



**ISS
ofBC**
WELCOMING
NEWCOMERS

ARRIVING TO THRIVING

26,313 UNIQUE NEWCOMER
JOURNEYS IN BC

2023-2024

IMPACT REPORT
SUMMARY

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The origin of the Land Acknowledgement can be found in Nation-to-Nation tradition and protocol that has been used as a way “for guests to show their respect for and pay homage to the Indigenous community with which they are visiting and engaging” (source: Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) Guide to Acknowledging First Peoples and Traditional Land). ISSofBC works in different communities throughout the Lower Mainland as well as in other regions of BC. We acknowledge that our work takes place on the traditional and unsundered lands of the Coast Salish peoples of Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh, the Katzie, Kwantlen, Kwikwetlem, Lheidli T'enneh, Semiahmoo, numerous Stó:lō Nations, Syilx Okanagan people, Tsawwassen and Qayqayt First Nations. Indigenous peoples have cared for, nurtured and sustained these lands since time immemorial and we are grateful for their commitment to protect the environment, the land, and the waters that surround us. We express our gratitude for the opportunity to live, work and play on these lands. We are thankful for the places and spaces we occupy and for the generosity of the rightful owners of this territory. We commit to walking gently on the lands and in the space we occupy in the same way you once did, with respect, kindness and care.

Read our [Truth and Reconciliation Strategy](#)

This is a summary version. For the full report, please visit [annualreport.issbc.org/home-2024](https://issbc.org/home-2024)



Board Chair and CEO's Message

Dear Friends,

We want to express our gratitude for your interest in and support of ISSofBC's mission. We are proud to share our 2023 / 2024 Annual Impact Report with our community, partners, and stakeholders.

Last year, we celebrated welcoming more newcomers — refugees, migrants, families, international students, and others — than ever before. A year later, we are thrilled to have supported thousands more in achieving their goals: making a home in Canada, learning English, studying, finding jobs, starting businesses, and more.

Every day, organizations like ours support newcomers to Canada, including those seeking refuge from violence and persecution. We lead and innovate in the settlement sector, continually improving our practices.

Over the last year we were part of 26,000 unique stories of strength, determination, and resilience, a few of which we are thrilled to share in this annual impact report. Behind each of these stories is our dedicated team of nearly 500 talented and diverse staff members, driven by our shared values and diverse experiences. We thank them all. We also extend our gratitude to our volunteers, funders, partners, and donors for their unwavering trust, support, and commitment.



Alec Attfield
BOARD CHAIR



Jonathan Oldman
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Immigration enriches Canada's cultural, economic, and social fabric. However, we also acknowledge that the Canadian immigration system is under stress. Over the past year there has been continued focus on immigration levels, goals, and impacts. While debate about Canada's immigration policies is important, we continue to believe in our country's ability to welcome and integrate newcomers and in ISSofBC's ability to ensure that this is done successfully.

Thank you for being part of our ongoing success.

