



RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AWARENESS INITIATIVE

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2021

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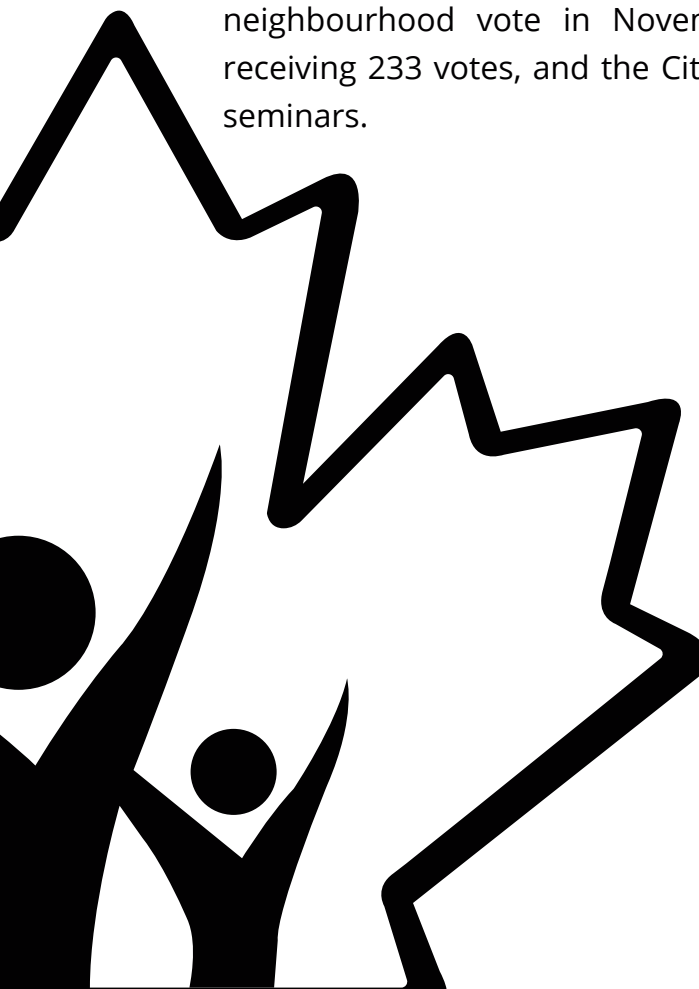
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INTRODUCTION

RRAI is a community initiative, incorporated as a registered charity, aimed at spreading legal, financial, and cultural awareness to the Ontario community. RRAI provides educational sessions based on the needs of the greater Ontario community to teach rights and responsibilities in Canada with respect to laws, regulations, finances, and culture, to fill the gaps in some important daily life issues which are not provided by most settlement agencies. Our services are aimed at newcomers, seniors, students, refugees, temporary residents, and similar groups.

The information offered is highly important, as it impacts the daily life of newcomers who land from various countries with different laws; the focus is on protecting newcomers from spam and scams, while enhancing the value of honesty in them when conducting transactions.

RRAI was established during the application of a proposal created as a response to the Neighborhood Decision Making Initiative by the City of London. The proposal aimed for organizing short courses or seminars in London neighbourhoods regarding the rights and responsibilities of newcomers to London. The funding proposals were subject to a neighbourhood vote in November 2019. The proposal was successful, receiving 233 votes, and the City of London provided a grant to fund those seminars.



RRAI is a registered charity

Charity Registration Number- 724956479 RR 0001

Ontario Corporation Number- 5033331



RRAI
VISION

**ENSURE THAT ALL COMMUNITY
MEMBERS ARE FULLY AWARE OF
THEIR RIGHTS AND
RESPONSIBILITIES AS RESIDENTS OF
CANADA.**

RRAI MISSION



Spread the awareness of rights and responsibilities in the community through:

- Online webinars;
- In-person workshops (depending on Covid-19 restrictions);
- Written materials in several languages
- Online information and videos, in several languages.



