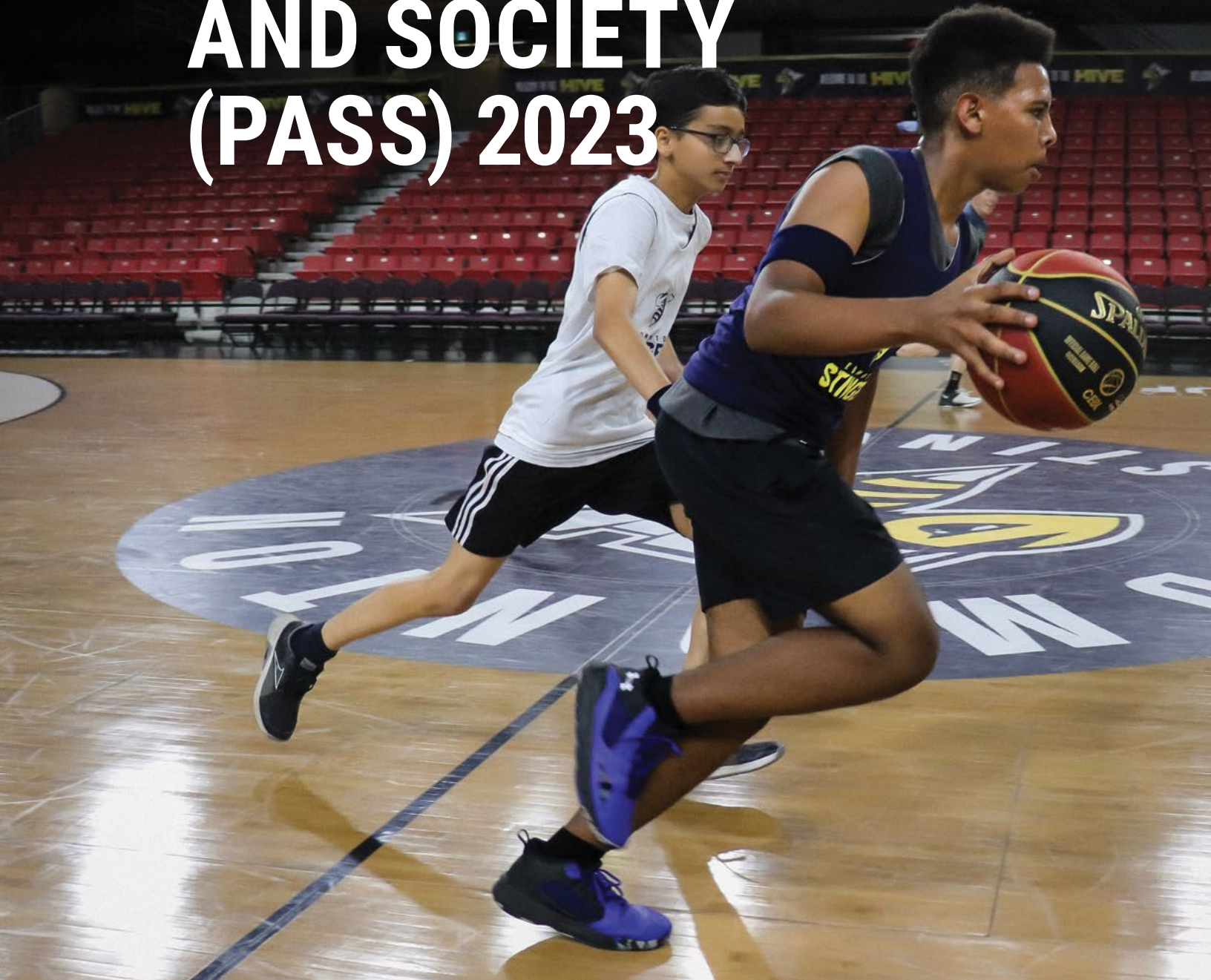


IMPACT REPORT: PARTICIPATING IN ARTS, SPORTS, AND SOCIETY (PASS) 2023



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Top: Girls' Multi-Sport Program in partnership with Girls in Sport Alberta, Clareview Rec Centre, June 2023.
Bottom: Girls' Multi-Sport Program in partnership with Girls in Sport Alberta, Clareview Rec Centre, June 2023.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Participating in Arts, Sports, and Society (PASS) project, led by the Action for Healthy Communities Society of Alberta (AHC), is a comprehensive initiative aimed at addressing the barriers and challenges faced by racialized newcomer youth in accessing and participating in sports activities. The project, generously funded by Canadian Heritage, seeks to create an inclusive and equitable sports environment where all youth, regardless of their background, have equal opportunities for personal growth, social integration, and well-being.

With immigration playing a significant role in shaping Canada's population, AHC recognizes the importance of supporting newcomers in their integration process. The PASS project specifically focused on racialized newcomer youth, who often encountered unique obstacles to sports participation. By fostering partnerships, engaging stakeholders, and implementing innovative strategies, the project aimed to work towards breaking down barriers to sports participation, such as lack of information, complex systems, and non-inclusive environments.

The collaboration with various sports organizations proved to be crucial in expanding opportunities for racialized newcomer youth by introducing them to a diverse range of sports and athletic activities. Through these partnerships, the PASS project successfully provided exposure to a wider array of sports, enabling youth to explore and engage in activities that were previously inaccessible to them. This not only contributed to their physical well-being but also fostered a sense of inclusivity and belonging within the sports community. Moreover, the research was conducted as part of the project yielded valuable insights into the existing barriers that hindered equitable sports participation for racialized newcomer youth. The project's findings and recommendations will guide future initiatives aimed at enhancing equity and fostering inclusiveness and equity in our society.

Every Child deserves the opportunity to participate in meaningful sports, where they can learn valuable life skills, develop a healthy lifestyle, and feel sense of belonging.

INTRODUCTION

The Action for Healthy Communities Society of Alberta (AHC) is a non-profit organization committed to strengthening community capacity and fostering healthier and more resilient communities in Alberta. Since 1995, AHC has provided targeted support to all individuals and communities, particularly those facing equity challenges, to build their capacity in addressing the social determinants of well-being and prosperity. Through collaborative partnerships and active community engagement, AHC works tirelessly to create inclusive spaces where everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, can thrive and actively participate in all aspects of society. Aligned with AHC's organizational strategy and mission, the Children and Youth Program at AHC is committed to enhancing the skills development and fostering community connections of equity-deserving youth. This program recognizes the significance of supporting racialized newcomer youth, who may face additional challenges due to their immigrant background and experiences of racialization. By providing skill-building initiatives, community engagement, and tailored support, the Children and Youth Program actively creates opportunities for these youth to succeed and become active participants in Canadian society.

