



COWICHAN  
INTERCULTURAL  
SOCIETY

IMMIGRANT  
WELCOME CENTRE  
OF COWICHAN

## Cowichan Intercultural Society's Guide to Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

### Who are we?

The Cowichan Intercultural Society (CIS) is a Canadian registered charitable organization that has been serving the Cowichan Valley Region for 41 years.

In February 2016, our organization received approval from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to become a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) for supporting the refugees from abroad when they resettle in Canada.

### How does the PSR program work?

SAHs annually receive a set of spaces allocated for one calendar year and the cases are taking into consideration based on a waiting list.

- **Sponsors collect** info, gather documents and complete forms. CIS will email the complete application package to the Resettlement Operations Centre in Ottawa (ROC-O).
- **ROC-O will screen** the application, create a file, and send to the Visa Office (VO).
- **VO will review** the application, set up an interview, initiate medical, security and criminal checks, approve and arrange the travel.

### Private group responsibilities

Groups are responsible for the first year of settlement after the refugees' arrival in Canada. They must:

*where cultures connect*



- **Complete a settlement plan** for the refugees.
- **Providing** refugee(s) with the settlement assistance, material, and financial support necessary for the duration of the sponsorship period – usually up to one year from the date they arrive in Canada.
- **Complete** the requested **forms** between CIS and Constituent Group/Private Group).
- Have their **Criminal Record Check** done.
- Pay a **one-time payment \$525** per application for direct administrative costs.

## Principal Applicant Responsibilities

Assemble all the **requested forms** (IMM 0008, IMM 0008 Schedule 2, IMM 5669 Schedule A) along with **photos, passports/travel documents** and all the **Identity and Civil Status** documents translated into English by a certified translator.

## Settlement Agreement Holder (SAH) Responsibilities

Among the SAH responsibilities, the main ones are:

- 1. Pre-Screening.** All applications are pre-screened to ensure the refugee meet the eligibility and admissibility criteria of the PSR program.
- 2. Screening.** Its Constituent Groups (CGs)/Private Groups and co-sponsors to ensure they have the capacity to fulfill their financial and settlement responsibilities and that they are not a danger to the personal safety of the refugees.
- 3. Training.** Training, oversight, and information sharing with their CGs and co-sponsors.
- 4. Main Contact.** Is the main contact between IRCC and the Private Group and is responsible for monitoring the members of the CG.