RRAI OBJECTIVES

- Through community consultations, identify the topics that need to be covered to support community members;
- Plan, coordinate, mobilize resources for the awareness campaigns;
- Conduct awareness campaigns to increase knowledge in the community; and,
- Collect and analyze feedback to assess organizational impact and make adjustments accordingly.



RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AWARENESS INITIATIVE

PILLARS

COMMUNITY

EDUCATION

DIVERSITY

JUSTICE



Working towards a better and stronger community



Legal, financial, and cultural awareness



Our services are open for all, everyone is welcome



Public education is one step closer to justice

REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

DOUG FERGUSON



The RRAI brings a unique approach to community education. We focus on legal, financial, and social topics that affect our everyday lives. Our sessions are primarily aimed at newcomers, but are useful for everyone – seniors, students, permanent residents, and others. Settlement agencies assist newcomers for a limited period of time with their adjustment to their new country. We pick up where the settlement agencies leave off, with information that will help them adjust and succeed as Canadians.

As a new organization, we are just beginning the process of fundraising and applying for grants. We are confident that as we continue our sessions and help more people, we will succeed in improving our funding and add services such as translations of our sessions.

I want to thank our partner organizations and our session presenters for their support in our first year. We are very grateful and look forward to continue to work with you.

It has been an honour to serve as chair of RRAI and work with our dedicated board members. We are hopeful as we begin our second full year, and hope that the Covid-19 pandemic will soon end, which will allow us to hold more in-person sessions and board meetings.

Best regards,
Doug Ferguson

EXACTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

HETHAM KARKY



As we enter the New Year I feel very proud of what RRAI team achieved so far. During the past two years, RRAI provided educational sessions based on the needs of the greater London community, to teach rights and responsibilities in Canada with respect to laws, regulations, finances, and culture to fill the gaps in some important daily life issues which are not provided by settlement agencies.

Our services were aimed at newcomers, seniors, students, refugees, temporary residents, and more. Here is a summary of our sessions:

- Number of webinars: 23 webinars.
- Number of participants: 629 participant
- Rating out of 10: 9.3

This would not be possible without the outstanding efforts of RRAI team and volunteers.

I am hereby expressing my personal thanks and gratitude to all of RRAI team including the RRAI Board of Directors, RRAI Advisory Committee, volunteers, and the presenters who believed in RRAI mission and values to help the community to be better and more welcoming for everyone.

I am also grateful for all kinds of support we got from the community institutions and for the kind support we received from businesses and individuals who supported RRAI.

All the best,
Hetham Karky

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RRAI Advisory Committee is a diversified committee of community facilitators representing different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds, aiming to educate communities about rights and responsibilities to make Canada a better, more welcoming place for everyone.

Members of the Advisory Committee play a vital role in connecting RRAI with local communities, promoting RRAI activities, and establishing connections with their community organizations. They are to ensure that information about RRAI activities is distributed among their communities, as well as providing RRAI with feedback on their communities' needs and quality of RRAI activities.

RRAI is committed to principles of anti-oppression and equity. The organization encourages individuals from various groups to join and self-identify, such as Indigenous, ethnic-racial, LGBTQ+, newcomers, refugees, differently abled, and other equity-seeking groups.

CURRENT MEMBERS OF RRAI ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Black community
Sofiat Ajibowu



Latino community
Luisa Garcia



Indian community
Yamini Parashar



Asian community
Mona Lei



Middle eastern community
Omar Mohamed



LGTBQ+ community
Onyinye Enuoyibo



Indigenous community
To be appointed

ACTIVATES IN 2021

1 AWARENESS SESSIONS

Between January and December 2021, RRAI conducted 13 awareness sessions that presented different legal financial and cultural topics.

The sessions were online webinars and carried out virtually on Zoom platform. The sessions are promoted in advance on social media and through community partners.