Studies suggest that sport participation is one of the effective ways to promote the social integration of immigrants (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2010; Doidge et al., 2020). For example, participation in sport programs and physical activities increase a sense of belonging and inclusion for immigrant youth (e.g., Tirone et al., 2010). However, as immigrants integrate into Canadian society, they face a number of barriers to various daily activities including sports (e.g., Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Rich et al., 2015; Barrick et al., 2021).

We also have directly observed the ongoing struggles experienced by racialized

newcomer youth in their participation in sports activities and their efforts to establish connections. Due to different intersectional barriers, immigrants to Canada have not been fully and equally participating in sports and recreation (Allan, 2023). Considering both the literature and our own firsthand observations, it is evident that racialized newcomer youth consistently face persistent obstacles when it comes to participating in sports activities and establishing meaningful connections.

In 2016, during the influx of Syrian refugees, AHC took the initiative to establish Soccer Clubs as safe spaces for youth to engage, connect, and develop essential life skills. This endeavor has been incredibly successful, providing a much-needed outlet for these youth to find support and belonging. However, as we delved deeper into facilitating ongoing sports participation, we realized that there remains a significant amount of work to be done, requiring multifaceted approaches.

In 2019, AHC established a partnership with Commonwealth Sport Canada's Sport for Newcomers (S4N) pilot program. This collaborative initiative facilitated the delivery of 52 participation activities, benefiting over 200 newcomer youth. As a direct outcome of this pilot, we successfully established 16 new partnerships and secured four funding grants, setting the stage for future impactful endeavors.

By leveraging these partnerships, we gained invaluable insights into the barriers faced by vulnerable families when it comes to accessing sports opportunities. Through the collection of anecdotal accounts, we consistently encountered challenges faced by racialized newcomer youth, including a lack of information, navigating complex systems, and encountering non-inclusive environments. We also learned the challenges of sports organizations. Additionally,

our interactions with sports organizations have shed light on the specific challenges they face. It is evident that, as the number of immigrants arriving in Canada continues to grow in both quantity and diversity, sports organizations have encountered difficulties in effectively engaging with immigrants within their programs (e.g., Forde et al., 2015; Frisby, 2011).

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges experienced by equity

deserving communities in Edmonton, and to engage stakeholders in collective action to address the barriers, AHC initiated the Participating in Arts, Sports, and Society (PASS) project in September 2021, which was generously funded by Canadian Heritage.

Through the PASS project, AHC implemented a diverse range of strategies aimed at enhancing collaboration, gathering valuable insights, and informing future work.



Top: AHC Boys' Soccer Program.
Bottom: Basketball Summer Camp with Edmonton Stingers, July 2022.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Participating in Arts, Sports, and Society (PASS) project, funded by the Government of Canada, are as follows:

- 1. Environment Scan to Identify Barriers:** The PASS project aimed to identify and gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by newcomer youth. By conducting research and engaging stakeholders, the project works towards understanding and overcoming these barriers, enabling equitable access to sports and recreational activities.
- 2. Increase Participation:** The primary objective of the PASS project was to increase the participation of racialized youth in recreational and organized sports. Recognizing the importance of sports as a vehicle for personal growth, social integration, and well-being, the project aimed to enhance the exposure of racialized youth to various sports activities. By providing opportunities for engagement and actively supporting their connection to sports, the PASS project sought to empower these youth to become active participants in the sports community.
- 3. Promote Anti-Racism Education:** By providing educational resources, facilitating workshops, and promoting dialogue, the PASS project sought to empower individuals and teams with the knowledge and tools to challenge and overcome racism. Through these efforts, the project aimed to foster a culture of respect, understanding, and solidarity within the sports community, ensuring that racialized youth are able to fully participate and thrive in a safe and inclusive environment.
- 4. Foster Collaboration:** One of the key strategies employed within the PASS project was the establishment of collab-

orative partnerships with various sports organizations. These partnerships played a crucial role in expanding opportunities for racialized newcomer youth by introducing them to a diverse range of sports and athletic activities. The PASS project encouraged collaboration among sports organizations, governments, and cultural communities. By bringing together stakeholders from different sectors, the project aimed to foster cooperation, shared learning, and collective action in addressing the barriers faced by racialized youth in sports participation.

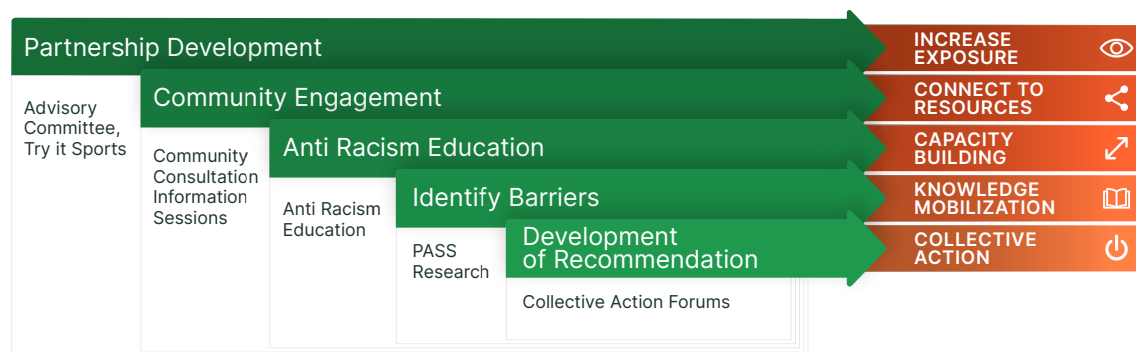
- 5. Develop Recommendations:** Through its activities and research initiatives, the PASS project aimed to develop recommendations to increase the participation and inclusion of racialized youth in sports and recreation. These recommendations serve as a roadmap for informing policies, programs, and practices that promote diversity, equity, and access within the sports community.

Overall, the PASS project was designed with the clear purpose of creating a more inclusive and equitable sports environment. Throughout the duration of the project, several activities were undertaken to effectively work towards these goals, which are outlined in the following section.

SCOPE OF WORK AND OUTCOMES

The PASS project was designed with a holistic approach, incorporating several vital components to effectively meet the stated objectives.

PASS project scope and outcomes



Anti-Racism in Sport Advisory Committee

The project established the Anti-Racism in Sport Advisory Committee (ARSAC), which united representatives from diverse stakeholders who shared a strong interest and commitment to reducing barriers in sports participation within Edmonton. ARSAC played a pivotal role in leveraging the collective experience, expertise, and acumen of its

members to provide valuable recommendations through regular meetings, consultations, and collaborative discussions. The collaborative nature of ARSAC allowed for the utilization of collective wisdom and informed decision-making, while also leveraging their respective networks.

