Canadian Council for Refugees

A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE CCR CONSULTATION

Fall 2019

WELCOME TO THE CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES!

The Canadian Council for Refugees wishes a warm welcome to all participants at the consultation and particularly to those attending a CCR consultation for the first time.

CCR consultations are organized jointly by the CCR Executive, the staff and the local organizing committee, with important and active contributions by volunteers, both from the CCR membership and the local community where the consultation takes place.

This booklet is intended to give some basic orientation to the CCR structures and procedures.

We know that the organization can seem confusing and perhaps intimidating at first, but there are many people who are more than willing to answer any questions you may have. We encourage you to jump right in and participate!

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Canadian Council for Refugees is a national non-profit umbrella organization committed to the rights and protection of refugees and other vulnerable migrants in Canada and around the world and to the settlement of refugees and immigrants in Canada. The membership is made up of organizations involved in the settlement, sponsorship and protection of refugees and immigrants. The Council serves the networking, information-exchange and advocacy needs of its membership.

The mandate of the Canadian Council for Refugees is rooted in the belief that:

★ Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution; (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 14.1)

★ Refugees, refugee claimants, displaced persons and immigrants have the right to a dignified life and the rights and protections laid out in national and international agreements and conventions concerning human rights;

★ Canada and Canadians have responsibilities for the protection and resettlement of refugees from around the world;

★ Settlement services to refugees and immigrants are fundamental to participation in Canadian life;

★ National and international refugee and immigration policies must accord special consideration to the experience of refugee and immigrant women and children and to the effect of racism.

The Canadian Council for Refugees is guided by the following organizational principles:

★ The membership of the Canadian Council for Refugees reflects the diversity of those concerned with refugee and settlement issues and includes refugees and other interested people in all regions of Canada;

★ The work of the Council is democratic and collaborative;

★ Our work is national and international in scope.

The Canadian Council for Refugees fulfils its mission by:

★ Providing opportunities for networking and professional development through conferences, working groups, publications and meetings;

★ Working in cooperation with other networks to strengthen the defence of refugee rights;

★ Advancing policy analysis and information-exchange on refugee and related issues;

★ Advocating for the rights of refugees and immigrants through media relations, government relations, research and public education.

Adopted by the membership November 1993, amended November 2013

BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE CCR

LEADERSHIP
The CCR is governed by an Executive Committee elected by the CCR membership. Executive members serve terms of two years. Elections are held at each Annual General Meeting (in November or December).

ISSUES AND POLICY
The CCR addresses issues through its working groups (for details, see page 4). The CCR's policy base is established through resolutions adopted at each General Meeting (one is held at each consultation). Past resolutions already cover a vast range of issues: you can search in the Resolutions Database at ccrweb.ca/en/resolutions. You can read below (page 8) for information on how to draft a resolution for an issue not already covered.

JOINING THE CCR
Non-governmental organizations are warmly encouraged to consider joining the CCR. Full members must be Canadian organizations, but we also have a category for individuals and another for non-Canadian NGOs. Full details are in the membership packages, available from the registration desk or from ccrweb.ca/en/join – or ask a member of the Executive.

VISIT THE CCR WEBSITE
Go to ccrweb.ca to find information about meetings, documents, press releases, campaigns, public education resources, etc.

KEEPING IN TOUCH BY EMAIL
The CCR has a listserv (email discussion group), called ccrlist, which offers NGO participants an opportunity to receive and exchange information. For information, see ccrweb.ca/en/ccrlist; to join, send a note to ccrlist@ccrweb.ca with your name and organization.

To keep in touch with CCR Youth Network, subscribe to ccryouth: write to yn@ccrweb.ca.

MEETING CYCLE
The CCR meets 4 times a year. Two of these meetings are consultations, in late November/early December and in late May/early June. The consultations move around to different cities. A General Meeting is always held at these consultations. The other two meetings are working group meetings and are held in Toronto in late February, and in Montreal in early September.

ANTI-OPPRESSION POLICY
The CCR has made a commitment to anti-oppression in all areas of our work focused externally on changing our society and internally on eliminating oppression within the CCR. The CCR Anti-Oppression Policy is available at ccrweb.ca/en/ccr-anti-oppression-policy.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
The CCR's Guiding Statement on Indigenous Peoples recognizes the Indigenous Peoples of Canada as its original inhabitants: ccrweb.ca/en/ccr-guiding-statement-indigenous-peoples

REFUGEE PARTICIPATION POLICY
The CCR is committed to promoting the full participation of refugees in the CCR and has adopted a policy to this effect.

