

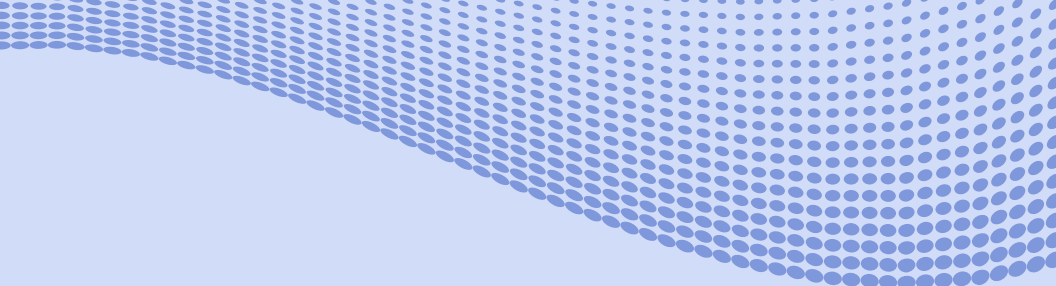


**2022-2023**

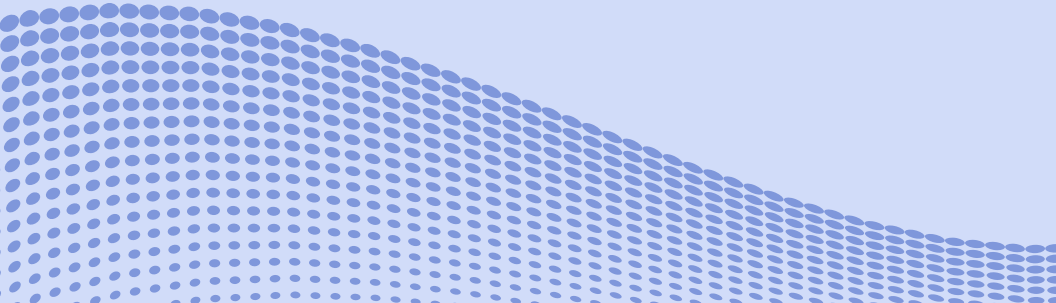
# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**PACIFIC IMMIGRANT  
RESOURCES SOCIETY**





**The Pacific Immigrant Resources Society is grateful to carry out our work on the unceded, unsundered, and ancestral territories of the Coast Salish, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, s'q'eciya? t'əməx<sup>w</sup> (Katzie), Kwantlen, Kwikwetlem, x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəy'əm (Musqueam), Qayqayt, S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō), Stz'uminus, Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), s'cəwaθena? t'əməx<sup>w</sup> (Tsawwassen), selílwitlh (Tseil-Waututh), and Á,LEÑENEÇ ŁTE (W̱SÁNEĆ) nations.**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vision and Mission	2
Report from the Board & Executive Director	3-4
PIRS Strategic Plan	5
Financial Report	6
Programs Overview	7
In the Words of our Participants	8
Impact at a Glance	9
Building a Child Care System that works for Immigrant and Refugee Women	10-11
Newcomers, Food, Insecurity and Pathways Forward	12
Key Learnings from the Newcomers to Canada Food Security and the local food systems research project	13
Program Highlights	14-15
Participant Overview	16
PIRS Trauma-informed Practice Training	17
Participant Story	18
Bursary 2022-2023	19
Fundraising	20
Staff & Volunteers	21-22
Board Members	23
Partners, Key Funders, Friends	24-25

# VISION & MISSION

Our vision is a society that honours the strengths of diverse women and empowers their contributions.

Our mission is to deliver accessible, inclusive, low-barrier programs for immigrant and refugee women and their children that create a sense of belonging, meaningful participation and leadership.



# REPORT FROM BOARD & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Despite the myriad challenges that 2022-2023 threw our way, it was a year of growth and resilience for PIRS. The ongoing displacement from Afghanistan and Ukraine, rising costs of living, and economic instability, meant that demand for PIRS services increased. And PIRS staff, volunteers and the board stepped up, achieving nothing short of extraordinary.

