

## MAP INFORMATION WORKING GROUP MEETING

MINUTES - Friday November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1pm at QMUNITY in Vancouver

### **Present:**

Carlo Campodonico – Qmunity  
Azadeh Tamjeedi - UNHCR  
Katherine Griffin – MOSAIC  
Iris Solorzano - Options  
Richard Belcham – inasmuch  
Jenny Moss – MAP

By telephone: Farah Kotadia – AMSSA

Guest: Alia Dharssi, The Discourse

Apologies: Bahar Taheri, Thanh Lam, Sara Lopez – VAST

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### **Chair: Richard Belcham**

- Richard welcomed everyone and thanked Carl@ for the wonderful hospitality at Qmunity. Since Iris (Options) was able to attend everyone introduced themselves – including Farah (AMSSA) who was on line
- Outline and approval of Agenda – approved
- Minutes from October 19 meeting – approved

### **Roundtable discussion: How to get the message out?**

Richard welcomed Alia from The Discourse to discuss with the group.

#### **Alia Dharssi brings her experience from working at DISCOURSE**

**Azadeh** stated problem as it is – at start of 2018 public opinion was pretty normal, but now we see more use of words like ‘illegal’, ‘queue jumpers’, and general negativity towards RC.

IRCC reacted by saying they are going to speak out against the negativity.

**Question:** Is there something we can do to keep the discussion positive in BC? How can we reach the public who don’t know about refugees, and may be very negative?

**Richard:** In Fraser Valley many people had parents who came as refugees, and who see Canada as theirs; and resent those coming later. It’s almost a racist reaction.

**Azadeh** – everyone arrived in Canada through a variety of routes as refugees or migrants – but many who came as refugees don't want more from their own country to come. The government is keeping an eye on polls to make sure policy is in line with public opinion; and that's what needs to change.

**Alia:** what are you wanting to do?

**Azadeh:** to provide a positive response in terms of public education (but not necessarily advocacy)

**To Alia:** how can we speak and be heard?

**Alia:** in person/stories is very powerful – people take from messages what they want, so a real-life story is more compelling. Those who do comment are just the tip of the iceberg.

The Discourse experimented with engagement with public – they planned a coffee shop discussion. Promoted the event through social media that their speaker was open to discussion in a coffee shop and people both for and against turned up and there was a great discussion, and alliances made afterwards.

Note: Many who speak negatively about refugees often have never met one.

Journalists don't know the difference between RC;'s, GARS etc. – so inaccurate information in the papers happens because journalists just don't know.

**Question:** Should we be talking to UBC journalist students?

**Azadeh** participated in one in Quebec through UNHCR and it was very useful – there was good feedback from journalists. UNHCR has a guide made with IOM in February that is very helpful and can be tweaked for BC.

**Jenny** has a relationship with Kathryn Gretsinger, Prof of Journalism at UBC and former CBC radio host. She could try and arrange a presentation to the students.

**Richard:** Q to Discourse – if we approached Sun and offered information about RC's what would they want to know?

**Alia:** provide positive role models among refugees, provide new or unexpected info – or a trend.

Carl@ mentioned the story of LGBTQ youth coming from Central America and all they had been through that forced them to flee.

Possible themes:

- Like why are LGBTQ claimants coming from Central America?

Using that story include positive messaging abt. refugees in Canada.

- Why does it matter now? Because many are coming, and they are in great need
- Anything unexpected – number of BC homeless who are refugees.

**Katherine:** but what abt. the backlash we might expect like: housing costs – if we focus on barriers would we not draw more negative attention and create a bigger problem?

**Azadeh:** agreed – we shouldn't mention numbers, especially in relation to housing or claims process.

**Carl@:** not enough coverage abt. LGBTQ – caravan – if we could just give RC's a voice – so they can get their message out.

**Azadeh** – it would be great to get this out IF journalists will hear; Richard's question is the right one – what subject is best?

**Iris:** we have good stories – we should start slowly with website and social media to share our stories

**Alia** – to Carl@ – you have good ideas – worth mentioning to journalists OR just tell your story – find places to share your story – journalists on a deadline often need these kinds of contacts.

**Richard** – could we create a refugee hub for journalists to go to? Somewhere to go to find a resource book of refugees that journalists could talk to.

**Carl@** – Jennifer from Guatemala could speak.

But we need to support refugees in how to work with journalists

**Azadeh** – Warning! We should not ask RC's who are not already accepted.

Even those who are accepted should be careful not to share their real or full name.

**Alia** – The Discourse have a toolkit to help prepare claimants before they are interviewed. This should be a responsibility of agency who engages the RC in any media experience.

**Iris:** suggested we should provide a number of speakers.

**Alia** – to help the public think more positively we should provide good solutions –

- 5 things people can learn about
- What subject will get people to click? – like the momentum around housing generally. Maybe housing – if we could show that it is addressing a need.

**Alia** – it's difficult to get reporters' attention, but its still important to talk about getting the message out despite that – use social media instead – and develop relationships with journalists.

**Azadeh: CCR** – will have a panel on media challenges at Montreal.

**Richard** requested that UNHCR report back.

## Updates and discussion

- Katie Lapi had submitted her **5 logo designs** and there was a discussion.  
The committee agreed on Version C Palette B  
Modifications for Katie to make:
  - Katherine: **Capitalize the first letter of each word in tagline except ‘for’**
  - Azadeh – need a geographical marker – **agreed that it should be BC**
  - Farah – **grey lettering good – agreed**Jenny will send the modifications to Katie and distribute the update once received.

- **Update on website planning – Richard**

Wireframe – Richard shared the wireframe and explained the different sections including a password protected area for MAP members that would include Minutes and other confidential information:

<https://www.justinmind.com/usernote/tests/37331719/37332256/37333111/index.html>

Following there was much discussion on audiences, sections etc.

**Katherine** – Can we include a **Get involved** section – a place for volunteering/Call to Action??

Response: Should that be private or public?

There was considerable discussion about our audience (MAP members/RC’s/general public?) and whether we need more than one website? / what use is MAP website for claimants?

**ACTION Step:** Richard to send out a revised wireframe with a set of ideas ready for comment. PLEASE SEND RICHARD YOUR IDEAS.

- **Public Education Action Planning – Azadeh TABLED to November 16**
- **Canadian Heritage Grant** – Jenny/Farah/Thanh – spoke by phone and Jenny created a template ask.  
Jenny will see Amy Huwang (Canadian Heritage) on Wednesday at 1pm if anyone is available to accompany her.  
ACTION: Everyone invited to send in their ideas to Jenny who will come up with an IDEA page submission for Canadian Heritage.
- **Provincial Multiculturalism Grant** \$5,000 available – **TABLED to Nov 16**
- **Meeting request: a member asked to change this Friday to alternate Fridays**  
Decision: Unfortunately not - because it would clash with MAP meetings just the day before.

3:00

**Closing – next meeting: Friday 16 Nov at ISSofBC Room 201 2nd Floor**