AMINA MALKO REFUGEE PARTICIPATION FUND
In recognition of the financial barriers which limit refugee participation, the CCR has a fund to cover part of expenses to attend CCR meetings for a certain number of refugees associated with CCR member organizations.

There are two components to the fund:
- Fund for Refugee participation: Selected candidates have part of their expenses covered to attend a CCR consultation
- Fund for Refugee Leadership: Selected candidates have part of their expenses covered to attend three CCR meetings for a year.

See ccrweb.ca/en/ccr-refugee-participation

WORKING GROUPS

The working groups are the forum in which CCR members exchange information, network and develop strategies and policy positions in areas of concern. They are responsible for preparing resolutions and planning workshops at the consultations, and advising the Executive on policy.

All CCR members are encouraged to attend the meetings of the working groups of interest to them. Meetings are open to other non-governmental representatives. Members of inter-governmental organizations are invited to attend as observers. Meetings are closed to media and government representatives.

CCR members can review minutes of past meetings and other documents on the relevant working group page (you must be logged in).

WORKING GROUP ON IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT ccrweb.ca/IS
➤ looks at all issues relating to refugee and immigrant settlement and integration in Canada (e.g. access to employment and housing, counselling, access to rights and services, migrant workers).

WORKING GROUP ON INLAND PROTECTION ccrweb.ca/IP
➤ concerned for the protection of refugee claimants in Canada or seeking to come to Canada.

WORKING GROUP ON OVERSEAS PROTECTION AND RESETTLEMENT ccrweb.ca/OPR
➤ looks at issues relating to the selection of refugees overseas (refugees sponsored by either the government or private groups) and the programs for them here in Canada. Also interested in protection issues for refugees around the world.
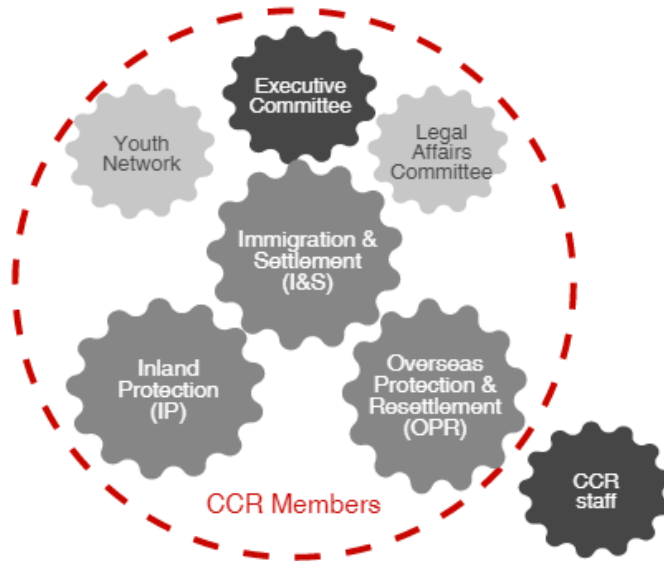
THE CCR ALSO HAS THE FOLLOWING:

LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
➤ guides and oversees the CCR's increasingly active litigation agenda, which involves interventions in significant cases affecting refugees and immigrants. See ccrweb.ca/en/legal-affairs-committee.

YOUTH NETWORK ccrweb.ca/youth
➤ engages in online discussions and teleconferences, the organization of youth-led workshops and strategy sessions and the development of youth-driven projects — all with the vision and commitment to promote youth inclusion in the Canadian Council for Refugees and to address challenges faced by refugee and immigrant youth. Write to yn@ccrweb.ca to subscribe to the ccryouth listserv.

ORGANIZATION CHART

POLICY ON PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMING AND AUDIO-RECORDING

The policy is intended to protect the anonymity and privacy of those persons who do not want to be photographed, filmed or audio-recorded, and to ensure free discussion at meetings.

1. Photography, filming and audio recording is permitted outside the CCR sessions (e.g. in the coffee area or lobbies, or before or after a workshop session) ONLY after explaining the purpose and obtaining permission of each person photographed, filmed or recorded.

2. Photography, filming and audio recording is not permitted during CCR sessions (workshops, plenaries, working group meetings) except for people acting for CCR, or for a purpose specifically approved by CCR in advance;

   in which case such persons will:
   o abide by instructions regarding announcing the purpose of the recording at the beginning of the session,
   o provide opportunities for people to discreetly request exclusion from recording, and
   o erase any recording on request.

GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSION

Principles
- ★ The CCR recognizes that there are many barriers to full participation in CCR meetings, including linguistic and cultural barriers and unfamiliarity with CCR ways of working.

- ★ The CCR values inclusiveness and full participation of all and commits itself to measures that promote this.

