



## *Come Together Alberta*

*Building Welcoming and Inclusive Communities*

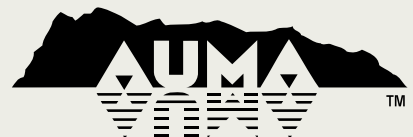
*December 1 & 2, 2011*



**WELCOMING  
& INCLUSIVE  
COMMUNITIES**



**Government of Alberta** ■



# Come Together Alberta Conference Report

---

## Contents

Background	3
Event Objectives & Philosophy	4
Delegates	5
Agenda	6
Conference Sessions	11
Roundtable Discussions	11
Next Steps	14
Event Feedback	15

# Background

---

## AUMA Welcoming & Inclusive Communities

The AUMA Welcoming and Inclusive Communities (WIC) initiative is a partnership between the AUMA, the Alberta Human Rights Commission and the Government of Alberta. The goal of the initiative is to build municipal capacity to combat racism and other forms of discrimination in Alberta communities.

At the Second Annual Pan-Canadian meeting of the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination in Calgary in March 2009, Alberta's Provincial Network of Welcoming and Inclusive Communities was formed.

The objectives of the Provincial Network are:

**“I was stretched!”**

- To provide networking opportunities among participating municipalities.
- To provide an opportunity for the sharing of best practices and resources.
- To provide support to municipalities as they work to become more welcoming and inclusive.
- To broaden the reach of welcoming and inclusive initiatives throughout the province.
- To increase the number of Alberta municipalities actively engaged in becoming more welcoming and inclusive.

In September of 2009, Alberta's Provincial Network of Welcoming and Inclusive Communities held its first two-day meeting in Edmonton. Twelve municipalities were represented at the event. The objectives of the meeting included:

- To formalize the organization of a provincial network of welcoming and inclusive communities.
- To provide an opportunity for networking among participants.
- To provide an opportunity for the sharing of best practices and resources among participants.
- To provide learning opportunities on topics of relevance to participants.

During this meeting, municipalities had the opportunity to learn from each other's successes and challenges. Participants also identified future directions for AUMA's WIC initiative. This included the development of a WIC microsite and a diversity and inclusion campaign to be implemented in municipalities throughout the province.

**“I find myself sharing the information with colleagues and being very inspired.”**

## Come Together Alberta

In the two years since the last Provincial meeting, the landscape of Alberta and Canada has changed, particularly in regards to the numbers of immigrants who have moved to the province looking for work and a place to raise their families. The greater visible presence of newcomers across the province has resulted in more attention being paid to the complex challenges faced by newcomers and the varied responses of Albertans to this visible diversity. In response to the growing needs expressed by Alberta municipalities for expertise and learning in this area, and the desire of AUMA and WIC to continue to support the important work that municipalities are already doing, we felt the need for a second provincial meeting.

The Come Together Alberta event was part of a larger initiative to pass on useful education and resources to municipalities. The WIC microsite (<http://wic.auma.ca/>) was first created in 2010 and has thus far

proven to be a valuable resource for municipalities. The WIC Toolkit in particular, developed in 2006, has been useful to municipalities looking to develop welcoming & inclusive strategies. With financial support from Alberta Human Services Come Together Alberta funding stream, resources related to the attraction, retention and integration of newcomers—including a series of videos profiling best practices in four Alberta municipalities—have now been added to the WIC microsite. In addition to the resources and the event, WIC is also offering a series of action planning workshops to help municipalities move their work with newcomers forward.

With the support of the Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund, WIC contracted advertising company FREE (formerly McRobbie Optamedia) to develop a Provincial Diversity and Inclusion Campaign that aims to increase awareness about the value of diversity and promote local Welcoming and Inclusive initiatives. FREE has worked closely with municipalities in the development of this campaign. WIC officially launched the new campaign material at the Come Together Alberta conference.

## **Event Objectives & Philosophy**

### **Objectives**

- Share best practices in the area of immigration with municipalities and community members.
- Present new and cutting-edge knowledge, frameworks and practical tools to take home.
- Provide an opportunity for attendees to network for the purpose of sharing ideas, challenges and successes.
- Launch AUMA's Immigration Project microsite and the Alberta Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Provincial Campaign.

### **Philosophy**

In order for the event to have maximum benefit, we envisioned that it:

- Focus on knowledge sharing – from best practices to enduring challenges to new ideas
- Introduce attendees to cutting edge ideas and research in the field
- Balance theory and practical application
- Use interactive and participatory learning methods
- Emphasize relationship building and networking
- Inspire new and continued commitments to this important work

# Delegates

---

## Municipalities

Town of Beaumont

Town of Bonnyville

City of Brooks\*

City of Calgary\*

Town of Calmar

City of Edmonton\*

Town of Edson

Town of Elk Point

Town of Falher

City of Grande Prairie\*

Village of Holden

Town of Lac La Biche

City of Lethbridge\*

Town of Olds

City of Red Deer

Town of St. Paul

Town of Smoky Lake

City of Spruce Grove

Strathcona County

Town of Tofield

City of Wetaskiwin\*

Wildwood

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo\*

## Organizations

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Alberta Municipal Affairs, Library Branch

Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan

Calmar Public Library

Central Alberta Refugee Effort

Centre for Race and Culture

Edmonton Public Library

Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council

Edson Public Library

Enbridge Pipelines

Holden Municipal Library

Human Resources & Skills Development Canada

Kilkenny Community League

Lethbridge Regional Police Service

Montana First Nation

Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative Ltd.

