

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS: POSITIVE SPACE CHAMPIONS

The Positive Spaces Initiative (PSI), a project of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI), is on a search to identify regional Champions! A Champion is a person who is actively engaged in their community, working for the inclusion and human rights of LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirit, queer, questioning, asexual, intersex, pansexual, genderqueer, etc.) immigrants and refugees. This volunteer position recognizes the work that you are already doing in your community, gives you an opportunity to build your skills, contacts, and experience, and connects you with other people doing similar work around the province.

We are particularly looking for Champions in the following areas:

- **Central East:** Barrie, Bradford, Durham Region (Ajax, Oshawa, Pickering, Whitby), Peterborough, York Region (Aurora, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan)
- **Central West:** Peel Region (Brampton, Burlington, Halton, Malton, Mississauga, Oakville)
- **East:** Belleville, Cornwall, Kingston
- **North:** Kenora, North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Timmins, Thunder Bay
- **South:** Beamsville, Brantford, Cambridge, Fort Erie, Guelph, Hamilton, Kitchener, Niagara, St. Catharines, Waterloo, Welland
- **West:** Chatham, Leamington, London, Sarnia, Windsor-Essex

*****Please note that in the City of Toronto, we are ONLY looking for Champions who speak French and have an interest in working with Francophone communities.**

Qualifications

Required

- Experience with LGBTQ+ newcomer communities (this may include work-related and/or personal lived experience)
- Demonstrated commitment to open, accountable, safer spaces, and to equity for LGBTQ+ newcomers
- Demonstrated leadership skills and initiative; works well independently and collaboratively
- Holds strong values of equity, inclusion, and diversity
- Thorough understanding of intersectionality; works from anti-oppressive framework to end all forms of discrimination against LGBTQ+ newcomers including homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexism, cissexism, xenophobia, and racism
- Strong communication skills in English

Asset

- Active and established presence in the region or community (personally and/or through workplace)
- Knowledge of the immigrant and refugee serving sector in Ontario
- Previous training and/or experience relating to Positive Spaces
- French-speaking or self-identified Francophone keen to work with and outreach to French-speaking and Francophone LGBTQ+ communities in order to build and strengthen LGBTQ+ Francophone networks and resources
- Proficiency in additional languages.

Responsibilities

1. Perform outreach and referrals within your region.
 - Promote the Positive Spaces Initiative and its tools, resources, and training opportunities to immigrant and refugee serving agencies in your region.
 - Gather contact info of individuals and agencies within the region who would like to subscribe to the PSI Mailing List.
2. Maintain a list of community resources within the region for LGBTQ+ newcomers and service providers.
 - This resource list will be hosted on www.PositiveSpaces.ca under 'Community Links.'
3. Coordinate one regional event per year, in collaboration with any other Champions and organizations in the same region. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness of LGBTQ+ newcomer issues, and to bring people and agencies together for greater resource-sharing and collaboration.
 - Event ideas may include hosting a film screening, panel discussion, roundtable, picnic/BBQ, coffeehouse, open mic night, Pride event, etc. – this is your chance to be creative!
4. Establish an informal network in your region (or build upon existing networks).
 - Forward relevant local/regional events and news items to PSI Coordinator for distribution through PSI Mailing List.
 - Coordinate online (by moderating discussions) and/or offline meetings (by inviting people to inform, support, and share information, in collaboration with organizations in the region).
 - Motivate and mobilise the LGBTQ+ community at a local level.
 - Encourage volunteering, and create and stimulate community interest.
5. Communicate regularly with the PSI Coordinator on progress made and support required.

Benefits

- Champions will be publically recognized by OCASI through the featuring of their names and short bios on www.PositiveSpaces.ca.
- You will develop skills with outreach, networking, and event planning; build your repertoire of professional contacts; and gain experience in the immigrant and refugee serving sector, and in understanding unique LGBTQ+ needs and realities.
- Champions will receive a certificate to verify that they have received professional development training in the PSI methodology.

Upon Being Selected for Position of Champion

- New Champions will be required to complete Modules 1-4 of the “Serving LGBTQ+ Newcomers” self-directed online training at www.LearnAtWork.ca (a total of 6-8 hours) prior to the Group Orientation & Training (unless they have already completed the modules in-person).
- Champions will be required to attend the Group Orientation & Training held in Toronto on **Saturday, March 7 & Sunday, March 8, 2014**. Champions will receive support to cover travel expenses.

Additional Details

- This is a volunteer position. Expect to spend **2-3 hours per week** on outreach/referrals, building the regional network, and maintaining the resource list. **Additional time will be required some months** to coordinate the annual regional event.
- Time commitment is **one year**. After one year, Champions may continue as long as is mutually satisfactory.
- The primary contact between OCASI and the Champions is the PSI Coordinator. The Coordinator is here to support you in your role and to provide any necessary assistance.
- Champions will be connected with all other designated Champions and with the PSI Advisory Committee through email, telephone, and an online forum. Champions in the same region are especially encouraged to work together.

If you are interested please submit:

- Your current resume;
- Introductory letter including:
 - Why you want to volunteer for OCASI Positive Spaces Initiative;
 - Your specific expertise and interest relating to the Champion position; and
 - Two reference contacts.

Applications are due **Sunday, February 8, 2015**. All applications and inquiries should be directed to:

Erin Ewing, Coordinator, Positive Spaces Initiative

Email: eewing@ocasi.org Phone: 416-322-4950 Ext. 265