The topics were:

- Assessing Canadian Permanent Residency Pathways
- Human Rights Code of Ontario
- How to Manage Your Debt
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Wrongful Dismissal and Employee Rights
- Employment Standards Act and COVID-related Issues
- Identity Theft and Fraud Prevention
- Student Financial Aid in Ontario
- Policing in Canada and Youth Programs
- COVID-19, All You Need to Know!
- The Importance of Tax Planning for Financial Security
- Filing Taxes in Canada
- Licensing Processes for Regulated Occupations in Ontario

2021 Sessions by Topic

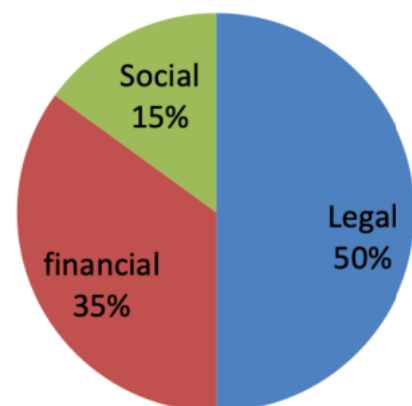


Figure 1: 2021 Sessions by Topic.

50% of RRAI sessions in 2021 covered Legal topics, 35% covered financial topics, and 15% covered social topics. Please see Figure 1.

The number of participants raised by 64% compared to 2020; in 2020, 238 individuals attended RRAI awareness sessions (Figure 2). In 2021, this number increased to 391 individuals; this is an indication of RRAI's positive progress to its mission, as well as gaining more attention from the community. This is also a demonstration of the need of RRAI's services in the community.

Number of Participants 2020-2021

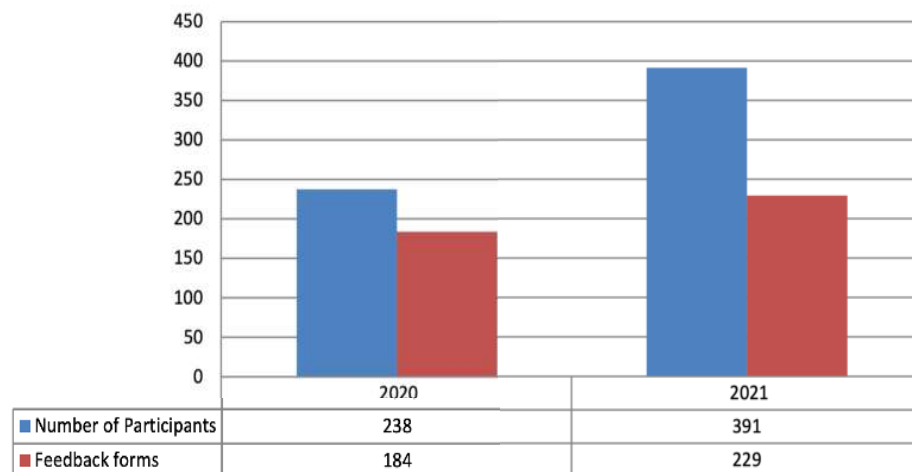
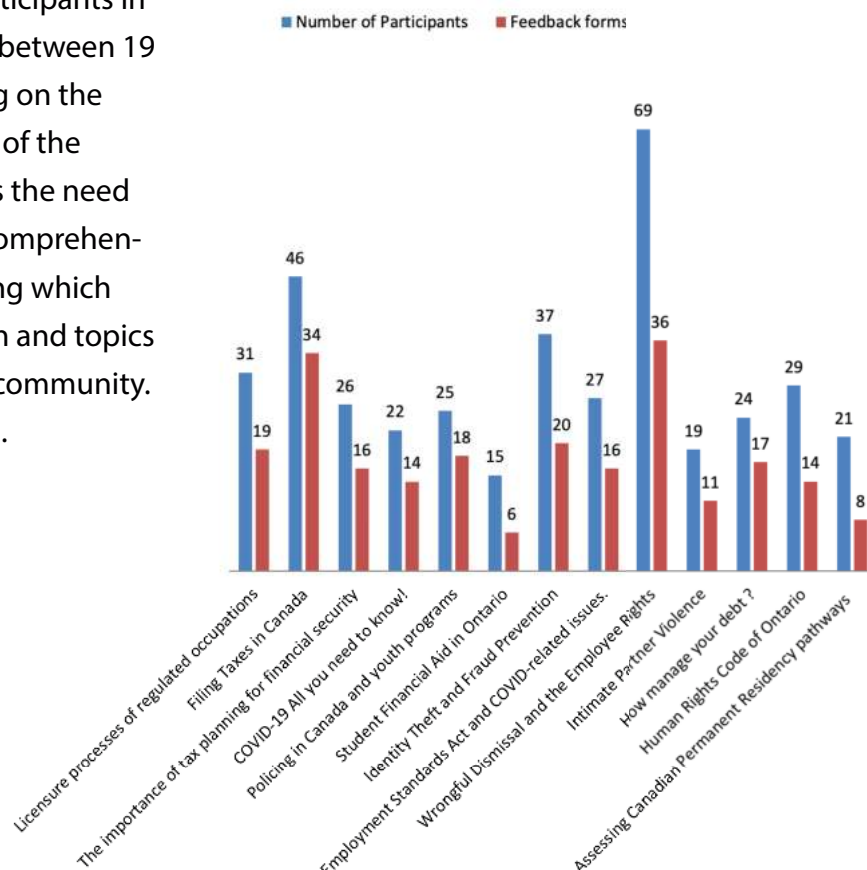