Sincerely,

Alec Attfield
BOARD CHAIR

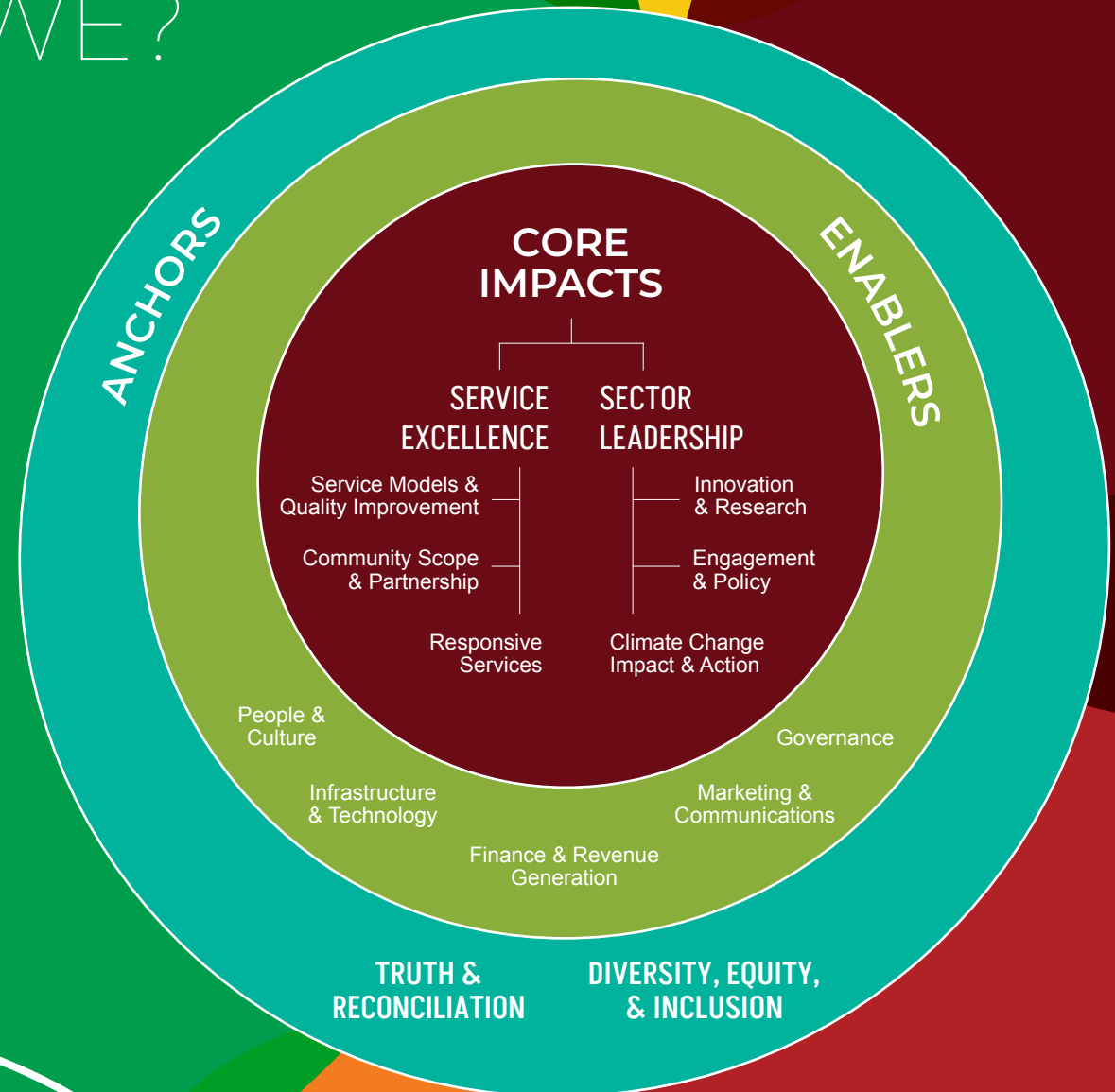
Jonathan Oldman
CEO

Strategic Vision

WHERE ARE WE?

The 2023 – 2024 period was the second year of our current strategic planning cycle. This multi-year commitment to deepening our impact and effectiveness recognizes the different elements of capacity and expertise that ensure ISSofBC can continue to thrive, adapt, and innovate in an ever-changing environment.

The plan identifies goals relating to service excellence, sector leadership, organizational capacity (‘enablers’), and actions linked to critical social justice issues.



Here are some highlights of our year's progress...

Service Excellence

- We undertook a comprehensive review of current systems, promising and innovative practices to enhance service accessibility and client experience in response to the recent IRCC CFPs (call for proposals). We will fully introduce these starting April 2025.
- We also prepared for the next iteration of provincially-funded temporary resident and naturalized citizen services that were launched April 2024. We are proud to be a provider for the BC Newcomer Services Program (BC NSP) delivering all-in-one settlement, language and job support for temporary residents and naturalized citizens, and the BC Services and Assistance for Humanitarian and Vulnerable Newcomers Program (BC SAFE HAVEN), providing specialized support for refugee claimants and asylum seekers.
- We invested in improving quality, conducting policy reviews, and implementing new processes to act on client feedback. Alongside mandatory data reports for funders, we are enhancing our client experience evaluation tools in NewTrack¹, our proprietary immigration CRM (client relationship management system).

¹ Originally developed by ISSofBC, the NewTrack CRM is now licenced through a wholly owned for-profit subsidiary company, NewTrack Solutions Inc.



Sector Leadership

- ISSofBC has long been an active voice in representing the interests of newcomers of all types and the wider settlement sector. Over the last year, senior leaders and a range of staff played active roles on numerous national, provincial, and local panels, committees, boards, and leadership groups, particularly regarding refugee resettlement and the Ukrainian emergency travel program. Here in BC, we helped shape the new International Credentials Recognition Act, approved in November 2023.
- We welcomed many political and civil leaders to our sites to meet with staff and clients – all the while raising awareness of the needs of newcomers. In May of 2023, we closed our groundbreaking New Perspectives series with a moderated panel discussion on the future of immigration to Canada.
- In March, Chris Friesen, our COO, won the Metropolis national service provider award in recognition of his 3-decades of sector leadership. Our CEO, Jonathan Oldman, was included in the “BC500 2023” a list of BC’s most influential business leaders published by the Business in Vancouver magazine.
- We continue to be a partner with several research institutions and bodies in the sector, contributing to a range of studies. In September we published our own multi-year research report, Sustaining Welcome: Longitudinal on Integration with Resettled Syrian Refugees, follows the integration journeys of over 200 resettled Syrian refugees living in British Columbia from 2017-2020.
- Like many organizations in our sector, we are aiming towards climate change adaptation, particularly given the impact this has on migration patterns around the world. Despite some limited actions to improve our operational sustainability, we still need to achieve more in this area.

