## 

**AGENDA ITEM DOC4**

**Subject: Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant MINE Project Summary**

**Date: Sept. 13, 2019**

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We were successful in our application for a $70,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to build a sustainable newcomer employment service involving LSP and PLs.

Here is a summary for your information.

## Mobile Information for Newcomers’ Employment (MINE)

## Feasibility and Proof of Concept Project

### August 2019

***Introduction***

*Mobile Information for Newcomers’ Employment* is a project sponsored by the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) and the Kitchener Waterloo Multicultural Centre (KWMC). It has been funded for one year as a Trillium Foundation SEED grant starting in early September 2019.

***Project Purpose***

MINE is a feasibility and proof of concept project with the following purposes:

* To research the needs and feasibility of delivering innovative information services to underserved, newcomer communities in Ontario.
* The project will also include a proof of concept pilot implementation phase for a mobile, pop up multimedia and learning hub that is delivered in community settings to people not currently accessing other information services.
* It will provide education and information resources on employment, skills development, and financial literacy.
* The outcome will be an evaluation of the pilot and a report on the scalability, replicability, and sustainability of the model in other communities across Ontario.

***Need and Opportunity***

Information services and access to information communication technologies (ICT) are vital to newcomers seeking employment and establishing financial independence in the 21st century. Studies on information practices of immigrants/refugees indicate that there are multiple barriers preventing them from accessing information they need to enable them to participate in their new country (Diaz Andrade & Doolin, 2019)[[1]](#footnote-1) (Caidi et al, 2010)[[2]](#footnote-2). Lack of knowledge of information resources, difficulties navigating the service landscape and lack of access to ICTs continue to be significant obstacles to participation.

This project will adapt and pilot an award-winning model developed by Libraries Without Borders bringing information experts, information tools and technologies to newcomers where they are. Our focus will be on connecting newcomers with targeted information about employment, skills development opportunities, financial literacy, and resources for entrepreneurs. The initial pilot will focus on the needs of immigrants and newcomers in the Waterloo region in collaboration with the Kitchener and Waterloo public libraries. The pilot will be replicable and scalable provincially.

***What We Will Learn***

* Our initial research phase will focus on what the current gaps are in newcomers’ *use* of existing employment and financial information.
* We will examine what the barriers are as described by newcomers themselves and those that serve them.
* We will also learn about innovative information services that have been proven effective in similar situations.
* In the proof of concept phase, we will learn about the concrete requirements of our proposed solution, partnership options, and practical implementation experience will be gained.
* And in the evaluation phase, we will put the research and implementation knowledge together for a comprehensive learnings report that will also point the way forward for additional projects.

***Activities and Results***

This project will consist of 4 principle activities: research, a proof of concept pilot, evaluation, and final report / plan.

* Research: This phase will include a literature search and online research of need and gaps, options for new services, impact studies and evaluations of successful innovative approaches by others; qualitative research with existing service providers and community leaders through a community based-focus process.
* Proof of concept project: Includes loading content on to specially prepared mobile interactive devices; community partnership creation; taking the devices out to community spaces and events with trained information facilitators for pilot delivery.
* Evaluation: Feedback from clients and information facilitators (qualitative findings) will be combined with quantitative findings of usage statistics and comparisons of engagement in a variety of venues.
* Final report: Completion and dissemination of a final report with findings, recommendations, and plans for expanding the project.

1. Diaz Andrade, A, & Doolin B (2019). Temporal enactment of resettled refugees’ ICT-mediated information Practices. Information Systems Journal 29(1), 145-174. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Caidi N., Allard D., & Quirke, L. (2010). Information Practices of Immigrants. Annual Review of Information Science and Technology, 44(1), 491-531. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)