Figure 2: Number of participants between 2020 and 2021.

The number of participants in each session were between 19 and 69, depending on the topic and the time of the session. This shows the need for conducting a comprehensive study indicating which type of information and topics are needed in the community. Please see Figure 3.

Awareness Sessions 2021



RRAI asked the participants to fill out a feedback form after each session to help measure RRAI's performance in each session, aid in developing better methods for conducting RRAI's services, suggest new topics, and evaluate the quality of given information. All feedback about sessions can be seen in Figure 4.

	Workshop topic	Number of Participants	Feedback forms	Workshop materials	Knowledge increased	Recommending this workshop	Considering attending	Overall satisfied
1	Licensure Processes of Regulated Occupations	31	19	9.26	9.10	9.26	9.15	9.21
2	Filing Taxes in Canada	46	34	9.26	9.14	9.17	9.32	9.17
3	The Importance of Tax Planning for Financial Security	26	16	8.64	8.58	8.76	8.76	8.70
4	COVID-19 All You Need to Know!	22	14	9.28	9.28	9.28	9.28	9.28
5	Policing in Canada and Youth Programs	25	18	9.50	9.55	9.55	9.53	9.55
6	Student Financial Aid in Ontario	15	6	9.16	9.16	9.16	9.16	9.16
7	Identity Theft and Fraud Prevention	37	20	9.47	9.31	9.54	9.45	9.50
8	Employment Standards Act and COVID-related Issues	27	16	9.57	9.64	9.77	9.79	9.71
9	Wrongful Dismissal and the Employee Rights	69	36	9.31	9.30	9.42	9.48	9.36
10	Intimate Partner Violence	19	11	9.27	9.23	9.32	9.32	9.29
11	How to Manage Your Debt	24	17	9.05	9.00	8.94	9.00	9.05
12	Human Rights Code of Ontario	29	14	9.00	9.35	9.42	9.53	9.42
13	Assessing Canadian Permanent Residency Pathways	21	8	9.125	8.875	9	9	9.375
TOTAL		391	229	9.22	9.19	9.28	9.29	9.29

Figure 4: Feedback from 2021 participants.