NorQuest College Centre for Excellence in Intercultural Education

Northern Lights Library System

St Paul Municipal Library

Strathcona County FCSS

Strathcona County Library

University of Alberta

Vancouver Dialogues Project

Wetaskiwin & Hobbema MIYO

Yellowhead County Library Board

Yellowhead Regional Library

## Special Guests from

Alberta Human Services

Alberta Culture and Community Services

Alberta Human Rights Commission

Lindisfarne Productions

## Conference Conveners

Aliya Jamal, Immigration Program Assistant, WIC, AUMA

Marc Colbourne, Senior Project Coordinator, WIC, AUMA

*We would like to acknowledge the contributions of representatives from Alberta Human Services, the Alberta Human Rights Commission, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and our various municipal and community partners in the development of the conference concept and details.*

# Agenda at a Glance

<b>Thursday, December 1</b>		<b>CMARD Commitments*</b>
9:00am	Breakfast & Registration	
10:00am	Meeting Welcome	
10:15am	<b>Setting the Stage: Newcomer Stories</b>	8, 10
11:00am	<b>Roundtable #1: Why are we here?</b>	
11:30am	Break	
11:45am	<b>Assessing and Developing Intercultural Sensitivity in your Community</b>	2, 5, 10
12:45pm	Lunch	
1:45pm	<b>Introducing the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Provincial Campaign &amp; the CCMARD Toolkit</b>	8, 10
2:15pm	<b>Roundtable #2: Where are we at?</b>	
2:45pm	Break	
3:00pm	<b>Creating Welcoming Public Spaces</b>	3, 10
4:30pm	End	
6:00pm	Cocktail Reception	
6:30pm	<b>Come Together Alberta: Banquet &amp; Launch of Microsite</b>	
<b>Friday, December 2</b>		
8:00am	Breakfast & Registration	
9:00am	<b>The Temporary Foreign Worker Program in Alberta</b>	6
10:00am	<b>Roundtable #3: What are our challenges? What are our successes?</b>	
10:30am	Break	
10:45am	<b>Relationship-Building with Aboriginal and Newcomer Communities</b>	3, 8, 10
12:00pm	Lunch	
12:45pm	<b>Strategies for Creating an Inclusive Workplace</b>	3, 5, 6
2:45pm	Closing Conference Remarks	

\*Each session will relate to one or more of the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination's ten common commitments.

<b>Thursday, December 1</b> <b>9:00am – 4:30pm</b>	
9:00am	Breakfast & Registration
10:00am	<b>Meeting Welcome</b> Opening Prayer: <i>Myrtle Callahasin</i>
10:15am	<p><b>Setting the Stage: Newcomer Stories</b></p> <p>Listen to a panel of stories told by newcomers to Canada and learn what contributes to wellbeing and a sense of belonging in a community. Laying the foundation for this two day event, this session will emphasize the diversity of experiences within newcomer communities and get you thinking about how to build strategies that are truly responsive to the needs of newcomers.</p> <p><i>Dr Valerie Mason-John</i> aka Queenie immigrated to Canada in 2008. She is the author of six books, including <i>Detox Your Heart</i> – working with anger, fear and hatred, and <i>Broken Voices</i> – the lives of the most oppressed women in India – the Dalit. She is a consultant in conflict transformation, working with immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and with Edmonton Public. She has just completed her 2nd novel – <i>The War Done Done</i>, family Saga during the Sierra Leone Rebel War, and is currently co-editing an anthology on African Canadian Poetry. <a href="http://www.valeriemason-john.com">www.valeriemason-john.com</a></p> <p><i>Mohamed Yusuf-Idriss</i> As a global nomad, Mohammed lived in four different continents before moving to Canada. He is very involved in his community, sitting on different boards, taskforces, organizations and community initiatives locally, provincially and nationally. Mohammed's education is as diverse as his many past postal codes. He holds degrees in Language and Literature, General Management and Human Security and Peace Building. Mohammed's career is also very diverse. He worked as Development Coach, Community Facilitator, Disaster management Instructor and management consultant. He is currently the Service Manager at Brooks and County Immigration Services. Mohammed's passion is in promoting unity in diversity. Mohammed, his wife Biftu, and their baby daughter Noor call "Brooks, Alberta" home.</p>
11:00am	<p><b>Roundtable 1: Why are we here?</b></p> <p>Roundtables are designed to foster reflection, knowledge sharing and network building. Each participant will participate in a discussion group; at each of four roundtable sessions throughout Thursday and Friday, discussions will reconvene to continue building on conversations and insights.</p>
11:30am	Break
11:45am	<p><b>Assessing and Developing Intercultural Sensitivity in your Community</b></p> <p>Sensitivity to cultural difference is one of the challenges faced by host community members seeking to be welcoming and inclusive. But how can you tell how sensitive people are? What difference does intercultural sensitivity make toward achieving the goals of welcoming communities? In this session you will hear about the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) and a statistically reliable tool, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), that can be used to measure it. The presenter will also share examples of practical ways intercultural communication competence is making a difference in communities and organizations that seek to be welcoming and inclusive. You will leave this interactive session with concrete ideas for your community.</p> <p><i>Sarah Apedaile</i> is an intercultural specialist with the NorQuest Centre for Excellence in Intercultural Education. She does applied research, curriculum development, training and instructs courses in intercultural communication. Sarah is qualified administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory. Her publications include <i>Critical Incidents for Intercultural Communication</i>, <i>Roots and Connections: A Culturally Integrated Curriculum for Community Orientation</i>, the <i>Intercultural Coach</i> and <i>Intersections 2: A Guide to Inclusive Non- Profit Governance in Alberta</i>.</p>
12:45pm	Lunch