Organizational Capacity ‘Enablers’

- A core part of our strategic plan, is continued investment in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our organizational operations and core capacity. With 500 staff and 11 service delivery locations, an organization of our breadth and scope must have a sophisticated and comprehensive infrastructure to support client service delivery.
- We developed and launched new real estate, marketing, and communications strategies, including introducing a striking new logo and visual brand ‘Welcoming Newcomers’. Our People, Culture, & Inclusion (formerly HR) team supported the recruitment of over 100 new staff as we expanded services and developed a completely new compensation framework and process to ensure we are competitive in attracting and retaining the best talent.
- We introduced improved finance and IT systems to keep up with our responsibilities as stewards of public funds and our clients’ private and confidential information. With increased demands for digital service delivery, we invested in the back-end infrastructure to build this with safety and security.
- Our volunteer Board of Directors reviewed and revised their own governance policies and practices to further strengthen their strategic oversight and leadership of the Society.

Social Justice ‘Anchors’

Our Strategic Plan is designed to ensure we integrate principles of DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and Truth and Reconciliation into all our activities and practices. Over the last year we undertook two significant strategy exercises to support this: the development of a comprehensive Truth and Reconciliation strategy (launched shortly after the end of the year), and a full DEI organizational assessment, examining both our strengths and weaknesses. Over 300 staff provided input that will lead to a multi-year DEI strategy.



Our Programs: IMPACTS & OUTCOMES

While we served over 26,000 clients, this number illustrates only a limited part of our impact. Over the year we continued to make steady progress in creating a much greater and richer story of our collective successes with newcomers through our impacts and outcomes. We recognize that building sustainable livelihoods in British Columbia is a journey and that no one journey is the same. Our clients, including immigrants, refugees with or without legal status, temporary foreign workers, and international students arrive in BC with different migration experiences, skills and assets, backgrounds and needs.

Below, we share highlights on the newcomers we supported. These numbers include all ISSofBC program areas including our Language and Career College (LCC) social enterprise. Note: figures throughout the 2023 – 2024 annual impact report are based on unique clients supported.



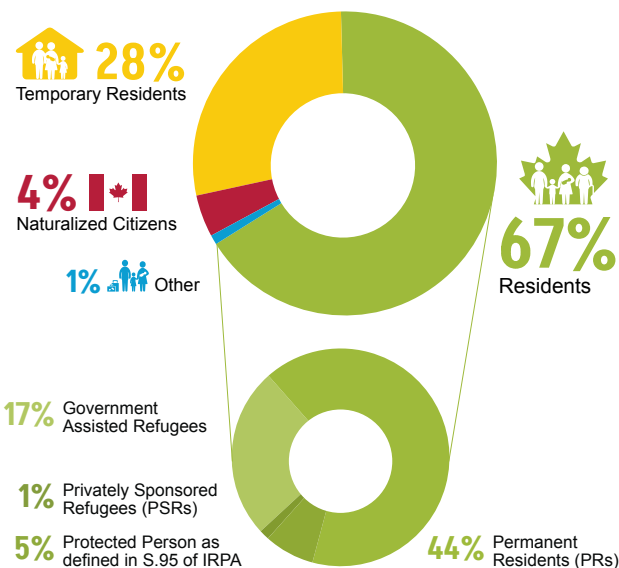
34,440

PROGRAM REGISTRATIONS

This # is not unique and reflects 8,000 clients accessing / registering for multiple programs.

26,313

of clients served across all programs.



Our clients speak over
135 PRIMARY
LANGUAGES



TOP 5 MOTHER TONGUES

فارسی
Farsi 15%

دري
Dari 11%

العربية
Arabic 9%

Español
Spanish 8%

普通话
Mandarin 6%

Financial Report



Craig Stocking
TREASURER



Vinson Luu
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

As we report ISSofBC's financial performance for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024, we want to acknowledge the dedication of the ISSofBC staff team, our volunteers, and our partners and the roles they each played to support newcomers to build their future in Canada.