Guidelines for chairs
- ★ Offer a particular welcome to new participants and encourage them to contribute to the discussion, emphasizing that their input is valued.

- ★ Ensure that all participants have an opportunity to express themselves in the course of the meeting (e.g. by making a point of asking for interventions from people who have not already spoken).

- ★ Offer brief explanations of acronyms, programs, CCR procedures, and anything else that may be obscure to newcomers.

- ★ Make use of small group discussions and other techniques that make participation easier.

- ★ When groups of volunteers are being formed (e.g. to work on a project or draft a resolution) encourage a mix of "new" and "old" members.

Guidelines for new members
- ★ Express your point of view. Your input is valued.

- ★ Ask for an explanation of anything that is not clear to you.

- ★ Propose agenda items of concern to you.

- ★ Volunteer for any activities that interest you. You do not need to be an "expert" or an old hand to be able to contribute.

Guidelines for "old members"
- ★ Offer to sit next to newcomers and explain things to them as necessary.

- ★ Avoid speaking in code (using acronyms, making "in" references).

- ★ If you have been participating actively, keep it up, but bear in mind that the longer you have been around the CCR, the less time you should need in meetings to get your points across.

- ★ If your participation has been more passive, consider getting more involved (give your opinions on issues, volunteer for activities).

RESOLUTION-DRAFTING

1. The Canadian Council for Refugees establishes its policies through a process of adopting resolutions by membership vote. Where there is already a resolution on an issue, follow up action does not require a further resolution. All CCR members are encouraged to participate in this process. Resolutions will be voted on at the General Meeting.

2. If you would like to work on an issue, find others interested in working with you. You can ask for help from the Resolutions Committee or from others with experience.

3. Find out whether there is already a resolution on the topic. Check the Resolutions database at ccrweb.ca/en/resolutions.

4. If the CCR already has a resolution that covers the policy position of concern (or you are not proposing a policy position), you can consider what follow up might be taken. Go to the relevant working group to discuss the issue.

5. If there is not already a resolution on the topic, prepare a draft resolution (you can use the CCR conference office). Note that the resolution should state **a policy position** (rather than calling for an action).

6. Inform one of the chairs of the appropriate working group and bring your resolution to the relevant working group meeting for discussion and approval. Resolutions must be approved by a working group to be brought to the General Meeting.

7. Hand in the final version of the resolution (typed) to the office by **FRIDAY 5:30pm** (and indicate where it is saved – the Resolutions Committee doesn't want to have to re-type it!).

FORMAT FOR RESOLUTIONS:
WHEREAS: 1.
                          2. etc.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: 1.
                                                2. etc.

MOVER:
SECONDER:
WORKING GROUP:

Please note that the mover and/or seconder must be present at the General Meeting.

RESOLUTIONS CHECKLIST

All CCR members are responsible for ensuring that the CCR adopts strong and credible policies, through their participation in the debates on resolutions at the Working Group and General Meetings.

The following are questions you should ask to evaluate draft resolutions.

1. **Does it state a policy position?**	➢ Focus on the policy, not on action to communicate it such as writing a letter. ➢ If you want an action (e.g. research, setting up a meeting), discuss it in the working group (a resolution is not needed).
2. **Is it a new policy?**	➢ Once a policy is adopted by resolution, the CCR can act – don't repeat the resolution. ➢ If we are changing our position from a previous resolution, say so.
3. **Is the policy stated in a way that will be relevant in more than this specific situation?**	➢ We want to establish a policy that we can apply to similar situations in other places or at other times. ➢ The "whereas" can refer to a specific situation, but the "be it resolved" should focus on the more general principles.
4. **Are facts correct?**	➢ If we are not sure of facts, consider doing research or holding a workshop before moving a resolution.
5. **Is it clear?**	➢ Everyone should have the same understanding of the policy position we are adopting. ➢ Simpler is often clearer.
6. **Is the wording constructive?**	➢ The CCR's resolutions are read by many people. Make sure the wording enhances CCR credibility.
7. **Is it consistent with CCR goals (mission)?**	➢ If you have to argue for why it is relevant to the CCR, maybe it is not so relevant.
8. **Is it in the right Working Group? Is it relevant to more than one Working Group?**	➢ For resolutions relevant to more than one Working Group, decide on the lead WG, but consult the other WG in case they have concerns or suggestions for amendments.

Of course there is one **fundamental question** remaining:

o Is this the right policy position?

PROCESS FOR DEBATING RESOLUTIONS

Presenting resolutions at the General Meeting
1. The mover or seconder must present the resolution, by outlining the main point (1-2 minutes only). They should not read the resolution.