1:45pm	<p><b>Greetings from the Alberta Human Rights Commission</b></p> <p>Honourable Blair Mason, Q.C., Chief Commissioner, Alberta Human Rights Commission</p> <p><b>Introducing the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Provincial Campaign</b></p> <p>With financial support from the Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund, the WIC initiative has developed a provincial diversity and inclusion campaign strategy. McRobbie Optamedia will give an overview of the tools they have created and how the campaign can be effectively implemented in your community to raise awareness about diversity and inclusion initiatives.</p> <p>Presenters: <i>Jamey Hawtin &amp; Michael Brechtel, McRobbie Optamedia</i></p> <p><i>McRobbie Optamedia</i> is a full-service marketing communications agency with a 20 year history of inspirational creative and proven client service. Their team of 18 professionals has earned more than 50 awards and has worked with a significant list of clients including government, industry and national brands. As a medium-sized agency, they are able to provide personal client service, an experienced strategy and creative team combined with a history of successful marketing, communications and advertising projects.</p> <p><b>Presenting The Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination Toolkit</b></p> <p>The newly developed CCMARD Toolkit provides municipalities with practical tools and information to use at all stages of their CCMARD membership; from considering membership in the Coalition, to developing an action plan, to evaluating the progress of their CCMARD initiatives. This session will provide a brief overview of the Toolkit.</p> <p>Presenter: <i>Marc Colbourne</i></p>
2:15pm	<b>Roundtable 2: Where are we at?</b>
2:45pm	Break
3:00pm	<p><b>Creating Welcoming Public Spaces</b></p> <p>Based on the idea that public spaces are the base layer that social engagement is built on, best practices and cutting edge thinking will be shared about how to create public spaces that are welcoming and inclusive of newcomers and other marginalized populations. This includes how we think about urban planning and infrastructure, where we put parks and outdoor public places, what we think buildings are for, how we design them and what we fill them with. Case studies from different communities will be featured.</p> <p><i>Dr. Rob Shields</i> is Director of the City Region Studies Centre at the University of Alberta, the Henry Marshall Tory Chair and a Professor in the Department of Sociology and the Department of Art and Design. Rob's work spans architecture, planning and urban and regional geography. His interdisciplinary research is in the areas of cultural studies, regional development and locative media. He founded <i>CURB</i> magazine and has lectured around the world on various topics to do with urban planning, space and culture.</p> <p><i>Shafraaz Kaba</i> is an architect working for Manasc Isaac in Edmonton for the last 11 years. Before that, he spent a year working on housing and development in northern Pakistan, an experience which he gained a deep appreciate for all the things we take for granted here: clean water, reliable power and central heating. He is originally from Tanzania but grew up in the suburbs of Edmonton, and has grown to love this city after learning to love winter.</p> <p><i>Lesley Winfield</i> has been the Library Manager in Olds Alberta for nine years. She has also served a term on Town Council and functioned as the Chair of the Olds Welcoming and Inclusive Communities committee for several years. "Community work is about bringing people together and breaking down boundaries."</p>
4:30pm	End
6:00pm	Cocktail Reception
6:30pm	<p><b>Come Together Alberta Banquet &amp; Microsite Launch</b></p> <p>This evening, AUMA is pleased to officially launch a set of best practice videos that profile what the municipalities of Wood Buffalo, Olds and Brooks are doing in attracting, retaining and integrating newcomers. These videos will be the highlight of the newly redesigned WIC website, complementing a rich online library of resources for working with newcomers, as well as in three other WIC areas of focus.</p> <p>Take the new WIC website for a test drive, browse resources you can take home with you, make a pledge on the Provincial Campaign pledge board, all while enjoying music by a local artist and a delicious dinner.</p> <p><i>Mona Abdolrazaghi</i>, Persian flamenco guitar player introduced to the world of music at the age of seven years. The inspiration of the artist is mostly by Middle Eastern and Spanish music influenced by the great flamenco guitar players such as Paco Pena, Paco De Lucia and Vicente Amigo. In 2006, Mona received the honor of the Flamenco Guitar finalist with 10 other flamenco artists in Iran Flamenco Guitar Festival competing against 100 guitar participants. Mona has co-operated with her brother, Amir Mohsen, in composing the sound track for several short films, one of which was recently submitted to the Bournemouth student film Fest. Mona is planning to present her work inspired by a combination of different styles of world music such as Indie, folk, Jazz with profound modal Spanish music and performing on larger stages.</p>



