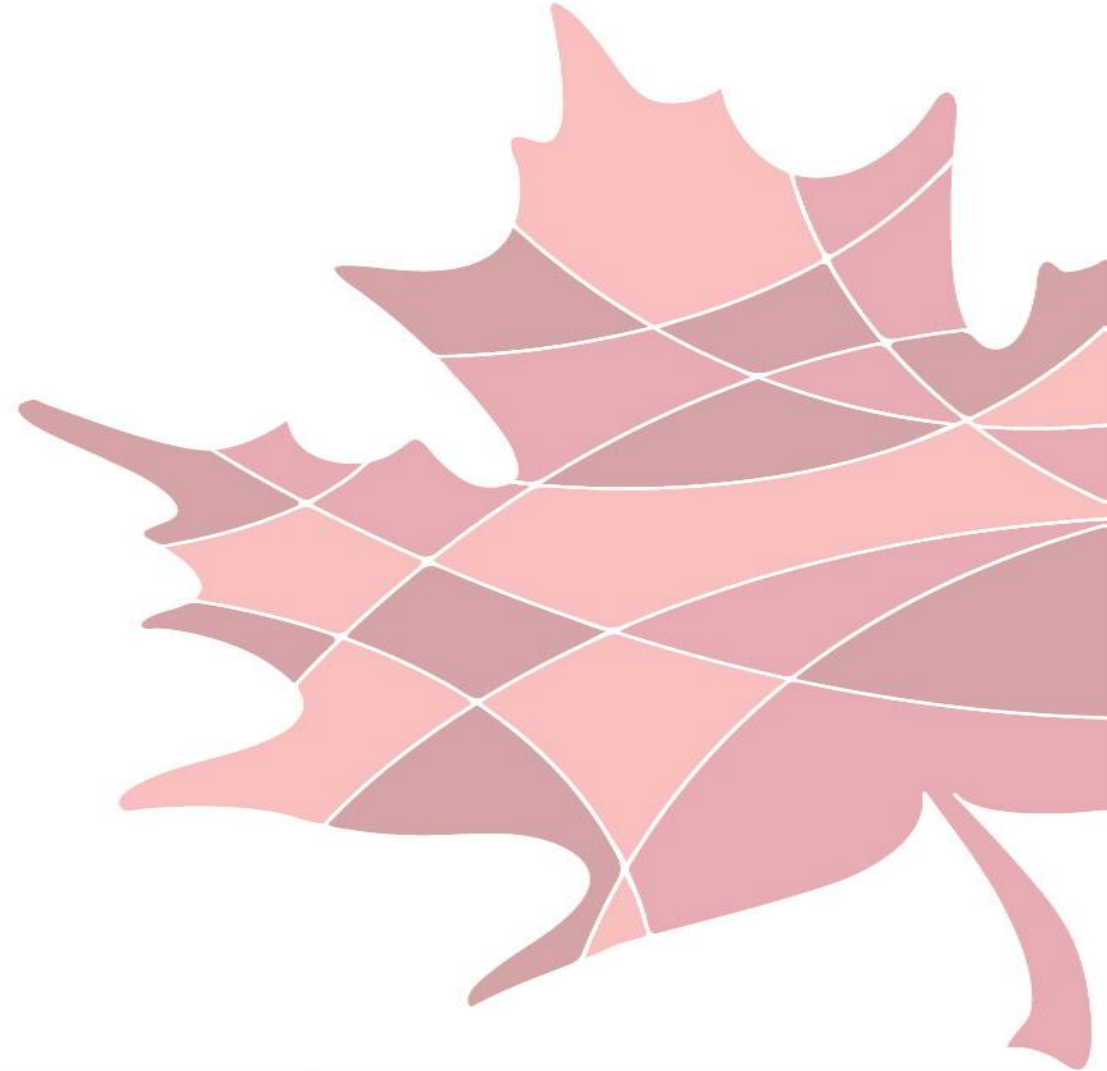


Service Delivery Improvement (SDI) 2020-2024 and Equity RFQ SDI Projects Key Learnings

Social Innovation Unit
Settlement and Integration Policy
March 2025



Service Delivery Improvement (SDI) at a Glance

SDI is a dedicated funding stream to build evidence for what works in improving newcomer outcomes and increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Settlement Program.

First cohort (SDI 2017-2022)

- Launched in 2017
- 102 funded projects

Second cohort (SDI 2020-2024)

- Launched in 2020
- 78 funded projects

Equity Request for Quotations (RFQ)

- Launched in 2022
- Six funded projects

SDI Expression of Interest 2020-2024

The SDI 2020-2024 EOI process focused on **short-term** projects to support newcomers and the settlement sector through **sustainable recovery from the pandemic** under three priority streams:

1

Leveraging technology to support effective, equitable remote service delivery

2

Increasing employer involvement in the integration process to improve newcomer employment outcomes

3

Building the capacity of the settlement sector to be flexible and resilient through social research and development and **enhancing anti-racism activities** and programs.