The ARSAC members include:

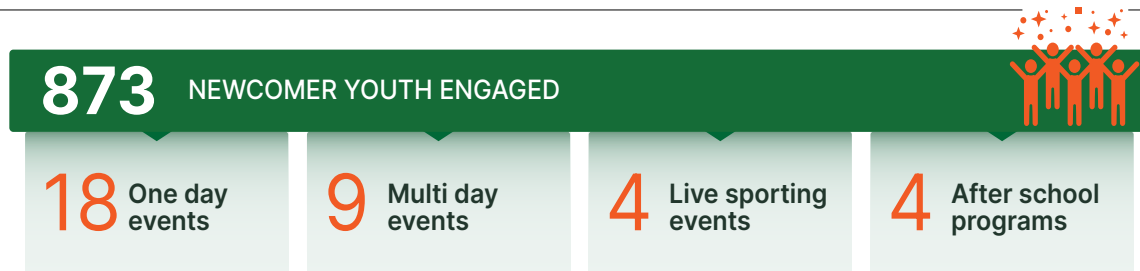
- Gary Shelton - Edmonton Sport Council, Executive Director
- Liz Herbert - Canada Sport for Life, Manager of National PLAY Assessments and Physical Literacy for Communities
- Eoghan Curran - Community Recreation and Culture, City of Edmonton, Sport Liaison.
- Ruke Okoma - Free Play for Kids, Program & Social Operations Manager.
- Jingjing Gui -University of Alberta, PhD in Kinesiology, Sports, and Recreation, Postdoctoral Fellow, Intercultural Communication Lab, Department of Psychology, University of Alberta.
- Ryan Pelley, Commonwealth Sport Canada, SportWORKS Program Manager.
- Andrea Carey, INclusion INcorporated, Founder & Chief INclusion Officer.

Exposure and Connection to Sports

Recognizing the exposure to and engagement in sports activities play a vital role in fostering a sense of belonging and integration for newcomer youth. The unfamiliarity of newcomers with the sports commonly played in their new community can lead to feelings of exclusion and hesitation to participate. AHC facilitated various sports trial opportunities to encourage participation and introduce newcomer youth to different sports in a fun and supportive environment. In collaboration with sports organizations and clubs, the PASS project organized sports trials that allowed participants to connect with these entities. Examples of sports included in these trials were curling, cross-country skiing, ball hockey, basketball, downhill skiing, track

and field, gymnastics, soccer, and canoeing. Through 31 try-it sports events and 4 after-school sports programs, the project provided 873 newcomer youth with opportunities to explore and try different sports, including those specific to the Canadian context. These initiatives aimed to not only introduce newcomers to a variety of sports but also foster a sense of curiosity, confidence, and enjoyment in their sporting experiences. By exposing them to new sports and creating a welcoming atmosphere, the PASS project encouraged the participation of newcomer youth, helping them to develop new skills, build connections, and ultimately enhance their overall well-being and integration into the sports community.

Community engagement in numbers



Flag Football with Northern Alberta Flag Football Association, July 2023.

A partner of after-school sport program said it was meaningful for them:

"To offer dance to people who you know want to dance or have dreamed of dancing, but due to all myriad of reasons can't access dance. And to see the joy that brings to them is very powerful."

*Sherri Somerville,
Executive Director, Ballet Edmonton*

A participant's testimonial about after-school sport programs:

"In Afghanistan, girls are not allowed to study. Obviously, they are not allowed to dance! In Canada, it's free. You can do anything you want. You feel free to dance."

Swaida Shayan, 14 years old

A participant who attended a try-it event:

"I wanted to try curling because they said it's like a Canadian origin game, so I just wanted to try something new. Back in India, we don't get to see snow, so I've been so mesmerized by ice and everything. I just want to curl. I'm sure I want to keep playing this. It's so good and fun. Canada is all about snow and curling represents Canada in a unique way. I now want to play this sport for Canada too, if I keep playing continuously.

I want to be selected for an international team too."

Avantika Suresh, 14 years old

PASS events in the press

CTV NEWS
EDMONTON

NEWS VIDEO SHOWS ABOUT LOCAL

Free program helping newcomer youth learn about sports, make connections



Alex Antonelli
CTVNewsEdmonton.ca Digital Producer
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Newcomers in Edmonton are being given the chance to learn different sports, especially those most popular in their new country, for free.

CTV News Edmonton



Global News

The Sherwood Park -
Strathcona County News

Life Opinion All Newspapers Advertise with Us Shopping Working Driving Healthing

Sports / News / Local Sports / Local News / Curling

Canadian newcomers learn to love curling

Lindsay Morey

Published Dec 01, 2022 • Last updated Dec 07, 2022 • 4 minute read

Join the conversation



Curling For Newcomers program attendees were very attentive as Sherwood Park's Heather Nedohin taught them the basics of the sport. Lindsay Morey/News Staff

It's not every day new Canadians can learn the art of curling from one of the best coaches in the world.

Sherwood Park News

CBC | MENU
NEWS Top stories Local Climate World Canada Politics Indigenous
VIDEO Channels

News > Canada > Edmonton



Newcomers adjusting to Canada through hip-hop

9 months ago | News | 2:51

Youth new to Canada are getting the chance to try free new extra curricular programs like hip-hop dance and sports in Edmonton to help integrate into their new lives.

CBC News

Building Knowledge for Equity and Inclusion

Anti-Racism Education for Youth

One of the integral components of the PASS project was the inclusion of anti-racism education, catering to both racialized and non-racialized youth. Its primary objectives were to raise awareness about anti-racism within the sports setting, and to foster an inclusive and respectful environment where racialized youth could participate without fear of bullying or discrimination.

The response from youth sports teams and schools requesting these sessions was very positive, indicating a growing recognition among racialized individuals and communities of the necessity for such education. The workshops effectively fulfilled this need and generated substantial interest and demand.

During the PASS project period, a total of 70 participants took part in the workshop, which covered several key elements:

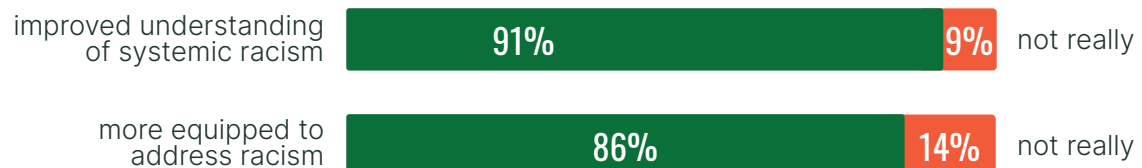
- Fostered an understanding of personal identity and its role in the context of sports.
- Presented real-life examples and stories of racism in sports, allowing participants to grasp the real-world impact of discriminatory practices.
- Defined the various dimensions of racism and anti-racism, enabling participants to comprehend the complexity of these issues and explore potential solutions.