<b>Friday, December 2</b> <b>8:00am – 4:30pm</b>	
8:00am	Breakfast & Registration
9:00am	<p><b>The Temporary Foreign Worker Program in Alberta</b></p> <p><i>Martin Shields</i> has been involved in municipal governance since 2004 – he served from 2004-2007 as a Councilor and from 2007-present as the Mayor. He holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Education and a Master of Arts and prior to his career in politics, Mayor Shields served as a teacher and school administrator for 25 years and a University part time instructor for 20 years. He currently serves as the Director of Strathmore-Brooks Alberta Conservative Constituency Association and is a past President of the Medicine Hat Federal Conservative Constituency Association. Mayor Shields has been living in Brooks with his family for 25 years and is very committed to the success and quality of the community. This is evident through his involvement in various organizations such as the Alberta Library Trustees Association (Board Member), the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, the Shortgrass Regional Library System Board (Vice Chair Person), Palliser Regional Health Board, and the Palliser Area Health Advisory Committee.</p> <p><i>Yessy Byl</i> has worked as a labour lawyer in private practice and on staff with unions in Alberta. She was also the Temporary Foreign Worker Advocate with the Alberta Federation of Labour from 2007 to 2011. As the TFW Advocate, she co-authored two reports on TFWs: “TFWs – Alberta’s Disposable Workforce” ( November, 2007) and “Entrenching Exploitation” (April 2009). She currently works as the Northern Alberta Educator for the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Center, is a tutor for Athabasca University in labour studies and is also working temporarily for United Nurses of Alberta. She has been a volunteer lawyer for the past ten years with the Edmonton Community Legal Centre and is a past Board member and was instrumental in setting up the TFW program with ECLC. She works with the ECLC TFW clinic as well as with a number of agencies providing services to TFWs in the Edmonton area.</p> <p><i>Percy Cummins</i> has worked for the Government of Alberta since 1980. He has worked in both rural and urban service delivery offices as well as several policy roles. Percy is currently the Executive Director of Immigration Policy and Programs within Alberta Human Services. His area is responsible for Federal/Provincial Immigration program issues, Foreign Qualification Recognition, settlement services, innovative language training projects and Alberta’s permanent and temporary immigration policy.</p>
10:00am	<b>Roundtable 3: What are our challenges? What are our successes?</b>
10:30am	Break
10:45am	<p><b>Relationship-Building with Aboriginal and Newcomer Communities</b></p> <p>Aboriginal and newcomer communities are sometimes seen merely as target groups for service provision or integration into mainstream society. But how can organizations support the wellness of these communities using genuine citizen engagement tools and responsive policy development? This session will talk about how to engage with marginalized communities, and how to find points of intersection and potential dialogue between them. The panelists will provide both a conceptual overview and profiles of best practices within municipalities.</p> <p><i>Ashima Sumaru</i> (BA, BEd) is the coordinator for the Migrant Routes program at the Centre for Race and Culture. She has delivered cultural competency, anti-racism and diversity and inclusion training to a wide variety of audiences. Her current research interests include sharing power in the classroom and linking current immigration issues to global and historical contexts. Ashima is also very familiar with adult education, participatory education and family literacy.</p> <p><i>Annie McKittrick</i> is the Social Planner in Strathcona County. Prior to coming to Alberta, she worked for the City of Williams Lake as the Acting Manager of Social Development where she worked on the Official Community Plan which includes a cultural diversity focus acknowledging the First Nations communities. For five years, she worked as the Manager of a community-university research partnership, the Canadian Social Economy Hub. Prior to moving to Victoria she worked for over 20 years with immigrants and refugees and helped found the Richmond Multicultural Concerns Society and the BC Settlement and Integration Workers Association and was the Coordinator of the Vancouver Community College Certificate Program for settlement/multicultural workers. Annie was also the Executive Director of a Social Planning Council. Her interest in immigration and cultural diversity comes from her background as a United Nation kid, and her own immigration to Canada from France.</p> <p><i>Karen Fong</i> works for the City of Vancouver as the Project Coordinator for the Vancouver Dialogues Project, which aims to foster greater understanding and strengthened relations between Aboriginal and immigrant communities. Prior to this position she completed a Master of Science in Planning from the University of Toronto, with a focus on the integration of skilled immigrants in the labour market.</p>
12:00pm	Lunch

12:45pm	<p><b>Strategies for Creating an Inclusive Workplace</b></p> <p>The Labour Program’s Racism-Free Workplace Strategy reflects the Government of Canada’s leadership role in the fight against racism, and promotes a fair and inclusive workplace, free of discriminatory barriers to the employment and advancement of members of visible minorities and Aboriginal peoples. It focuses primarily on workplaces under the jurisdiction of the Employment Equity Act and the Federal Contractors Program. In this interactive workshop, municipalities will learn how to access the resources, networks and training offered by RFWS. The workshop will also include an interactive discussion on the topic of Strategies for creating a racially inclusive workplace, to share practical ways to recruit and interview members of visible minorities by engaging in discussions with other human resource professionals, recruiters and hiring managers.</p> <p><i>Anne-Marie Pham</i> is the Racism Prevention Officer for the North West Pacific Region and supports employers across Alberta to build racism-free workplaces. Anne-Marie is a seasoned diversity educator and has worked closely with community and government stakeholders to create innovative regional and national partnerships to support the creation of new tools and resources for the Strategy. Anne-Marie holds a Master’s Degree in public administration and a BA in Sociology. In 2008, she was the runner-up for the Canadian Asian of the Year Award. In 2005, she received the Alberta Centennial Medal for outstanding community leadership and volunteerism.</p>
2:45pm	Closing Conference Remarks

# Conference Sessions

---

Videos of all conference sessions are available, along with accompanying presentations, at <http://wic.auma.ca/Events/ComeTogether>.

## Roundtable Discussions

---

Scheduled over the two days of the event, the three Roundtable Discussions gave participants a chance to reflect on what they had heard in the sessions, make links between new information and their own contexts, and connect with each other personally and professionally. The roundtables also enabled people to benefit from the abundance of expertise and insight in the room; sharing best practices and learnings has been repeatedly identified as a key desire of both municipalities and community members working on WIC-related initiatives.

The aim was for each discussion to build on the previous one in order to advance conversations and knowledge; to that end, a summary of the previous discussion was read out before starting the next one.

The following are thematic summaries of the discussions.