The year started out as a nail biter. Revenue was tight and we anticipated a significant deficit. But as the year unfolded, our overall revenue increased by 21% and the projected deficit dissolved. Overall we increased our impact by 49%.

As we focused on what it means to deliver accessible, inclusive, low-barrier programs for immigrant and refugee women and their children that create a sense of belonging, meaningful participation and leadership, PIRS embarked on a number of projects exploring systems change work which resulted in exciting initiatives in the Childcare and Food Policy spaces.

And we were delighted by the unexpected success of PIRS' fee for service Pop Up Childcare which earned a whopping \$115,000 and employed 7 immigrant women at 131 engagements for a total of 3,784 hours.

Our new governance structure resulted in a board team that is poised to chart the future course of PIRS' work. This remarkable team demonstrates an impressive array of diversity, skills, and talents, making it a true powerhouse. Their collective dedication and commitment to PIRS mission are evident in the work they undertake daily, ensuring that PIRS continues to make a meaningful impact in our community and beyond.

Like so many non profits, we are emerging from the pandemic with a pandemic hangover as government supports end amid increasing needs. Stable multi-year funding continues to be illusive. And we are seeking new avenues for funding.

We are ever grateful to donors who donated in-kind food, supplies, and services at a value of \$283,540 and cash donations totaling \$88,908.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to the 38 volunteers who contributed more than 2,500 hours in programs, on committees, and the Board.

And we thank those who moved on to new adventures including Annie Aftab, Maria Gabriela Cervantes Valarezo, Sanja Sladojevic, Yuanyuan Chen (Stephanie), Yuchen Li. You remain a part of the PIRS family.

We are ever amazed by the passion, tenacity and resilience of the PIRS staff, board and volunteers. Thanks to all of you we are moving forward stronger, together.



**Mariam Bouchoutrouch,**  
Executive Director



**Kathy Price,**  
Board Chair

# PIRS STRATEGIC PLAN

## 2022 - 2025

### Attract and retain qualified people who live our values

- Retain our people by supporting their growth and development
- Invest in our people
- Build the capacity of our Board and volunteers



### Strengthen PIRS brand

- Build PIRS' communication and marketing capacity
- Develop our brand to ensure consistent messaging across the organization
- Increase awareness of PIRS with stakeholders

### Deliver responsive programming

- Pursue research activities to achieve PIRS' vision and mission
- Cultivate our culture of evaluation
- Leverage partnerships to enhance outreach and bridging of immigrant and refugee women to key services



### Build a culture of abundance

- Improve PIRS infrastructure by investing in administrative and organizational systems
- Diversify our funding
- Steward PIRS' donor relationships

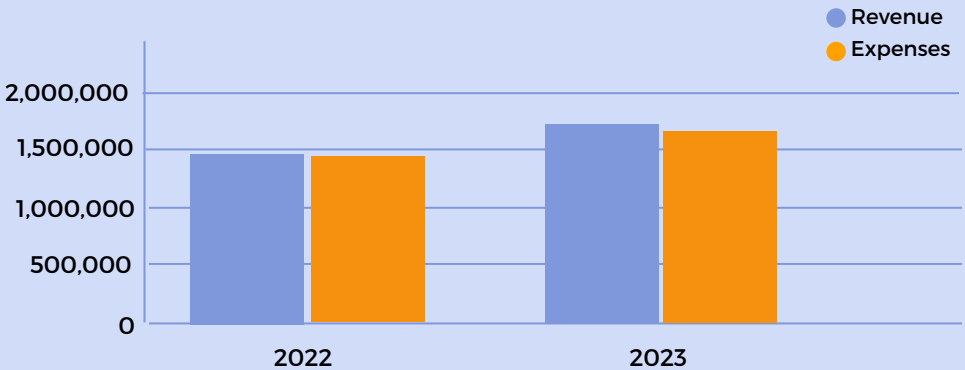
# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Statements of Operations