Targeted Request for Quotations (RFQ)

A separate process was held concurrently on community-based planning and governance approaches for service delivery.

SDI Expression of Interest 2020-2024 – Key Findings

Priority 1: Leveraging Technology to Support Remote Service Delivery

- Complexity of implementing technological solutions often underestimated
- Well-established technologies are the most suitable for the not-for-profit sector
- More modest interventions may be gamechangers for frontline SPO staff and newcomer clients
- Significant opportunities remain to enhance data sharing and information security strategies to support digitization of the Sector

Priority 2: Increasing Employer Involvement in Settlement Services

- More effective coordination required
- Lack of time and capacity a barrier for both employers and SPOs
- Pre-arrival information can change destination
- In-Person engagement remains important

SDI Expression of Interest 2020-2024 – Key Findings

Priority 3A: Supporting Sector Resilience and Adaptability

- Capacity-building resources are an urgent need for the sector
- Dedicated capacity building leads can be more cost-effective and efficient
- Community-based research and co-design of research with clients are of significant value
- Capacity building often requires an accompanying examination of organizations' strategic priorities and orientation.

Priority 3B: Enhancing Anti-Racism Capacity

- Racism and discrimination remains a persistent issue
- A Community-based approach generates more inclusive and relevant training and anti-racism training has positive socio-economic benefits
- There remains a need for further investment in this space but these investments should not replace current programming but instead enhance it

Priority 4 (RFQ): Community-Based Planning Models

- Building trust and true collaboration in a competitive space is a challenge
- A Community-based planning model would be a positive for newcomers
- Participating organizations favoured a community-based approach to funding priorities but have concerns
- Community-based models require better data



Equity Request For Quotations (RFQ) SDI Streams

The Equity RFQ was a **targeted intake process** to support projects that **explored ways to address systemic inequities** – including those based on race and gender – for all newcomers to improve their integration into Canadian society.

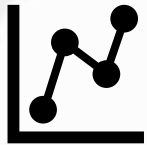
- The RFQ was funded using both **base Settlement Program funding** and **SDI funding** and 17 projects were funded under four streams.
- Two of the streams were funded via SDI (Anti-Racism – Research on Disparities in Newcomer Settlement and Integration and Addressing Inequities and Advancing Gender Equality for Newcomers).

The **results** of the SDI Equity projects strongly validated the importance of the CFP 2024 Equity Stream, particularly to help address:

- The need for ongoing and consistent Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training
- Persistent perspective gap between Newcomers and SPOs regarding racism and discrimination
 - Newcomer Expectations and Barriers Encountered with SPOs leads to frustration
- Capacity Issues Persist in SPOs

Challenges encountered by SDI 2020-2024 and Equity RFQ SDI Projects

Need for further investment and capacity building in data collection and analysis



Recommendation

Anonymized data-pooling and other sharing systems could yield greater results.

Variable quality of Third-Party Evaluations



Recommendation

Continued investment in outcomes measurement and reporting required, which should also involve third-party evaluators

Staff turnover and SPO Capacity



Recommendation

Exploring approaches to IT service management could address limited SPO capacity in the IT field

Covid Complications



Recommendation

Continue to focus on nimble pivoting for SDI projects

SDI Projects have had an impact on programming and policy development

SDI 2017-2022 project results significantly influenced the design of CFP 2024 in areas such as:

- Dedicated NAARs
- Mental health and well-being
- Sector capacity building

Interim SDI 2020-2024 project findings also influenced the design of CFP 2024 in areas such as:

- Digital technology and hybrid service delivery
- Anti-racism programming and sector training
- Leveraging umbrella organizations, LIPs/RIFs and IECs to better support and mobilize funded SPOs

Early findings from the **Equity RFQ SDI projects informed the design of the CFP 2024 Equity funding stream** as well as the GBA+ and Anti-Racism requirements applied to all proposals

Where are we going with SDI?

A new two-element approach to better integrate SDI into the broader Settlement Program was launched in 2023.

SDI Pilot Stream aligned with Settlement CFPs

1

- Included in CFP2024 to provide a pathway to pilot promising SDI approaches that require additional investment on a larger scale.
- The **SDI Pilot projects** – reduced to 3 years (like other CFP projects) – will begin spring 2025.

SDI Innovation Incubator (Expression of Interest)

2

- SDI expression of interest processes will continue to support small-scale, short-term (likely 2 years in length) testing and research of concepts that may support improvements to the efficiency/effectiveness of the Settlement Program.

The next Innovation Incubator intake will focus on testing and innovation to support the evolution of the Settlement Program in the context of the new Levels environment. More detailed information will be posted on the IRCC Funding Page as it becomes available.

Annex

SDI Expression of Interest 2020-2024 – Overview

Distribution of SDI 2020-2024 Projects by Priority



78 funded projects, all of which ended by March 31, 2024

Over \$65M in funding over 3 years