**“Never give up, it might not be the right time for the community to embrace the Welcoming Communities right now, BUT, IT WILL COME...!”**

### Roundtable 1 (Day 1)

#### Question: What are the qualities of a Welcoming and Inclusive Community?

##### On a personal level?

- Respect was a word that showed up repeatedly
- A great deal of emphasis on the responsibility of individuals to reach out to newcomers, to speak out against racism and to champion WIC
  - Newcomers also have a responsibility to share their experiences
- Importance of education and understanding, whether it be learning about other cultures, or being aware of one’s own personal bias
- Other words: caring, listening, participation, safe, comfort

##### On a municipality/organizational level?

- A WIC must have vision, leadership, and a policy/strategy/plan – and then they need to walk the talk
- Evolve
- Be aware of the system and the barriers it can create
- Education and training is key at the organizational level
- Need to be able to provide or coordinate a number of different services e.g. welcome wagon, language and other training, etc.
- Celebrate differences, recognize similarities
- Communicate & coordinate

## **On a societal level?**

- Break down misperceptions, we need to admit there is a problem
- Include WIC in schools
- Dialogue is key ... but where do you begin?
- Move from 'Us and Them' to just 'Us'
- Need a deeper understanding of how different cultures approach integration
- Participation of everyone is needed – it's a two-way street
- Educate & celebrate
- Canadian identity needs to be transformed

## **Roundtable 2 (Day 1)**

**Question: Considering the presentation on intercultural sensitivity, where do you believe your community/organization is at? Where do you hope to go next? What might your community/organization do to get there?**

- The vision is present but we need to move beyond implementation, beyond talk.
- Various communities are making large strides to be inclusive.
- How do we measure success?
- How do we acknowledge challenges?
- Awareness is key
- Services need to reflect demographics. What does a culturally competent service really look like?
- Take care not to be “over-sensitive”.
- Perceptions around Temporary Foreign Workers need to be addressed. How do we encourage longer run integration?
- Focus should be first on interconnectedness, which leads to interdependence.
- Involve children – give them positive experiences.
- I came in thinking much had been done ... now realizing there is a long road ahead.
- Has to become a priority for “people with power”.
- Realize mistakes and act to correct.
- Use toolkits to influence behaviour.
- Blanket solutions do not work.
- Lots of communities at minimization and polarization phase.
- Seek out information from other WIC communities – “lessons learned”.
- Challenges are also opportunities.
- Important not to get frustrated. Realize the process can be 2 steps forward, 1 step back.
- Sustainability includes social sustainability.
- Integrate into strategic plans.
- Don't just fund the “next idea” – need to continue to support tools that already exist.

## Roundtable 3 (Day 2)

### What challenges have you faced in your community/organization? How have you overcome them?

- Working with business in the community
  - Need to inform community of new arrivals/hires before and when they come
- Bureaucracy
  - Lack of harmonization
  - Recent changes to TFW Program; process needs to be streamlined
  - Too much red tape
- Not enough capacity to help newcomers
  - Social services
  - Housing
  - No settlement services
- Misconceptions about newcomers
  - How long TFWs can stay
  - Understanding various immigration streams
  - Getting hiring managers educated
  - That immigration costs a community
- Organizations don't reflect community diversity, but it is hard to engage newcomers in organizations like volunteer groups

**“Our population is 350. We are volunteered to death. The same 6 people do everything in this community”**

### What successes have you had?

- TFWs are dedicated and loyal
- Making newcomers feel welcome by creating opportunities to do that
- Successful language training
- Need to acknowledge costs and challenges to community

### What have you learned along the way?

- Resources available
  - Manitoba model
  - Municipal affairs language database (Mango Language Learning Software, free at all AB public libraries)
  - Public education videos
  - Churches
  - Libraries
- Be flexible
- Get a community champion
- Communicate well with employers who are bringing people
- The ultimate good is the retention of newcomers

# Next Steps

---

AUMA aims to continue to support Alberta municipalities to share information and connect around best practices and learnings regarding immigration and diversity. We encourage event participants to use the contact list that was sent out post-conference to get in touch with others and find ways to continue the knowledge sharing, and perhaps even build collaborative relationships to support each other's work. We hope that this event played a small part in moving Alberta in the direction of a province that is welcoming and inclusive to all its current and potential residents.

Here's how AUMA can continue to support your municipality's immigration work:

## **Immigration Workshops**

As a part of AUMA's immigration project, we are offering free capacity building workshops to Alberta municipalities to develop an immigration action plan. These workshops are a one-time offering and aim to support municipalities at whatever stage of planning for immigration they are at—just starting out or highly developed. Contact [Aliya Jamal](#) if you are interested in hosting a workshop in your municipality.

## **Provincial Diversity & Inclusion Campaign**

Following its official launch at this event, campaign toolkits are now available to all Alberta municipalities. The campaign is a great way to move WIC work in your community forward, either by promoting awareness about the value of diversity, raising the profile of existing WIC initiatives, or adding a diversity component to community events. See [http://wic.auma.ca/Provincial\\_Campaign/](http://wic.auma.ca/Provincial_Campaign/) for more information on the campaign. Contact AUMA if you are interested in receiving a copy of the toolkit or discussing how your municipality could implement the campaign.

## **WIC Microsite**

The WIC Microsite will continue to be developed and can serve as an invaluable starting point if your municipality or community organization is looking for resources or support around WIC work. The Newcomers page in particular offers a set of best practice videos from 4 Alberta municipalities to inspire and spark ideas, plus a rich set of resources under sub-headings like Small Communities, Employment and Workforce, and Community Engagement. Visit the microsite at <http://wic.auma.ca>.