2 THE IMPACT OF RRAI AWARENESS

The total number of participants who attended the Zoom sessions were 391. The participants provided 229 feedback forms with the following results:

- 92.20% of participants indicated that the workshop materials provided were appropriate and helpful.
- 91.90 % of participants indicated that their knowledge increased as a result of participating in the sessions.
- 92 .80% of participants indicated that they would recommend the sessions to other newcomers.
- 92.90% of participants who provided feedback indicated that they would consider attending another workshop organized by the Rights and Responsibilities Awareness Initiative (RRAI).
- 92.90 % of participants stated that "Overall, I was very satisfied with today's workshop."

The service provided by RRAI fills a gap that is not covered by settlement agencies, as RRAI is not limited to certain geographical areas nor limited to particular groups, rather it is open to the public, providing high quality professional information at a low cost.

Awareness of such information is essential for the daily life of newcomers who come from different countries with different laws. As newcomers often place considerable weight on word of mouth when making decisions in different areas of their life, such as where to work and/or study, it is very important to ensure that they have the correct information. This information must come from trustworthy sources that focus on protecting community members from misinformation when conducting their daily transactions.

The total feedback for 2020-2021 is presented in Figure 5; 629 participants provided 413 feedback forms regarding the positive impact that RRAI services are having in the community.

Feedback from all participants in 2020-2021

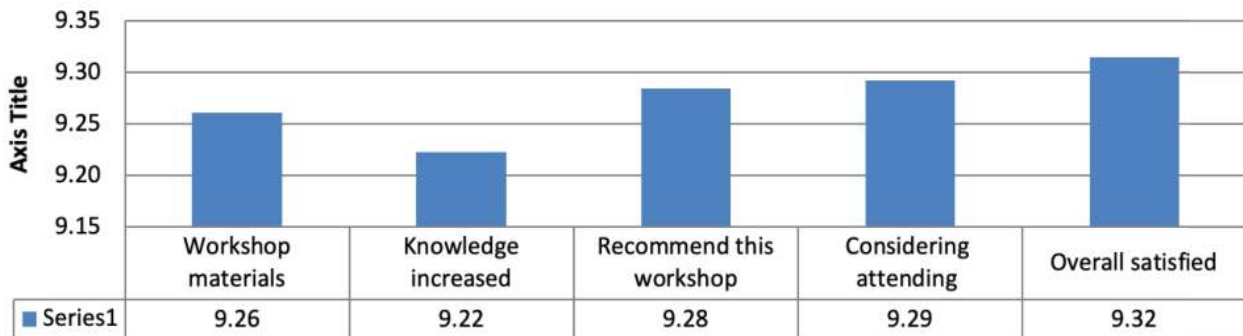


Figure 5: total feedback for 2020-2021.

Between 2020-2021:

- 92.60% of participants indicated that the workshop materials provided were appropriate and helpful.
- 92.20 % of participants indicated that their knowledge increased as a result of participating in the sessions.
- 92.80% of participants indicated that they would recommend the sessions to other newcomers.
- 92.90% of participants who provided feedback indicated that they would consider attending another workshop organized by the Rights and Responsibilities Awareness Initiative (RRAI).
- 93.20 % of participants stated that “Overall, I was very satisfied with today’s workshop”.

This project helped our local community realize:

- The importance of access to justice and understanding of our legal system for newcomers to Canada;
- An understanding of the legal issues faced by newcomers;
- The spread of, and the resistance to, the values of liberal democracy;
- The increasing complexity of modern legal systems; and,
- The importance of social empathy and social justice.

This feedback shows:

- The need in the community for awareness in several topics.
- RRAI’s capability of organizing and conducting the sessions.

