ROM Welcomes:
Inviting Canadian Newcomers to the ROM
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How can museums engage new Canadians?

Why does it matter?
Introductions + Overview

• Engaging Communities
  – ROM Community Access Network
  – 48 partners, including: ICC and Culture Link

• Welcoming Newcomers
  – ICC’s Ahlan Cultural Access Pass Program

• Towards the Future
  – Culture Link and engaging newcomers in the arts, culture and civic activities
ROM Community Access Network (ROMCAN)

ROM COMMUNITY ACCESS

Definition: Working with community partners to make the ROM's world-class collections, research and programs fully available to all Ontarians, regardless of their socio-economic status, ethnicity, age, and mental and physical abilities.

Pillars of Social Inclusion

Access

Representation

Participation

COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

More than just a museum, the ROM builds community by bringing people and ideas together. As a major extracurricular educator, we are constantly evolving to meet the needs of our visitors. The ROM is proud to offer free access and specialized learning opportunities for 100,000 Ontarians annually.
ROM Community Access Network (ROMCAN)

100,000 Tickets Annually*

* Increase from past allotment of 75,000 tickets, due to demand.

- **NEW CANADIANS**
  Citizenship ceremonies, New Canadian Citizens Cultural Access Pass Program

- **UNDERSERVED/UNDERREPRESENTED/RACIALIZED YOUTH**
  School Visits Bursary Program, vocational and arts and culture learning opportunities for youth such as ROM in Your Backyard

- **FAMILIES & CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY**
  Sun Life Financial Museum + Arts Pass (MAP)

- **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE DEAF COMMUNITY**
  Guided tactile tours, tactile exhibit design, audio described tours, American Sign Language programs and gallery interpreters

- **SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**
  Literature for Life program

- **KIDS WITH LIFE-THREATENING MEDICAL CONDITIONS**
  Special ROM experiences for kids through the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Canada

- **SENIORS AT RISK**
  Partnership with the Alzheimer Society of Ontario and fully accessible galleries

- **STUDENTS**
  Free Tuesdays for Post-Secondary Students and the School Visits Bursary Program

- **AT-RISK INDIGENOUS YOUTH**
  Tailored school visits, virtual visits, travelling school case resource kits and mentorship programs
ROM Community Access Network (ROMCAN)
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Free Tuesdays for Post-Secondary Students
ROM Community Access Network (ROMCAN)
Culture and connections: Welcoming newcomers through the ICC’s Ahlan Canada Program

NOVEMBER 3, 2016 | YASMINE MOHAMED, MANAGER, CULTURAL ACCESS PASS, THE INSTITUTE FOR CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP
The Institute for Canadian Citizenship

The ICC inspires Canadians to be inclusive, embrace fresh thinking, practice active citizenship, and own our collective culture and spaces.

6 DEGREES
A global forum exploring inclusion and citizenship in the 21st century

BUILDING CITIZENSHIP
Celebrating new Canadians on the day they become citizens

ICC INSIGHTS
A leading source of research on newcomer inclusion
CULTURAL ACCESS PASS (CAP)

Free access to Canada’s cultural riches for new citizens during their first year of citizenship

• More than 1,200 cultural attractions across Canada (museums, art galleries, science centres, national parks)

• 50,000 new citizens every year

• More than 200,000 former program members since 2008

• Travel discounts with VIA Rail Canada, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts
Ahlan Canada
Culture and Connections

• Program created in response to the arrival of Syrian refugees in 2015 and 2016.
• “Ahlan” translates to “welcome” and “bienvenue”.
• Closely involves arts and culture partners from CAP program.
• Invite Arabic speaking members of the CAP program as translators and social connections.
• Family-friendly tours of Canadian cultural attractions to welcome this group of newcomers.
• Build relationships and connect to our shared culture.
April 7, 2016
First Ahlan Canada tour at the Royal Ontario Museum
Vancouver Art Gallery

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic
Halifax, NS – August 19, 2016

Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21
Halifax, NS – August 19, 2016

Royal Ontario Museum
Toronto, ON – August 25, 2016
What have we achieved?

- Cultural attraction partners: 13
- New partners in the settlement space: 1
- Ahlan Canada events across Canada: 40
- CAP volunteers: 20
- Newcomers welcomed: 800
TOWARDS THE FUTURE: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Engaging newcomers in the arts, culture and civic activities exposes them to the heart and soul of their new home and in so doing opens up opportunities up for personal involvement and the potential for their own artistic and civic contributions.

November 3, 2016

Co-Presenter: Lisa Randall, Program Manager, CultureLink Settlement and Community Services
CultureLink Settlement and Community Services – In Brief...

• Started with the Metro Toronto Host Program in 1988, incorporated in 1992.
• Provides settlement services to immigrants and refugees across the lifespan.
• Broadened our mandate to serve all community members last year.
• Programs for newcomers and community members across the lifespan and a range of opportunities for community involvement.
• Settlement Workers in Schools and Libraries, Newcomer Orientation Week, March Break
• Community Connections and Mentorship Program, numerous mentorship events
• Newcomer Youth Centre; Wintergration, Settlement Education Assistance Program
• Newcomer Seniors’ Activities; Health forums for senior
• Special events: International Women’s Day, Senior’s Day
A Growing Appreciation of Arts-based Settlement

• Many CultureLink programs developed in the past several years have been characterized by a shared appreciation of art and creativity.

• The use of the arts in programs results in engaging newcomers in a holistic experience of settling into Toronto.

• CultureLink increased our activities that integrate the arts as a vital aspect of newcomer settlement developing new partnerships that support arts-based newcomer welcoming.
Engaging Newcomers in the Arts to Enhance Settlement – ?

Why and how do settlement services help newcomers get settled through arts and culture?

• Enhanced knowledge and understanding of local culture
• Art is a tool to engage a person holistically – the whole person. When a person’s mind, heart and soul are engaged, experiences are integrated more fully and more meaningfully.
• Art exposes commonalities and differences which are fascinating and informative
• If art experiences are incorporated early in a person’s arrival to Canada, the likelihood of art becoming a part of their lives will increase.
ROMCAN – CultureLink Joins Partnership

- Agency accessed ROM passes periodically in the past but was...
- Thrilled to come on board April 2016 with 600 free passes!!!
- By the end of July our client groups to the ROM had already used over 300 free passes.
- Our clients were motivated to go in groups and reported great enjoyment.
- Outings included youth outings, seniors, family outings, all with a settlement worker to support the experience and help orient them to the ROM. Some translation as well.
- Excited about other kinds of spin-off activities that may lead the partnership in new directions, i.e. great potential for cultural-mentoring and training newcomers to become docents through docent-mentoring.
- Wonderful opportunity as exhibits are global as is the newcomer (and greater) population. Docent diversity enriches ROM experience for visitors, volunteers, docent and ROM staff.
Enjoying the ROM with ROMCAN
Learning in Groups is Social and Fun!
Other CultureLink, Arts-based Integration Settlement Activities

- Newcomer Youth Summer Theatre for the past 12 years.
- Luminato mentor matching now in year four
- Soulpepper Youth Link, after school theatre in high schools
- ‘Night out at the Theatre’ with volunteers and newcomers accessing free tickets are various theatre productions.
- 2014 Soulpepper-CultureLink co-created New Canadian Welcome Program. Soulpepper Theatre has created a ‘welcoming community’ as a part of their civic theatre. Newcomers are matched with artists and administrators and several activities are planned annually, including a cabaret where newcomers can perform songs. The icing on the cake - participants receive free tickets to Soulpepper’s productions for one full year!
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