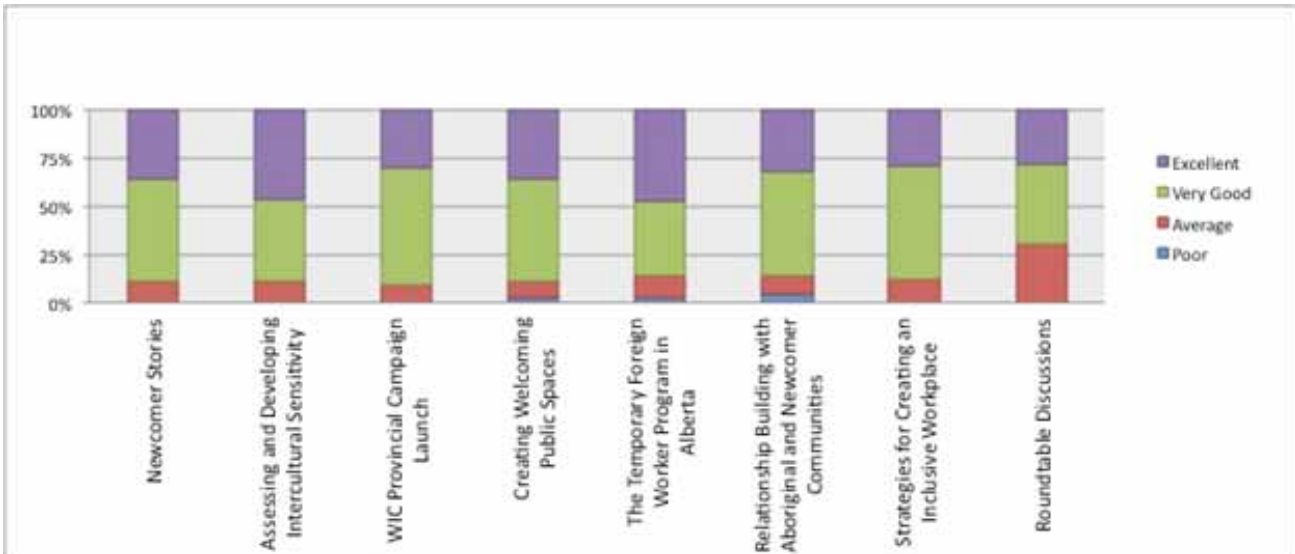
**“Please host a follow-up every 3 months to monitor progress.”**

# Event Feedback

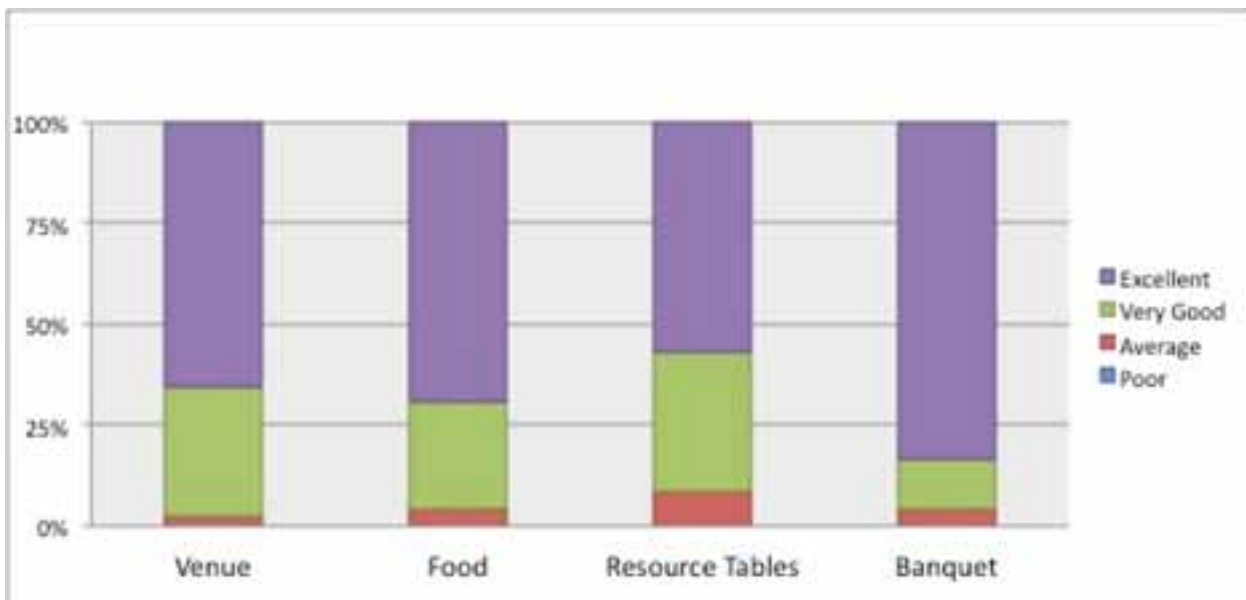
The week following the event, online evaluation forms were sent out to all conference participants. The intent of sending the forms out post-conference was twofold – one, to allow more time at the actual conference for sessions and discussion instead of form-filling; and two, to ensure that the feedback we received was ultimately based on the real-world usefulness of conference content in participants' home contexts. The following is a summary and some highlights of the results. Results are based on a 73% response rate.

Theme clouds were created using [Wordle](#).