2. Others can then ask questions or raise concerns about the resolution.

3. The resolutions have been reviewed by the Resolutions Committee, which may raise some points about resolutions. These are indicated by an asterisk.

4. Once a resolution is presented, it belongs to the meeting as a whole, and cannot be withdrawn or amended without the approval of the majority of the members at the meeting.

Amendments
5. If anyone has concerns about an aspect of a resolution, they are encouraged to propose specific wording changes to address the concern. This new wording becomes a proposed amendment. A seconder is required before any amendment can be considered.

6. Any amendment, even if considered "friendly", must be voted on, in order to change the text of the resolution. That vote is just on whether or not to accept the amendment, not on the resolution as a whole.

Voting on the resolution
8. After any amendments have been discussed and debated, the resolution itself can be voted on. Voting is by voting card (issued one per member organization).

9. If anyone feels that the debate has been going on long enough, they can "call the question" which means that they want the matter put to a vote, without further discussion. If someone proposes ending the debate, and there is a seconder, there will be any immediate vote on whether to end the debate. If a majority of the members vote to end the debate, the vote on the resolution will take place immediately. Otherwise, debate will continue.

ACRONYMS AND OTHER ODDITIES

117(9)(d)	Paragraph in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations establishing the 'excluded family member' rule.
AAISA (ay-sa)	Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies
ADR	Administrative Deferral of Removals
AMSSA	Association of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC
AO	Anti-oppression
ARAISA	Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies
ASMB	Asylum System Management Board
ATCR	Annual Tripartite Consultation on Resettlement (held in Geneva in June/July)
ATD	Alternatives to detention
AWR	Women at risk
BIOC	Best interests of the child
BOC	Basis of Claim form
BVOR	Blended Visa Office Referred
CARL	Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers
CAT	Convention Against Torture (also Committee Against Torture)
CBSA	Canada Border Service Agency
CCR	Canadian Council for Refugees
CPC	Case Processing Centre
CR	Convention refugee
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CS	Community sponsor (type of private sponsorship)
CSQ	Quebec Selection Certificate
DCO	Designated Country of Origin
DFN	Designated Foreign Nationals
EAL	English as an Additional Language
ESL/FSL	English/French as a second language
EXCOM	Executive Committee (of the UNHCR)
FESS	Front-End Security Screening
G5	Group of Five (type of private sponsorship)

GAR	Government-assisted refugee
GBA	Gender-based analysis
GCMS	Global Case Management System
H&C	Humanitarian and compassionate consideration
I&S	Immigration and Settlement (CCR Working Group)
IAD	Immigration Appeal Division (of the Immigration and Refugee Board)
ICAC	Integrated Claim Analysis Centre
ICAMS	Immigration-Contribution Accountability Measurement System
ID	Immigration Division (of the Immigration and Refugee Board)
IDP	Internally displaced person
IFA	Internal Flight Alternative
IFH(P)	Interim Federal Health (Program)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Inland Protection (CCR Working Group)
IRB	Immigration and Refugee Board
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
JAS	Joint Assistance Sponsorship
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual/transgender
LMIA	Labour Market Impact Assessment
MIFI	Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration du Québec
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSIC	National Settlement and Integration Council
OCASI	Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
OPR	Overseas Protection and Resettlement (CCR Working Group)
OYW	One year window
POE	Port of Entry
PRRA	Pre-removal Risk Assessment
PSR(P)	Private sponsorship of Refugees (Program) /Privately Sponsored Refugee
RAD	Refugee Appeal Division (of the Immigration and Refugee Board)
RAP	Resettlement Assistance Program (for government-assisted refugees)
ROC-O	Resettlement Operations Centre in Ottawa
ROGPRAQ	Quebec network of refugee sponsorship organizations and groups

RPD	Refugee Protection Division (of the IRB)
RRD	Refugee Rights Day (April 4th), commemorating the 1985 Singh decision
RSTP	Refugee Sponsorship Training Program
SAH	Sponsorship Agreement Holder
SAISIA	Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies
SOGIE	Sexual orientation and gender identity and expression
SPO	Service Provider Organization
STCA	Safe Third Country Agreement (between Canada and the US)
SWIS	Settlement workers in schools
TCRI	Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes
TESL	Teaching English as a Second Language
TFW(P)	Temporary Foreign Workers (Program)
TRP	Temporary Resident Permit
TSR	Temporary Suspension of Removals
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UPP	Urgent Protection Program
VAC	Visa Application Centre
VAW	Violence against Women
WRD	World Refugee Day (20 June)
YAG	Youth Action Gathering (CCR)
YN	Youth Network (CCR)