3 SESSIONS PRESENTERS

RRAI would like to express thanks to the following presenters:

- **Jie Feng**, M.S.W., RSW/Employment Counsellor /Access Centre for Regulated Employment (ACRE)
- **Daniel Barreiras**, Lending Specialist/Coach at Libro Credit Union
- **Nicole Fenn**, Coach at Libro Credit Union
- **Yaz Haddad**, Silver Peak Accounting
- **Bushra Jabri**, Registered Pharmacist/Rexall Specialty Pharmacy
- **Constable Ziyad Zabian**, London Police Service
- **Heather McFadyen**, Financial Aid Officer/triOS College Business Technology Healthcare
- **Lawrence Burns Staff Lawyer**, Neighbourhood Legal Services
- **Constable Tracey Jackson**, London Police Service
- **S.Michael Lynk**, Faculty of Law - Western University
- **Donnaa Fredrick**, (B.A.Hons, RCIC) Registered Immigration Consultant (R532997)

RRAI is planning to establish a database of experts, as well as an information database, translated to common languages including Arabic, Spanish, and Mandarin, which will be available on the project website. This will work to reduce language barriers in the targeted groups.

4 PUBLIC RECONNECTIONS

1 DIVERSITY, RACE RELATIONS, AND INCLUSIVITY AWARD

London City Council presented the 2021 Diversity, Race Relations, and Inclusivity Award to the Rights and Responsibilities Awareness Initiative at its December 7, 2021 meeting. Our Executive Director, Hetham Karky, thanked The City of London for recognizing RRAI's positive impact on the London community. Board members later met with Mayor Ed Holder for the presentation of a plaque.



RRAI Chair Doug Ferguson, Treasurer Petal Savage, Mayor Ed Holder, Director Lama Abdullh, and Executive Director Hetham Karky at the presentation of the plaque.

2 PILLAR NON-PROFIT NETWORK

The Rights and Responsibilities Awareness Initiative (RRAI) is a current member of the Pillar Non-profit Network. As part of Pillar’s work to support equity seeking organizations, Pillar was pleased to support RRAI with office space at no cost for a period of three months in Pillar’s co-working space in downtown London, Innovation Works.



3 LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

In the spirit of the 2021 holiday season, London Community Foundation supported RRAI with a grant to enable RRAI to continue offering its services within the community.

4 CITY OF LONDON

The City of London listed RRAI as an important resource for newcomers on the Newcomers Day page.

SUPPORTERS

Having a rights and responsibilities awareness initiative has garnered strong support in the London community on both individual and institutional levels.



SUPPORT RRAI

The Rights and Responsibilities Awareness Initiative (RRAI) is a nonprofit, charitable organization. RRAI benefits greatly from financial and in-kind donations from businesses and individuals that believe in the importance of our mission.

Charity Registration Number: 724956479 RR 0001

Business and Corporate Support

To learn how your business can support RRAI please contact: Hetham Karky Executive Director or by calling 226-700-7632.

Donate Online

Donate securely online with your credit card through RRAI Website, and you can receive a charitable receipt immediately by email. Give a one-time donation or monthly donation.



RRAI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rights and Responsibilities Awareness Initiative is governed by a diversified Board of Directors. The role of the Board is to plan and determine policy and be accountable to RRAI Members and the community it serves.

The RRAI Board of Directors are:

- **Douglas D. Ferguson** (Chair) Former Director, Community Legal Services, Western University, Barrister and Solicitor
- **Rafet Sayegh** (Vice-Chair), Business Owner/ BSC/MSc, Electrical Engineering
- **Khamwatie Savage** (Treasurer), Accounting Specialist
- **Prabh S. Gill** (Secretary), Business Owner/Human Rights Activist
- **S. Michael Lynk**, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Western University, UN Special Rapporteur for the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory
- **Steve Hillier**, London City Councillor
- **Frankie Young**, Assistant Professor, Ryerson University
- **Tony Cuzzocrea**, President of Planmar Financial Corp
- **Wafa Dawoud**, Crisis counsellor
- **Oday Ensour**, Business Owner
- **Lama Abdullh**, Student
- **Hetham Karky**, Executive Director





CONTACT US

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