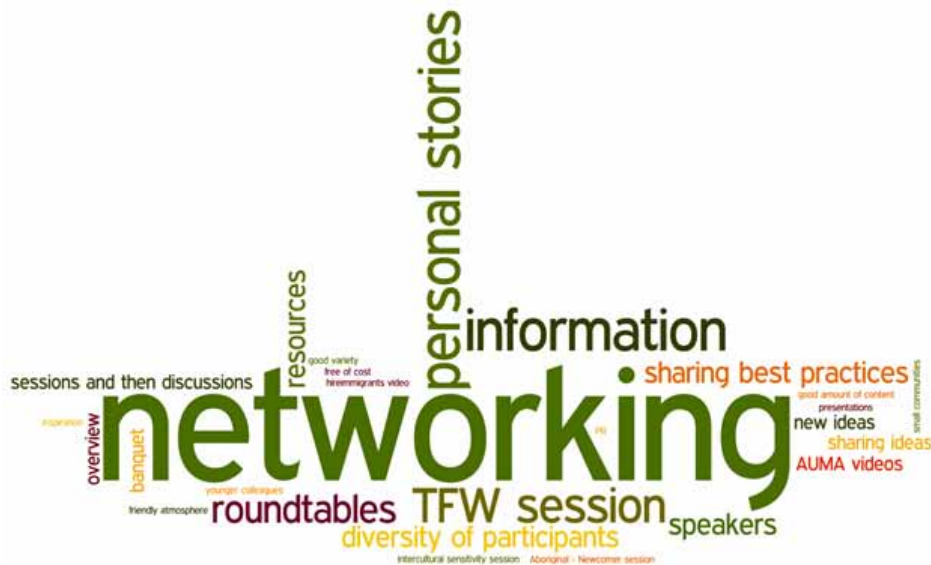
## Q1. Please rate each session.



## Q2. General event feedback



### Q3. What did you appreciate most about the conference?



Nice easy-to-access venue, excellent speakers and great food!

The atmosphere. Everyone was very friendly and willing to both share their story as well as listen to everyone else.

I enjoyed meeting a whole lot of different people than 'usual'. We haven't done much in the way of working on newcomers in rural Alberta, but I have a lot of folks whom I can now contact if we do get something together.

I appreciated the educational nature of it, listening followed by an opportunity to exchange ideas at our tables with a sum up.

### Q4. What are one or two key ideas you will take away from the conference that will contribute to your own work?



That moving to a new country can be overwhelming and disorienting, and that facilitating this transition with available resources and information can help ease the process.

The need to speak to Town Council to get them on board with CMARD program.

We must build relationships before we can start making changes.

Working with newcomers and attempting to get them to create their own events so they don't feel that it's just the City providing events FOR them but rather working WITH them.



## Q5. What are some tools/resources that could further assist you in your WIC work?



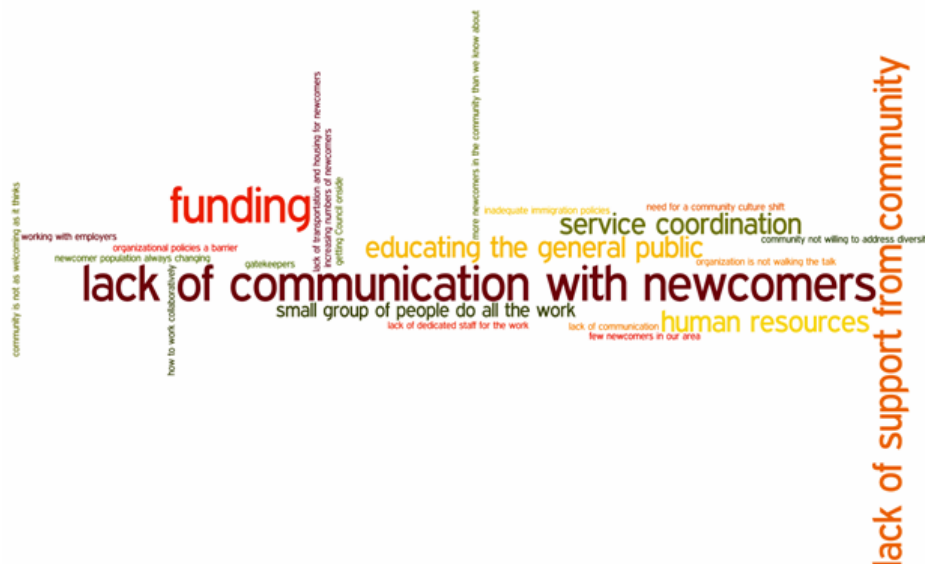
Utilizing the knowledge from other communities that have had the experience. Learning from their trials and errors.

The network that I built will be the most useful resource.

Videos, Booklets about programs.

Would like to hear from the immigrant serving sector.

## Q6. What are the biggest challenges facing your municipality/organization in doing Welcoming and Inclusive Communities work?



Understanding how to find populations that are not feeling welcomed and included.

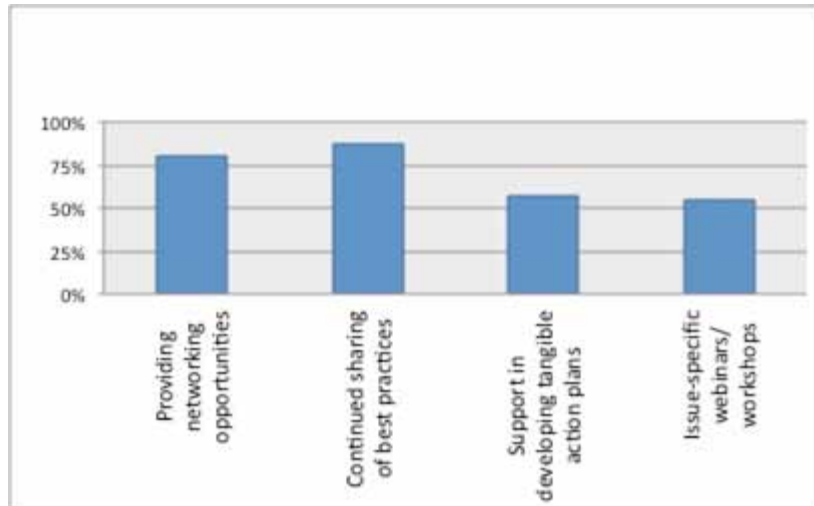
Resources, but also officially making it a priority/department.