REVENUE	2023	2022
Grants earned	994,469	745,853
Donations - in-kind	283,540	244,098
Donations - cash	88,908	193,857
Other income	248,348	217,200
Interest and other	11,894	4,090
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,627,159</b>	<b>\$1,405,099</b>

EXPENSES	2023	2022
Salaries and benefits	1,080,515	942,592
Program Expenses	460,435	379,409
Office and other	51,189	48,532
Community relations	33,674	27,948
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,625,813</b>	<b>\$1,398,484</b>

Revenue over expenses for the year	\$1,346	\$6,615
------------------------------------	---------	---------



*\*Full Audited Statements Are Available Upon Request*





# PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

In the 2022-23 programming year, PIRS brought its Vision, Mission, and Values to life in remarkable ways by delivering programs that foster a sense of belonging, meaningful participation, and leadership within our community.

Trauma-Informed Community English Classes helped participants to build language skills, confidence, and knowledge about Canadian society through six classes in Vancouver, New Westminister, Burnaby, and Surrey, with two virtual classes.

New cohorts joined Women's Leadership and Development programs (LEAD, Building Bridges, Childcare Leadership Group, and Immigrant Women Food Policy Group) to build inclusive leadership skills and advocacy capacities.

In January 2023, PIRS launched the Ukrainian Women's Employment Support Circle, offering employment assistance and mentorship for displaced Ukrainians.

Pathways to Childcare Careers welcomed three new cohorts with occupation-specific language learning, Responsible Adult, First Aid, and FoodSafe certifications, work placements, career coaching, and education opportunities.

Parenting and children's programming supported family well-being through stress management, outdoor activities, food and health literacy, and early learning-based home visiting sessions.

In the face of ongoing crises, these programs are crucial for immigrant and refugee women as they offer essential support and resources to address the unique challenges and barriers they face. They empower women to integrate into Canadian society, develop crucial language skills, gain confidence, access employment opportunities, and advocate for their rights.

# IN THE WORDS OF OUR PARTICIPANTS

“I am feeling so happy to come PIRS English class. I learn everything what I need to know to live in Canada.”

“I was in a really vulnerable situation when I joined. ... I didn't feel connected here. I wasn't aware of any community resources... I was completely lost... [Program facilitator] helped me a lot. She changed my perspective... [Building Bridges] made me feel confident about who I am and made me the person I am today.”

“[Pathways to Childcare Careers]... made me interested and excited to study ECE and open my family daycare. [The program] provided me with a lot of advice on how to connect with my kids (especially through RA training). Really like it and love it!”

“I was looking for a job for 8 months. And after the start of the [Ukrainian Women's Employment Support Circle] I got an offer within three weeks. I have used the knowledge [program facilitator] and her guests gave us.”



# IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- 28,827 hours of direct service provided
- 84 women honed their leadership abilities through women's leadership and development programs
- 47 aspiring childcare professionals graduated from our Pathways to Childcare Careers program. Over 40% are already working on-call and 4 graduates secured jobs, including at PIRS
- 282 women built their language skills and 138 children received quality education and care as their mothers studied
- 90 immigrant and refugee children participated in the School's Out Summer Camp
- 67 Ukrainian women received specialized support through training and mentorship



# BUILDING A CHILD CARE SYSTEM THAT WORKS FOR IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

2022-23 was the second year of this system change project funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE). The [Childcare Leadership Group \(CLG\)](#) continued raising awareness about systemic barriers and advocate for an inclusive, accessible childcare system grounded in equity and social justice.

The [Inclusive Child Care For All Summit](#) in Ottawa was a highlight!

CLG shared critical insights on the obstacles faced by immigrant and refugee women in accessing early learning and childcare, and highlighted the need to improve employment opportunities for racialized professionals and promote anti-racism practices.



