NET LIP Work Group Terms of Reference

1. Introduction, Purpose, and Vision

Mandate:

The mandate of the Work Group is to implement NET LIP strategic priorities for 2026 – 2028 by addressing the key issues identified in the Work Group thematic area while demonstrating adherence to NET LIP Values.

Context:

The Work Group is part of a larger NET LIP structure, which includes the Partnership Council, the Newcomer Council, the NET LIP Staff Team, NET LIP Strategic Advisory Committee, ad hoc task groups.

Desired Outcome:

The Work Group will achieve measurable outcomes in relation to its selected thematic priorities (i.e. newcomer access to primary health care; newcomer awareness of housing rights and resources; newcomer literacy levels; etc.).

Value Proposition:

The Work Group members are involved in sector and community level change by translating overarching strategic priorities into actionable work plans. Participation in a NET LIP Work Group allows members to develop their leadership and project management skills and be drivers of positive change on issues that prevent successful newcomer integration at individual, organizational, sector, and community levels. Work Group participation also provides members with a regular and convenient way of sharing subject matter specific program updates to a community of peers for program promotion and information sharing purposes.

2. Membership

Eligibility Criteria:

Any staff from organizations or groups that are part of the NET LIP Partnership Council with interest in addressing Work Group's thematic issues can be a member of a Work Group. Work Group members must be approved and assigned to participate in the work group by the participating organization's or department's executive as indicated in PC Partnership Agreement.

New Member Onboarding Process:

NET LIP members who are interested in participating in the thematic Work Group will reach out to the Work Group Coordinator for onboarding and introductions to the Work Group.

Minimum Number:

The minimum number of members for the Work Group is 15 members from unique organizations.

Commitment and Expectations:

The Work Group will establish a meeting frequency needed to ensure successful development and implementation of the work plan. Work Group members are committed to attending and actively participating in Work Group meetings. The minimum time commitment for Work Group members is 8 hours per year (i.e. 2 hours per meeting x 4 times a year). However, additional time may be needed to complete work between formal meetings based on identified actions.

Term of Membership:

The default duration of a member's term is from March 2026 to March 2029 or until successful implementation of the Work Plan.

Member Turnover:

If a Work Group member needs to leave the Work Group due to a change in position, change of organization, a leave of any sort, or capacity issues, the member is expected to communicate this to the Work Group coordinator as soon as possible, so that work can continue with minimal interruptions and coverage can be arranged as needed.

Diversity and Representation:

The Work Group will ensure that the NET LIP Values of Representation and Applying the EDI and Intersectional Lens to all its projects are reflected in its approach to work, analysis of issues, member composition, and selection of stakeholders.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of Members

General Responsibilities:

The Work Group members' core responsibility is to develop and ensure successful implementation of the work plan.

Active engagement in the Work Group is crucial to success of the work plan implementation and members are expected to attend meetings and carry out their responsibilities in a conscientious and committed manner. Member inability to attend meetings and participate actively in supporting the work plan implementation will be addressed directly by the Work Group coordinator with each member.

Active participation includes actions that stem from collective ownership over development and implementation of the overall Work Group work plan. In practice, this may look like:

- supporting smaller teams of Work Group members – task groups – to develop detailed action plans,
- inquiring about progress made and being aware of important action plan timelines,
- identifying alignment and facilitating connections with external stakeholders and tables,
- proposing and supporting collaborative approaches on shared goals, and
- other proactive work plan driven actions.

In addition, Work Group members play an important role as information conduits between their organizations' and NET LIP. Work Group members are expected to:

- share executive summaries of Work Group meeting minutes with their organization's leadership,
- share updates on Work Group activities at their team meetings as appropriate, and
- share NET LIP communications and resources (i.e. bi-weekly newsflashes and monthly info bulletins) with relevant teams at their organizations.

5. Leadership (Chair / Co-Chairs)

Role Description:

The Work Group is co-chaired by the NET LIP Work Group Coordinator and a Co-Chair elected from the Work Group members. The NET LIP Work Group Co-Chair and Work Group Coordinator work closely together to sound off ideas and provide leadership to Work Group members on the development and implementation of the work plan and associated action plans.

The NET LIP Work Group Coordinator is responsible for administrative and other aspects of Work Group management including new member onboarding, maintaining relationships with members and keeping their information up to date, most communications to members, meeting logistics, documentation, member off boarding, etc.