- Addressed the concepts of allyship and advocacy, highlighting the importance of individuals standing up against racism and actively promoting inclusivity within the sporting community.
- Recognize the various social movements and initiatives at combating racism and promoting equality.

By encompassing these crucial topics, the workshop equipped participants with the knowledge and tools necessary to promote anti-racism and create positive change within their sports environments.

According to the survey results conducted at the end of the sessions, a significant majority of respondents (91%) reported a notable improvement in their understanding of systemic racism and its impact on individuals' lives. Additionally, 86% of participants felt more empowered and equipped to address racism and discrimination after attending the workshop. These findings highlight the effectiveness of the anti-racism education provided by the PASS project in fostering greater awareness, understanding, and readiness to combat racism within the sports community.

Effectiveness of the anti-racism education by the PASS project



How to Create Inclusive Sport Policies Workshop

The PASS project included a dedicated workshop called “How to Create Inclusive Sport Policies” that was specifically designed for sports organizations at various levels. The objective of this workshop was to provide participants with the necessary resources and guidance to develop or enhance Equity,

Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policies within their organizations. The training focused on core considerations to incorporate into an EDI policy and shared valuable examples of lessons learned in implementing policy into practice within the sports context.

The workshop participants’ feedback (anonymous):

“I think knowing that a lot of other organizations are in the same boat as us and wanting to change.”

Participant 1

“It was great going over the breakdown of what should be included in an EDI policy, and guiding questions to start the process.”

Participant 2

Workshop participants’ feedback:

“I think the workshop helped our team learn and think differently about racism.”

KC Hockey club player, 14 years old

“[The workshop] Great for leading within their own lives as well as in our school. We’d love to have students develop a teaching project [based on the workshop] to share with their community.”

High school teacher and department head of student leadership program

The workshop attracted 27 participants, representing different sports organizations. The feedback received from the participants indicated a high level of satisfaction and recognition of the workshop's value. More than 75% of the participants assessed the content of the training as very good and excellent,

highlighting its significant contribution to their knowledge and acknowledging the tangible benefits it brought to their respective organizations. Additionally, 50% of the respondents specifically emphasized the need for more EDI training, emphasizing its relevance and importance in the sports sector.

Community Consultation and Information Sessions

The PASS project conducted community consultations and information sessions to engage with the local community, including racialized youth, their families, and community organizations. During the PASS project, we delivered a total of 25 gatherings (CCIS) that reached 181 participants, including both youth and adults, from diverse cultural and ethnic communities. These sessions were conducted in nine different languages, namely Arabic, Dari, English, Farsi, French, Kinyarwanda, Pashto, Tagalog, and Tigrinya.

These sessions served as platforms for open dialogue, gathering feedback, and understanding the specific challenges and needs faced by the target group. The insights gained from these consultations inform the

project's strategies and interventions.

Another objective of the CCIS sessions was to bridge the information gap and provide underserved communities, particularly racialized newcomer youth, with essential knowledge about recreational and organized sports.

32% of the participants responded to the CCIS evaluation survey and 88% said that the sessions helped them to improve their confidence and knowledge about the resources available to participate in sports.

Participants in the CCIS sessions gained a comprehensive understanding of the wide range of sports opportunities and available

Community engagement in numbers

CCIS

Community Consultations and Information Sessions



25 Sessions | 181 Participants | 9 Languages

findings from CCIS:

MAIN BARRIERS TO SPORT PARTICIPATION



Financial



Information accessibility



Language barriers



Transportation

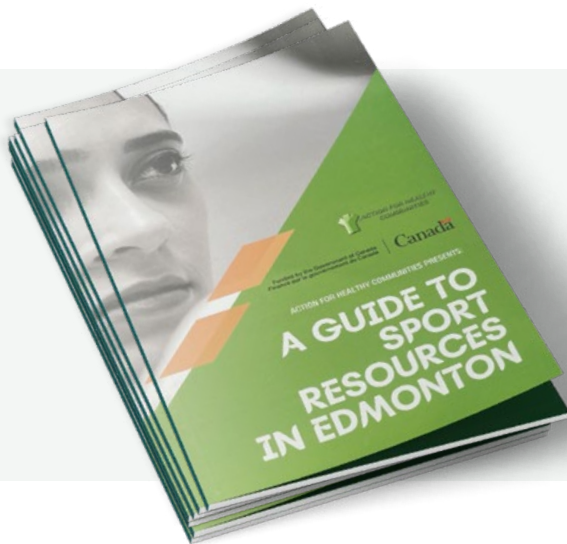


Religious, cultural

grants in Edmonton, which resulted in an increased number of registered participants in sports programs and activities. Recognizing that some individuals required additional assistance in finding suitable programs and navigating the application and registration processes, our program staff and Community Animators actively supported them in various languages. Furthermore, our outreach efforts extended beyond direct engagement with session participants. The information disseminated through various media channels reached a wider audience, leading to numerous contacts from the public seeking support. These individuals, who had heard about our program through word of mouth or media coverage, reached out to us to receive the

necessary assistance. Throughout the project, we have provided support to approximately 150 individuals, ensuring that they had the guidance and resources needed to access and participate in sports programs. Our efforts to assist newcomers in navigating the sports system and providing information have highlighted the pressing need for the sector to prioritize equitable access to information for all community members.

Additionally, to support further engagement, we created and published sports resource booklets in different languages. These booklets served as comprehensive guides, providing participants with accessible information on sports resources, programs, and



To support further engagement, we created and published sports resource booklets in different languages:

- Arabic
- French
- English
- Farsi
- Pashto
- Tagalog
- Tigrinya
- Luganda
- Hindi

opportunities in their respective languages. The booklets were distributed in various

routes and continue to disseminate.

PASS Research

The project conducted research initiatives to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers and challenges faced by racialized youth in sports participation. This research helps inform evidence-based strategies and interventions, enabling the project to develop targeted solutions that address the root causes of low participation and exclusion.