As a social impact organization, careful management of our financial resources is essential to manage our community work, to build organizational capacity, and to continue evolving to meet changing needs. Funding and financial support represents an increased ability to both deliver services and invest in organizational infrastructure.

In the 2024 fiscal year, ISSofBC experienced significant growth in total revenue, up by 14.4 per cent. This increase was mainly due to the provision of more services, particularly through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs), including those from the Afghan Special Initiative (ASI). However, revenue growth occurred across many service areas, reflecting the diverse needs of our clients.

This growth allowed us to invest in essential areas such as improving total staff compensation, implementing new technology systems, building organizational capacity and infrastructure, and enhancing our services to better serve our clients.

In the volatile economic environment that challenged everyone in 2023-24, the vision and guidance of ISSofBC's management and the efforts of its staff and volunteers allowed the organization to remain on course financially and strategically. By the end of the fiscal year, we had a small surplus of 0.9 per cent of revenue over expenses from operations. We are well-positioned with the resources needed to continue towards our goals as laid out in the current [strategic plan](#).

REVENUES

63.4%
Settlement
Section
\$35,111,450

33.5%
Language College
& Career Services
\$18,550,074

3.1%
Donations, Interest
& Miscellaneous
\$1,748,493



EXPENSES

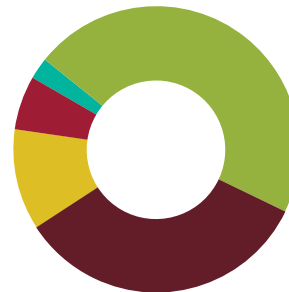
46.7%
Personnel
\$25,673,695

33.9%
Client Services
\$18,617,835

11.6%
Office & general
\$6,353,093

6.1%
Occupancy
\$3,352,371

1.7%
Amortization of
property & equipment
\$914,985



Board of Directors

2023-2024



Alec Attfield
BOARD CHAIR



Krista Thompson
VICE-CHAIR



Jennifer Natland
PAST BOARD CHAIR



Heather Judd
SECRETARY



Craig Stocking
TREASURER



Lida Paslar
MEMBER AT LARGE



Joanna Starczynowski
DIRECTOR



Abdullah Abunafeesa
DIRECTOR



Jordan Simmons
DIRECTOR



Lisa Richlen
DIRECTOR



Noha Sedky
DIRECTOR



Sohail Nazari
DIRECTOR

Members active as of April 1, 2023

We would like to thank the following, now retired, Board Directors who served for part of the year:

Jack Wong
Taruna Goel
Sasha Ramnarine
Joseph Chan

Board of Directors biographies available at: issbc.org/board-of-directors

THANK YOU!

Government of Canada

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)

Province of British Columbia

Ministry of Children & Family Development
Ministry of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

Municipal

City of Vancouver
City of Burnaby

Additional Funders

AIDS Vancouver	Inclusion BC Society
Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA)	Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT)
Burnaby School Board	Law Foundation of BC
Canadian Red Cross Society	Public Health Agency of Canada
Immigrant Association of Nova Scotia	Vancouver Coastal Health
	VanCity

Bursary Donors

The Arbutus Financial Services Ltd Bursary	The Michael Danchuk Bursary
The Community Bursary	The Millennium Development Group Bursary
The De Jager Volkenant Bursary	The Patricia Woroch Bursary
The Dr. She and Dr. Chan Bursaries	The Pietro Widmer & Renee Van Halm Bursary
The ISSofBC Staff Team Bursary	The Sasha Ramnarine Family Bursary
The Jim Tallman Bursary	The Stocking & Cumming Bursary
The Lower Mainland Urgent, Family & Primary Care Centres Bursary	The Thrive Refuge Bursary
	The Wolfgang Strigel Bursary

We would also like to thank all our private donors for their valuable contributions.

Get in Touch

This has been a year of evolution in the immigration sector and significant changes internally at ISSofBC as we seek to learn and improve in all we do across all departments. We continue to work hard to adapt to the evolving landscape and continue to support the incredible work that our staff and volunteers are involved in welcoming newcomers to British Columbia.

There are so many ways you can support us to make a difference and welcome newcomers. No matter how big or small, you can be part of helping us to reach our vision of a BC and Canada where we all thrive together in community.

Whether you choose to work with us, volunteer, donate, spread the word about our work or partner with us.

Get in touch: communications@issbc.org

We would like to thank all our staff, clients, volunteers, funders, partners and donors who make our work possible.

ISSofBC is a non-profit that welcomes newcomers, including immigrants, refugees and students, to settle in communities, learn English and find work in British Columbia, Canada.

Charity no. 130724222 RR 0001

Annual report designed by: Johanna Bartels
Micro-site developed by: Fitim Sylá