The Work Group Co-Chair and the Work Group Coordinator consult with each other, bring up concerns, and seek solutions to ensure Work Group success. The co-chair model ensures that there are leadership opportunities within NET LIP for members and that the community and member perspectives inform NET LIP operations and strategy on an ongoing basis.

Specifically, the co-chair selected from the Work Group membership has an understanding or an ability to quickly develop understanding of:

- Key issues affecting newcomers in relation to the Work Group's thematic area,
- Service and policy landscape related to Work Group's thematic area,
- Key stakeholders and players in Work Groups thematic area, and
- LIP's current strategic direction, the role of Strategic community plan, and work plans.

The Work Group Co-Chair has the capacity to:

- Act as a representative of the Work Group at other tables and meetings, as needed; and
- Recruit, engage, and align members and stakeholders toward common goals as outlined in the Strategic community plan.

The Co-Chair fulfills their role with benefit of the Work Group in mind and avoids potential conflicts of interest between their role as the Work Group co-chair and their role as a staff of a member organization.

Selection Process:

The Co-Chair is selected annually in April through a self-nomination process and an anonymous member vote.

Term of Leadership:

The Co-Chair term is for 1 year. The Co-Chair can be re-elected to continue for the following year.

In case of a Co-Chair leaving during their term, the Work Group members will select a new Co-Chair within two (2) upcoming scheduled Work Group meetings.

8. Meeting Schedule and Management

Meeting Frequency:

The Work Group will set its proposed annual meeting schedule by end of March each year / upon development of the work plan.

Agenda & Documentation:

Agendas will be sent out to the Work Groups by the Work Group Coordinator two weeks prior to a meeting, with a meeting reminder sent out the week prior to a meeting.

Work Groups will use standardized meeting minute templates to consistently capture similar information from each group. Meeting minutes will be sent within two weeks of the Work Group meeting taking place and will be posted on the NET LIP website.

9. Decision-Making Process

Work Group members will make decisions about which thematic issues to address and how. The Work Groups will aim toward consensus based decision making with Work Group co-chairs facilitating this process.

10. Concerns and Disputes

In situations where a Work Group member has concerns about any aspect of Work Group work or membership, they will bring it up with the appropriate party based on the nature of their concern. The appropriate parties to choose among are the Work Group Co-Chair, the NET LIP Manager, or a Consortium Partner Representative.

4. Governance and Accountability

Reporting Structure:

Work Groups report progress on the development and implementation of their work plan to the Partnership Council on a quarterly basis. This is done by the Work Group Co-Chair sharing updates at the Quarterly Partnership Council meetings.

Alignment with NET LIP Mandate:

Work Group Work Plans roll up to and address the wider NET LIP Strategic Community Plan for 2026 – 2029.

External Liaison:

There are multiple geographic and thematic tables and networks in North East Toronto. Work Groups are encouraged to identify alignment, facilitate connections, and propose collaborative approaches to accomplishing goals shared with other networks.

5. Conflict of Interest:

Members of Work Groups are obligated to act in the best interests of the stated Work Group goals and not represent personal or business interests, or those of an immediate relative, when developing

recommendations or representing the Work Groups. Work Group members are obligated to declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest to the Work Group Coordinator.

11. Communication Strategy

Communication Channels:

Preferred methods for communicating within the Work Group are through email. The NET LIP Coordinator will create, keep updated, and share the Work Group Distribution Group with all members.

Communication between task groups and the larger Work Group should always include Work Group Coordinator and Co-Chair.

Work Group members agree to share their contact information with other Work Group members and the Partnership Council for the purposes of staying connected in-between meetings and with the wider NET LIP network and team.

11. Guiding Principles and Code of Conduct

The principles that govern the Work Group's operations and interactions should reflect the NET LIP Values and the following Code of Contact:

- Work Group Distribution List will be used by members only for Work Group related business and will not be shared with external stakeholders;
- Work Group members will be respectful, considerate, and professional in their interactions and work with other members in spirit of respect, openness, cooperation; and
- Members will work towards a better understanding of complex challenges.

13. Review and Amendment of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated, if needed, to help achieve the Work Group's goals and objectives, on an annual basis – usually in the last or first meeting of the fiscal year – in March or June.