The purpose of the PASS Research is to

identify those barriers via developing recommendations to policy-makers to lower those barriers. To do so, a sequential mixed-method design was employed in the study. Nine competitive first and second-generation athletes, five parents, and nine sports organizations were interviewed using semi-structured, in-depth interviews. An online survey instrument was developed for sports and cultural organizations based on the qualitative

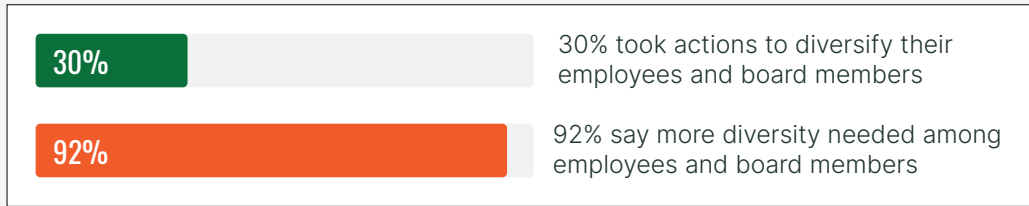
findings. Through our categorical aggregation, three main themes were identified in the interview data: (a) barriers to sport participation, (b) barriers to inclusive sport programs, and (c) strategies to address barriers. Our qualitative findings, especially the ones from the interviews with athlete youth with racialized backgrounds and parents of such youth, clearly indicated that these groups of people experience racially charged discrimination and micro-aggression in their everyday sport experiences in Alberta. Then we integrated

insights from both qualitative and quantitative results, to elaborate on major barriers experienced by the different stakeholders and potential solutions to those barriers (i.e., recommended practices). It was done while consulting the existing research literature and drawing upon practical insights within AHC. The practical recommendations were suggested from the discussion of structural barriers, racism, capacity building, and intersectoral connections in sports engagement for racialized newcomer youth.

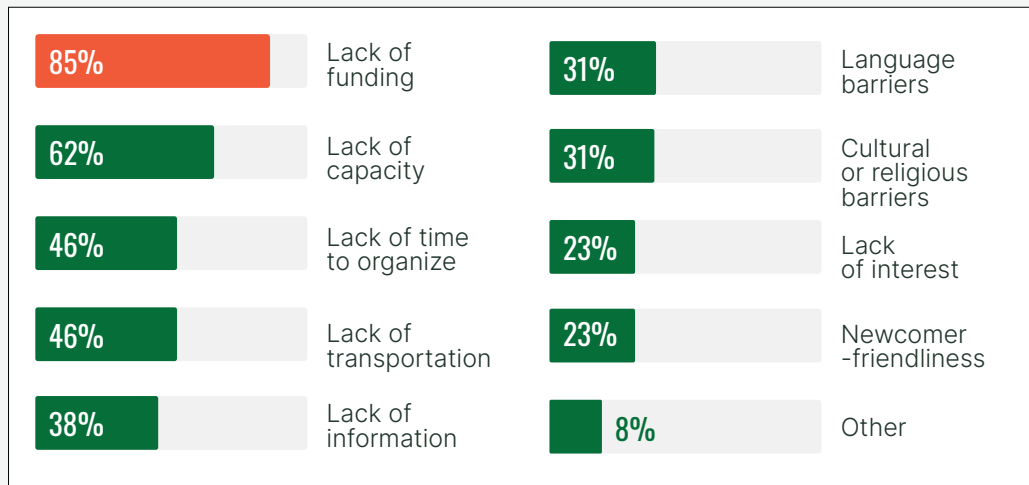


Hockey for Newcomers Program at Archbishop Jordan High School, January-April 2023. Professional athletes from St. Albert Crusaders volunteered to coach this program.

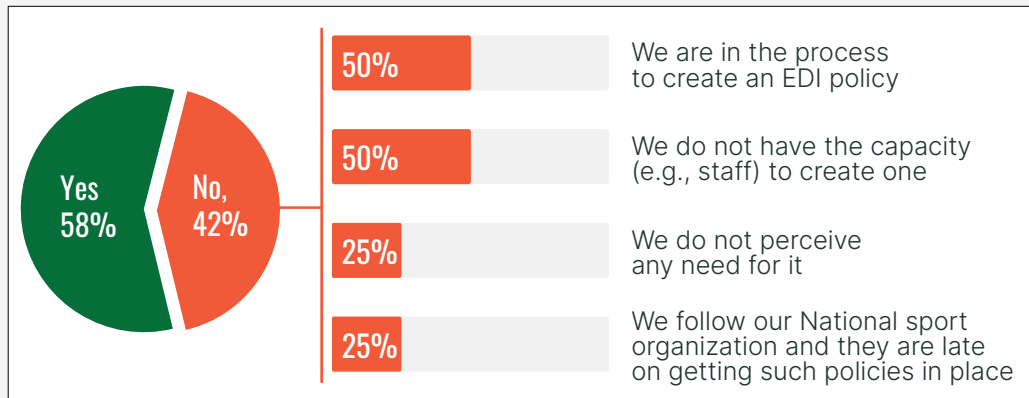
Survey findings: Sport Organizations



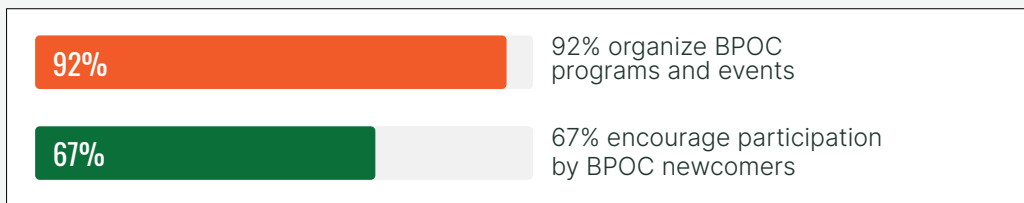
Barriers for Low Participation in Sports among BPOC Communities



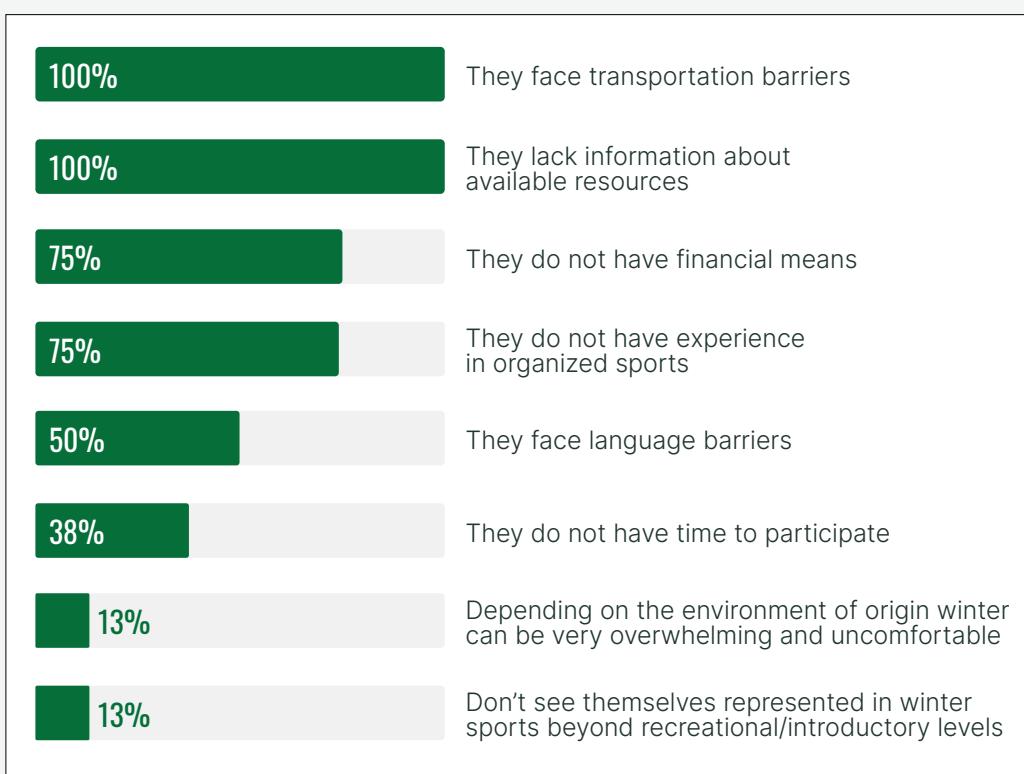
Does your sport organization have Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policies