We tend to have a much higher ratio of TFW's than new Canadians. This means that it's a very dynamic audience whose needs may change from month to month.

Municipalities do not walk the talk. Memoranda of Understanding do not mean anything... Actions speak louder than words.

Such a large organization, and there are lots of policies and such that we have to work around.

## Q7. How can the Come Together Alberta and Welcoming and Inclusive Communities initiatives support you in overcoming these challenges?



More information about immigration trends and best practices in integration.

Start a network of professional immigrants supporting each other and sharing online.

Speakers from other municipalities, or experts in specific fields (e.g. goal-setting and performance measurement, anti-racism, community mobilization).

Promote the much needed changes to the temporary foreign worker program.

Discussions to create collaborative initiatives.

## Q8. Do you have any suggestions for improving future events?



Have Aboriginal people and Temporary Foreign Workers represented by individuals who are from these populations. I questioned the validity of the work by the panels covering these topics because they were speaking for populations not represented.

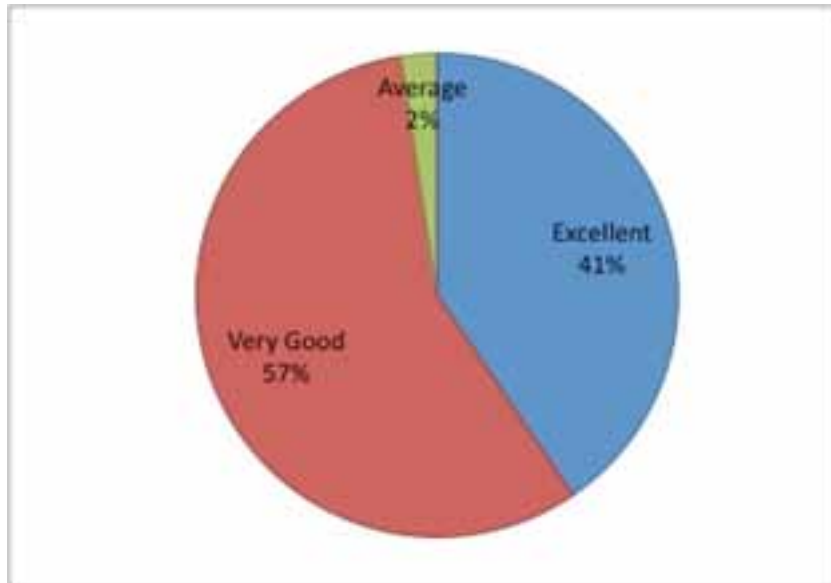
Offer different sessions for municipalities depending on where in the process they are.

The TFW program discussion was also good and informative but I'm not sure what municipal governments can do with that information. It seemed like more of a bash the federal government discussion than anything.

Get the word out earlier so people can plan to attend & budget for it.

National and provincial visual of Welcoming Communities; Community displays; We are a Welcoming Community - look at what we are doing...

**Q9. My overall experience at this conference was...**

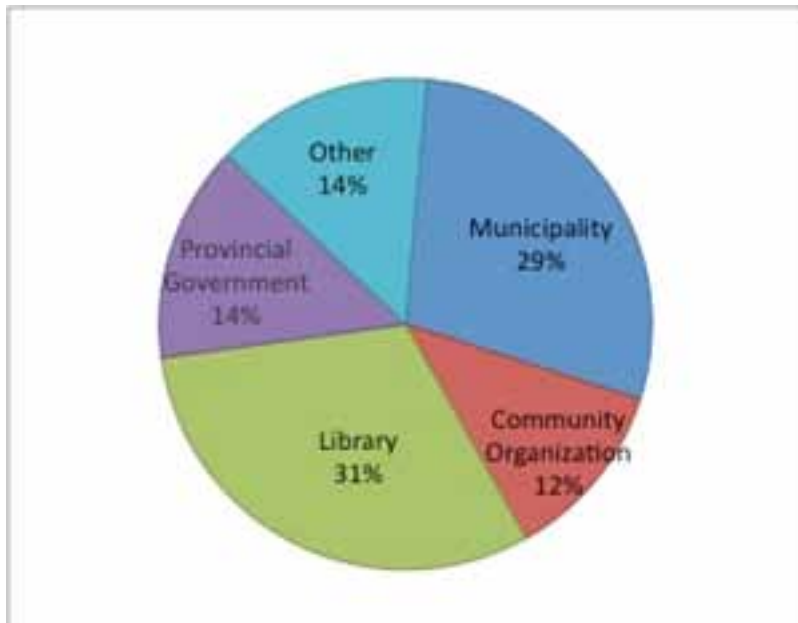


Thank you for the good work your organization is doing; you are making the difference.

I am not representing a municipality, so some of the information was not necessarily relevant to me. I think if I was with a municipality, it would have been excellent.

I want to learn more.

**Q10. I represent a...**



***Thank you to all sponsors!***



**WELCOMING  
& INCLUSIVE  
COMMUNITIES**



**Government of Alberta** ■

