



**SAMUEL CENTRE  
FOR SOCIAL  
CONNECTEDNESS**

# **Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness Fellowship Program**

SCSC - Internal Fellow

Project Title: Supporting and Connecting 2SLGBTQ+ Newcomers, Refugees  
and Asylum Seekers in Québec

## SCSC Fellowship 2023:

### Project Proposal

**Partner Organization:** Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness – Internal Fellow

The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness is dedicated to building social connectedness within and between communities to overcome social isolation. We strive to foster connectedness through research, programming, partnerships, and advocacy, bringing together the contributions of diverse scholars, students, advocates, and people with lived experiences.

We invite you to join us in this movement of building a society where everyone is valued, seen, and heard, and where everyone is supported in realizing their inherent right to belong.

**This is an internally hosted Fellow helping us to grow our strategic engagement and support our future network building.**

Learn more at: <https://www.socialconnectedness.org/about-us/>

**Location of the Project:** Remote, Canada

Since this project is focused on the Quebec immigration experience and landscape, there is a preference that the Fellow is based in Quebec. If the successful candidate resides in Quebec, there is the opportunity for in-person outreach and work with our team.

### **PROJECT INFORMATION**

## **Section 1: Description of the Project**

In 1991, Canada became one of the first Western countries to grant refugees status based on sexual orientation, and continues to accept refugee claims for those who are persecuted on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or HIV status. Broadly, this is done through referrals by private organizations, non-profits such as Rainbow Road, the United Nations Refugee Agency, and private sponsorship. However, across Canada, there is rising anti-immigration sentiment fueled by divisive political rhetoric that is not only harming immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, newcomers and forced migrants, but overall community health. In Québec, where approximately 60% of Canada's refugees are accepted, Premier Francois Legault recently [wrote a letter](#) to Prime Minister Trudeau seeking the forced relocation of asylum seekers. In stark contrast, Legault said that there was [no limit to the number of Ukrainian refugees](#) that the province was willing to welcome, underscoring the race-based discrimination that many newcomers in Québec face.

While major city centers may have cultural hubs, active Queer communities, intra-community support, and agencies dedicated to supporting newcomers as they transition and settle in Québec, are these systems sufficient to foster belonging for newly arrived 2LGBTQIA+ people in the face of divisive political rhetoric? And further, how supported are people who immigrate to smaller towns or remote places in Québec, or are placed there by Canadian immigration services?

Through mapping services across Québec, this project will focus on creating a clear picture of Québec's immigration landscape as it relates to support for 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers, refugees and asylum seekers. It will endeavor to identify where and how 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers feel a sense of belonging and community, and where they feel its inverse – social isolation. Further, the project will generate recommendations focused on coalition building between non-profits, community groups, and government actors in this space.

## **Section 2: Goals of the Project**

The purpose of this research is to inform future SCSC strategy and programming to support newcomers, refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the work of its partner organizations working in this space. This project focuses on 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers with

the recognition that this group is at an increased risk of isolation and potential marginalization due to the intersection of homophobia and xenophobia. The project aims to:

1. Understand and map the current immigration landscape in Québec, with a focus on 2SLGBTQ+ newcomer services and supports.
2. Identify gaps that exist for 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers that create social isolation and impede social connectedness.
3. Understand to what extent LGBTQ+ newcomers have access to spaces that foster belonging, connection and authenticity.
4. Help create a framework of action that other actors in this space can utilize to better support 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers in the face of growing anti-immigrant and anti-2SLGBTQ+ rhetoric.

### **Section 3: Guiding Questions**

1. How prepared is Quebec to support 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers, refugees, asylum seekers?
  - a. Who are the existing service-provision actors across the province, and how many offer specialized services to 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers and refugees?
  - b. What are the unique supports the 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers, refugees, and asylum seekers need when they arrive in Québec?
2. Where, when and why do newcomers and refugees in Québec feel a sense of belonging and community, and its inverse – social isolation?
  - a. What services and/or opportunities would encourage a sense of belonging for 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers and refugees?
3. How can actors and support services in this space ensure that 2SLGBTQ+ are welcomed and supported in Quebec?

### **Section 4: Key Deliverables**

- 1 blog post (500 – 1,000 word), posted to SCSC's website.
- A Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) in support of the Final Output
  - This will be led by the Fellow with the support of the SCSC Program Manager. We apply the term 'Community Engagement' liberally to include initiatives that interact directly with people [ex: interviews, focus groups, paint sessions, in-person events] or that seek to engage the public [ex:

- letter writing projects, podcasts, digital events, awareness raising efforts, photovoice projects].
- Fellows have typically taken the lead in designing their CEI, but partners can play a key role in brainstorming and co-creation.
- A Final Output [2 options]
  - A 25 – 35-page research report supported by primary or secondary source data.
  - A creative or practical output coupled with an accompanying written component. This could include a series of webinars, a toolkit, a community beadwork or painting project, a podcast series, photo journal, etc.
- A Final Presentation with the Cohort

## **Applicant Information:**

### **About the Fellowship/What the Fellowship Offers**

The Fellowship empowers young people, recent graduates, and community leaders to engage in meaningful research and community action. At the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness, our mission is to build connectedness within and between communities through partnerships, research, programming, learning initiatives, and advocacy. Belonging is central to our work, and the Fellowship offers the opportunity to apply the lens of ‘Belonging’ to intersectional issues, writing, and problem solving.

**This is a paid full-time opportunity from May 8 – August 28, 2023 [16 weeks]. The Social Connectedness Fellowship is a research and community action summer program, focused on understanding & integrating social connectedness.**

SCSC Offers:

- Competitive wages
- Work with national & international community partners
- Capacity building, skills development, & mentorship
- Meaningful work where your research has impact

## **Equity Statement:**

The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness is an equal opportunity employer, and we encourage applicants to apply even if they do not meet all the criteria. We believe all candidates have something to bring to the organization and the role. If you have skills outside the job description that you think can benefit the project, let us know in your cover letter. We encourage all equity-seeking groups such as immigrants, Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, women, young people, 2SLGBTQ+ community members, and people with disabilities to apply. Please let us know if you need any accommodation throughout the application and interview process, and we will be happy to support you.

### **Key Attributes and Skills in the Applicant:**

- An interest & understanding of immigration systems within Canada
- A passion for 2SLGBTQ+ and refugee rights
- Anti-oppressive praxis and social justice lens
- Ability to work independently and in a team
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Strong problem-solving skills

### **Asset**

- Undergraduate or graduate degree related to immigration, public policy, political science, social justice or other relevant fields.
- French fluency is an asset.
- Experience with landscape mapping is an asset.
- Connected to the 2SLGBTQ+ community and newcomer community