Survey findings: Cultural Community Organizations



Barriers in Organizing Programs/Events for BPOC Members



We call sport organizations and clubs in Alberta to translate their anti-racism and EDI policies into specific, measurable, and time-bound actions to combat existing racism in sports in the province. One of the first key actions may be to conduct research and assessments regarding how diverse each organization/club is at different levels (e.g., members, staff, board members) and broad surveys of racial issues within.

Interviews findings

Reported Barriers to Sport Participation

- Racial discrimination and micro-aggression
- Financial barriers
- Language barrier
- Access to info and resources
- Time constraints
- Transportation barriers
- Connection with racialized communities

Reported Barriers to Inclusive Sport Programs

- Lack of connection with racialized communities
- Language barrier
- Transportation barrier

Strategies to address barriers:

- Enforcing diversity
- Capacity building
- Enforcing equality
- Intersectoral connections
- Reducing costs
- Re-conceptualising sports in Canada
- Raising public awareness

“Especially in the heat of games when things are getting pretty rough. I’ve heard things like slurs relating to my heritage or my race”

– Athlete

“I felt like ... microaggressions against me. And he just did not like me for whatever reason and ... Then finding out ... the whole team is made up of only White women, like really made me feel like, OK, ... from the start, I didn’t belong.”

– Athlete

“But even if you just search up the basketball clubs, for example, in Edmonton, information wise, it is a little tough ... It can be quite challenging to navigate because ... you don’t even know each club, different clubs ...”

– Athlete

"... sport not connecting with the centers where a new immigrant family would connect with and not making meaningful connections with those organizations to say, 'Hey, we're here and we want you to come' ... Yeah. So that's lacking."

– Professional

"... in terms of for leadership and coaches, I think understanding the cultural sensitivity ... and understanding their own privilege, understanding the challenges of the groups that we want to welcome"

– Professional

"So, the biggest barrier is for [boards and employees of sport organizations] to understand first that those [BPOC] people are welcome to be on higher position"

– Professional

Policy and Action Recommendations

- Explore objectively how diverse your field is, what issues exist and what success has been achieved
- Set clear, specific policies for anti-racism and EDI with accountability
- Provide funding and support for creating champion positions, diversifying boards, and training staff
- Create opportunities for sport organizations, settlement agencies, and BPOC communities to connect
- Provide more funding/options at the competitive sport with clear criteria
- Make sport related information and resources available in multiple languages and user-friendly ways

Collective Action Forums

The PASS project organized Collective Action Forums, bringing together stakeholders from sports organizations, government bodies, cultural communities, and other relevant sectors. These forums serve as platforms for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective problem-solving. Stakeholders can identify systemic barriers, share best practices, and work together to develop and implement strategies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in sports.

We facilitated Community Action Forums to foster open dialogues and collaborative discussions among community members, organizations, and stakeholders. The first Collective Action Forum for Inclusive Sports Programs took place at the Alfred Savage Centre in Edmonton on November 30th, 2022, with a total of 22 participants.

The primary objective of the first Forum was to provide a platform for sports organizations and cultural communities to connect and address the barriers to low sport participation

for Black, and People of Color (BPOC) newcomer communities. The Forum focused on:

- **Networking and Exploring Opportunities:** Participants had the opportunity to network and explore potential collaborations and partnerships to enhance inclusive sports programs for BPOC newcomer youth.
- **Sharing Best Experiences:** Sports organizations shared their successful experiences in creating and delivering inclusive and accessible programs for BPOC newcomer youth, providing valuable insights and inspiration for others.
- **Learning about Barriers:** Preliminary findings from the PASS research interviews, which highlighted barriers to sport participation, were presented and discussed. This allowed participants to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by BPOC newcomer communities in accessing sports opportunities.



PASS Collective Action Forum: Next Steps in Inclusive Sports, March 24, 2023, City Hall, Edmonton.

Building on the success of the first Forum, the second Collective Action Forum, titled “Next Steps in Inclusive Sports,” aimed to bring together sports organizations, affected community groups, service organizations, and policymakers to discuss actions and next steps to support the creation of inclusive systems as the PASS project comes to a close. The second Forum addressed the challenges identified in the first Forum and focused on the following objectives:

- **Research Presentation:** The final PASS research report was presented, providing insights and recommendations based on the research findings.
- **Sharing Project Impact:** The PASS project’s activities conducted over the last 18 months were shared, highlighting the impact and outcomes achieved.
- **Roundtable Discussion:** A roundtable discussion was held, featuring the voices of stakeholders. This allowed for in-depth conversations around the policy suggestions and recommendations highlighted by the research.
- **Engaging with Representatives:** Representatives from sports organizations, cultural communities, City Councilors, Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), and Members of Parliament (MPs) were present to engage in conversations regarding policy suggestions and recommendations to address the barriers identified in the study.
- **Planning Next Steps:** Discussions were held to determine the next steps required to sustain the momentum of building equitable and inclusive communities, ensuring continued progress in fostering inclusive sports programs for BPOC newcomer communities.

Through these Collective Action Forums, the PASS project aimed to facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, and policy discussions to create lasting change and promote equitable access to sports for all

individuals, irrespective of their backgrounds or circumstances.

The ideas and suggestions generated from both Forums encompass various stakeholders and address key areas of improvement:

Sports organizations:

- Need for insurance coverage during try-out events to facilitate the enrollment of newcomer youth into sports clubs.
- Acknowledge the value of the PASS project in providing information and orientation about sports resources.
- Highlight the importance of liaisons from specialized organizations to enhance community outreach efforts.
- Call for more consistent and purposeful funding to foster relationships between sports and cultural organizations.

