services initiative! There are many great reasons why your organization might want to join VLIP Council, especially if you are a business or organization based out of Vancouver that has an active interest in newcomer integration into Vancouver.

Check out our Top 3 Reasons Why You Should Join VLIP Council.

- 1. High Cross-Sector Collaboration**

Our council is unique because we are open to representatives from various sectors; not just settlement and community services!

- 2. Effective Time Management**

Because of our high cross-sector collaboration, we effectively use and optimize our time to get the work done. We don't waste time with duplicate initiatives, and we ask that every council organization have one decision maker as a representative.

### Completely Free

There is absolutely no cost to join. However, we do ask that you fill out a membership application form at [www.vancouverlip.org/vlip-council-membership-application-form](http://www.vancouverlip.org/vlip-council-membership-application-form). We have a few criteria that we require each organization to meet. For instance, you must show that you actively support newcomer integration and settlement through your organization; we require two representatives from your organization, one of whom must be a decision-maker.

## Upcoming Events

Save-the-date

# 1ST COUNCIL MEETING

THURS. FEB. 24, 2022  
3-4:30PM

Fill out your membership application on our website: [www.vancouverlip.org](http://www.vancouverlip.org)

### Call for Submissions!

Are you a partner organization with upcoming events to share, or a thought leadership piece relevant to our cause that you'd like to circulate? Let us know! Email us with your upcoming events and thought leadership pieces at [vlipinfo@vancouverlip.org](mailto:vlipinfo@vancouverlip.org).

Foster a legacy of collaboration and innovation;  
 building our futures together.

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