Cultural communities:

- Express the need for dedicated space, particularly for group activities like swimming, which is currently dominated by sports clubs at recreation centers.
- Emphasize the importance of strengthening communication and resource sharing between cultural associations and sports organizations.
- Suggest creating programs within walking distance to overcome transportation barriers.
- Propose developing less costly, yet effective programs to address crime prevention in low-income communities.
- Advocate for bringing sports to schools or renovating existing recreation centers to increase access to sports facilities.
- Highlight the need to build trust through education about the benefits of sports as well as the role of settlement organiza-

tions in connecting newcomers with sport organizations.

- Raise concerns about the recognition of sports credentials from other countries and ensuring inclusive membership opportunities for immigrant youth within sports clubs.

Government representatives:

- Acknowledge the overwhelming and underfunded nature of organizations, suggesting the inclusion of more volunteers with a better understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
- Emphasize the importance of elevating the recommendations from the PASS study to a higher level and sharing them with a broader community, including governments.

- Propose making EDI strategies prerequisites for government funding and grants to sports organizations.

- Recommend building partnerships between municipalities, governments, sports organizations, and cultural communities to provide quality sports programs.

Research and academia:

- Appreciate the incorporation of research through collaboration with academia.
- Recognize the need for further research in identifying future leaders among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) newcomer youth.



Discussions at the PASS Collective Action Forum: Next Steps in Inclusive Sports, March 24, 2023, City Hall, Edmonton.

DISSEMINATION

The PASS project overview and PASS research findings were shared and presented in multiple platforms to increase awareness of the barriers faced by racialized newcomer community, such as:

- Alberta Park and Recreation Annual conference in Jasper on October 27-29, 2022.
- Article '*Creating welcoming, equitable spaces for new Canadians in sport*' by the Sport Information Resource Centre.
- *Media appearance (CBC, CTV News, Global News, Sherwood Park News) about the newcomer challenges and the importance of connection to sports.*
- "Newcomers in Sport" Panel at KidSport Calgary *Diversity and Inclusion in Sport Discussions Series* that held online on November 2, 2022.
- Collective Action Forum for Inclusive Sports Programs, held in Edmonton, November 30, 2022.
- Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies *Settlement & Integration conference* online on March 2, 2023.
- A Presentation for a Leisure Education course for the third-year students of the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation of the University of Alberta, March 9, 2023
- Collective Action Forum: Next Steps in Inclusive Sport, held in Edmonton, March 24, 2023.
- Meetings with Sport Canada officials: The PASS project was able to have crucial in-person meetings with key officials to discuss the project's impact and present recommendations derived from the research to address barriers to

sport participation for newcomers. These meetings involved influential individuals such as Vicki Walker, the Director General of Sport Canada, Katie Brambley, the team lead for Sport Policy Renewal of Sport Canada, Wallen Chang-Hong, the Programs Manager of Sport Canada, and MP Adam Van Koeverden, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and Minister of Sport. During these meetings, the PASS project team had the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions and share insights on the project's outcomes and the identified barriers faced by newcomers in sports participation. The recommendations derived from the PASS research were presented, emphasizing the importance of addressing these barriers and promoting inclusivity in sports.

- The 50 pages PASS research was finalized and ready to be disseminated.

Hear from our partners:

"The Sport for Newcomers (S4N) pilot initiated in 2019 with community partner Action for Healthy Communities (AHC) identified and reduced barriers to sport participation for newcomers. The pilot provided 52 participation activities for 200+ newcomer youth and resulted in 16 new partnerships created and 4 funding grants for future impact. Sustainability is a key component of Commonwealth Sport Canada's SportWORKS program model, informed in part through pilot learnings, AHC's PASS project now aims to address systemic change in society to engage more newcomer youth in sports activities through knowledge mobilization. We are glad to continue our partnership with AHC to serve newcomers through sport."

Ryan Pelley, SportWORKS Program Manager
Commonwealth Sport Canada

"It is clear that the PASS project (and AHC) is quite advanced, particularly in comparison to the other programs and organizations. And, it's great to have the research also happening along-side your work"

Christa Costas-Bradstreet, CCB Consulting

"It has been great to work with Action for Healthy Communities to help engage newcomer girls in sport. Girls In Sports Alberta is an organization that relies closely on partnership to reach as many girls as possible. The reality is if we work alone, our reach can only go so far and we are considered outsiders. Our community is made of many different people that have many different groups. Each of these groups has built trust among themselves. People, especially girls, are more likely to try something new if it comes from a trusted source and with friends. By creating these relationships, it allows us to understand the needs of each group and allocate resources so they can join the wider community. Building partnerships and working together is necessary to build an accessible and accepting community. That's what has made working together with Action for Healthy Communities and other organizations so successful."

Dia Sayed, Founder and CEO
Girls In Sports Alberta

PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Recognizing the proven effectiveness of cross-sector collaborations in addressing complex social issues and achieving positive outcomes, our efforts in building partnerships were central to the success of the PASS project. These collaborative partnerships, established since the inception of the project, have played a crucial role in maximizing our reach, impact, and overall effectiveness.

Throughout the duration of the PASS project, we have fostered strong and enduring collaborative partnerships with 31 sports organizations, one art organization, the City of Edmonton, immigrant-serving agencies (ENZO), and various recreational and organized sports entities. These stakeholders have actively participated in the project, each contributing in unique capacities to support our objectives.

These partnerships allowed us to tap into the expertise, resources, and facilities of these organizations, enabling us to reach a larger audience and offer a diverse range of sports opportunities. Through our

partnerships, we introduced diverse sports programs and initiatives to help racialized newcomer youth become familiar with and comfortable in participating in sports. These programs provided them with quality sports opportunities, fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance within the sports community. By collaborating with a diverse range of stakeholders, we have built a network of support that extends beyond the duration of the project. This network has laid the foundation for long-term sustainability, allowing the initiatives and positive impacts of the PASS project to continue benefiting racialized youth in the community.

Furthermore, partnering with sports organizations helped raise awareness among them about the challenges faced by newcomer youth, such as language barriers, limited resources, and cultural adjustment. This understanding prompted the organizations to consider develop strategies and accommodations to address these challenges, ensuring a more inclusive and supportive sports environment for the youth.



PASS Collective Action Forum for Inclusive Sport Programs, November 30, 2022, Alfred Savage Center, Edmonton.

CHALLENGES

Challenges in stakeholder engagement: The PASS project can be considered successful in several areas, but it also faced challenges during its implementation. One of the significant challenges was the difficulty in obtaining responses from numerous sports organizations. Despite reaching out to these organizations, some of them did not fully grasp the significance of inclusive conversations. They mistakenly believed that their diverse makeup automatically translated into inclusivity and equity. However, it is crucial to understand that diversity alone does not guarantee an inclusive environment.

Creating an inclusive environment requires more than just representation. It necessitates intentional efforts to foster an atmosphere where everyone feels valued, respected, and included. This involves recognizing and addressing systemic barriers, biases, and discriminatory practices that may exist within sports organizations.

Overcoming this challenge will require ongoing education and awareness-building initiatives to help organizations understand the importance of inclusivity beyond surface-level diversity.



Discussions at the PASS Collective Action Forum: Next Steps in Inclusive Sports, March 24, 2023, City Hall, Edmonton.

LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

AHC recognizes the importance of ensuring the long-term sustainability of its efforts. While we have made significant progress within the project's allocated timeframe, the limited duration has constrained our ability to fully leverage the momentum and achieve lasting impact. Building trust, fostering meaningful connections, and nurturing collaboration require adequate time and ongoing dedication. It is essential for us

to seize the momentum we have cultivated and use it as a driving force for sustained progress. We are creating a comprehensive plan that outlines strategies for securing funding from diverse sources, including government grants, corporate sponsorships, and community partnerships. This plan will provide a roadmap for sustaining our initiatives beyond the project duration.

THE PATH AHEAD:

BUILDING ON SUCCESS AND OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

AHC is committed to taking further steps in its mission to promote equity, inclusivity, and anti-racism in every aspect of our society. Building upon the foundation laid, AHC envisions several key actions to drive sustainable change and create lasting impact in creating equitable sports participation, and further social participation. The following are generated from the overall PASS project and from the broad sector engagement. These are to work together with various stakeholders, communities, policy makers.

1. **Enhancing Diverse Representation in sports sector:** The importance of diversifying the sector was consistently emphasized by multiple stakeholders throughout the PASS project. It is crucial for creating equity and inclusivity as it guarantees fair representation, equal opportunities, inclusive decision-making, fosters innovation, and reflects the diversity of the community it serves. Additionally, it provides motivation and a sense of comfort for racialized youth to access and participate in sports activities. Promoting diverse leadership within sports organizations, including coaches and board members, and implementing

effective strategies to enhance workforce diversity are essential for fostering inclusivity and achieving equitable representation.

2. **Sustaining Community Dialogues and Expanding Community Engagement:** The PASS project acknowledged the pivotal role of community engagement in driving transformative change. To ensure continuous improvement, it is imperative to maintain community dialogues involving grassroots organizations, racialized athletes, and parents to foster an environment of continuous learning and improvement, where community voices are heard and valued.
3. **Expanding Inclusion Educational Initiatives:** AHC aims to expand its educational initiatives by developing additional workshops, training programs, and resources focused on anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion in sports. These initiatives will target various stakeholders, including athletes, coaches, administrators, and community members, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the importance of equity and inclusivity.

4. **Bridging Information Gaps:** Throughout the PASS project, we acknowledged the persistent challenges presented by information gaps when it came to accessing sports opportunities. While we made efforts to address this issue through sessions, support, and resource booklets, we recognized that a longer-term and broader sector approach is necessary. It is crucial to continue this work and involve all sports organizations in collective efforts to bridge these information gaps. Proposed strategies include addressing language barriers by providing information in multiple languages and utilizing plain language to ensure clarity, enhancing registration processes to make them user-friendly, streamlining administrative requirements for smoother participation, and improving online platforms for easier navigation and seamless access to information. These collective efforts will facilitate equitable access to sports opportunities and promote a seamless and inclusive experience for all.
5. **Strengthening Cross-Sectoral Partnerships:** The project recognized the significance of collaboration and intends to establish strategic partnerships with organizations, sports clubs, schools, and community groups. By joining forces with like-minded entities, we can amplify its efforts, share resources, and leverage collective expertise to create a broader and more sustained impact. The established partnerships and Collective Forums need to continue to sustain the momentum and to lead to another collective action initiatives for future endeavor. This involves collaborative efforts, sharing knowledge and expertise, and leveraging resources for sustainable development.
6. **Increasing Funding for Sports Activities: Supporting Financial Accessibility:** Financial barriers have been identified as a significant challenge that contributes to inequity in accessing quality sports activities, as supported by numerous studies and testimonials. Lowering these financial barriers is crucial to ensure that

sports activities are accessible to individuals from all economic backgrounds and social circumstances. Lowering or removing these financial challenges requires a long-term approach, rather than a one-time solution. It involves engaging policy makers, cross-sectoral collaboration, and implementing sustainable strategies.

7. **Establish reporting mechanisms for discrimination and harassment:** To ensure a safe and inclusive sports environment, it is essential to establish clear reporting mechanisms for incidents of discrimination and harassment. This involves creating clear and accessible channels through which individuals can report such incidents. These mechanisms should be designed to protect the confidentiality and privacy of those involved, while also facilitating a prompt and thorough investigation of the reported cases.

By embarking on these next steps, AHC aims to drive meaningful and lasting change in sports participation for underserved community, promoting equity, inclusivity, and anti-racism as fundamental principles for a fair and accessible sporting environment. It is crucial for us to expand our efforts and adopt comprehensive strategies to ensure that these youth not only have initial opportunities but also experience sustained engagement and meaningful integration within the sports community.

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Top: Girls' Multi-Sport Program in partnership with Girls in Sport Alberta, Meadows Rec Centre, November, 2022.
Middle: AHC Boys' Soccer Program, Commonwealth Rec Centre.
Bottom: AHC Girls' Soccer Tournament, December 2022 in partnership with InMotion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our gratitude to the Government of Canada for its funding support.

We also extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all individuals and organizations who have contributed to the success of the PASS project. It is through their invaluable support, dedication, and collaboration that we have been able to make significant strides in promoting equity, inclusivity, and anti-racism in sports participation.

The organizations we have partnered with include:

- Edmonton Sport Council
- Edmonton Ski Club
- Edmonton Rhythmic Sportive Gymnastics Association
- Sport Central
- Commonwealth Sport Canada
- Sport for Life
- Edmonton Stingers
- Free Play
- Girls in Sport AB
- Race-Pace Swim Club
- Edmonton Ultimate Players Association
- Sherwood Park Curling Club
- Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation, University of Alberta
- Triathlon Alberta
- Edmonton Track and Field Council
- Edmonton Ballet
- City of Edmonton Outdoor Adventure Program
- City of Edmonton Youth After School Program
- Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation (SPAR) of the Government of Alberta.
- St.Albert Canoe Kayak Club
- Curling Alberta
- InMotion Network
- Edmonton Ballet
- University of Alberta Augustana Athletics
- KidSport Calgary
- Inclusion Incorporated
- The Sport Information Resource Centre
- Strathcona Wilderness Centre
- Nordiq Canada
- Northern AB Flag Football Association



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