CLG produced an [insightful video series](#) that reveals often-unseen barriers within the childcare system.

The videos illuminate unique challenges immigrant and refugee women encounter and support the creation of a universal childcare system that is affordable, accessible and inclusive for all.

Scan the QR code to watch the series →



We were thrilled to launch our first photographic exhibition, [Through the Lens: A Photographic Exploration of Exclusion, Inclusion and Belonging in the Childcare System](#), this past March at the Anvil Centre in New Westminster. Through evocative photographs and stories, participants explored their experiences of exclusion, inclusion and belonging within the childcare system.



The exhibition raised awareness about barriers faced and sparked dialogue on the need for an equitable, inclusive approach in building the childcare system. Capturing discrimination but also empowerment and joy, this exhibition provided an opportunity for the community and decision-makers to engage with and learn from the lived experiences of immigrant and refugee women.

In the year ahead, CLG remains dedicated to driving social change through raising awareness and providing recommendations for policy reform.



# NEWCOMERS, FOOD INSECURITY, AND PATHWAYS FORWARD

Canada has only recently started creating a comprehensive food policy to ensure food security among vulnerable populations.

This year, PIRS and the [Institute for Sustainable Food Systems \(ISFS\)](#) at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) completed an important research project on local food access among Metro Vancouver newcomers, thanks to the funding from the [Vancouver Foundation](#) and the [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada \(SSHRC\)](#).



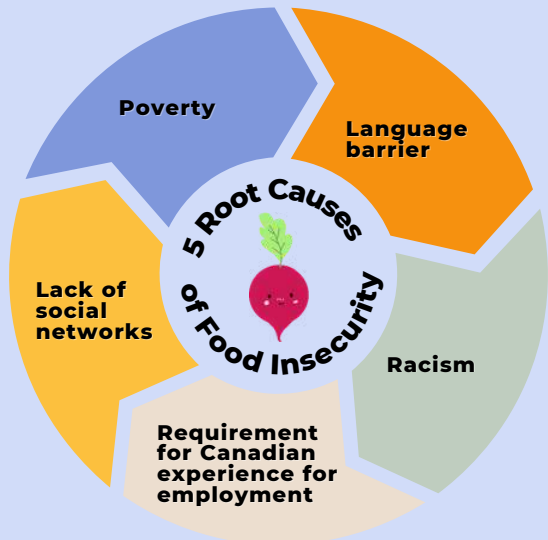
The project centered migrant women with lived experiences by forming the Immigrant Women Food Policy Group (IWFPG). The group convened 12 migrant women from around the world, including South America, Central and South Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa. The IWFPG played a pivotal role by providing their lived experiences to inform our research, while the research team supported them in learning about food policy and self-advocacy.

Through this collaborative approach, we built strong relationships with stakeholders from various sectors, including service providers, business owners, academics, health authorities, and government leaders. In the spring we held stakeholder events in Surrey and Vancouver where IWFPG participants shared personal stories and research findings were presented. Attendees discussed implementing recommendations to help shape action plans.

# KEY LEARNINGS FROM THE NEWCOMERS TO CANADA, FOOD SECURITY AND THE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS RESEARCH PROJECT

1. The top 5 root causes of food insecurity among newcomers are poverty, language barrier, racism, requirement for Canadian experience for employment, and lack of social networks. Poverty affects all populations, while the other factors disproportionately impact newcomers.
2. Social networks and support systems are crucial for newcomers. More programs are needed to address systemic barriers and build social capital to improve long-term health.
3. With 1.5 million new Canadian residents projected by 2025, collaboration between government, providers, community and those with lived experience is required for policy change.

Most importantly, we must advocate for long-term policy solutions to address food insecurity, so that newcomers can consistently access nutritious food with dignity rather than relying on emergency food aid.





# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## Supporting Displaced Ukrainian Women

Since the start of the war in Ukraine, PIRS has provided specialized support to Ukrainian women and children who have arrived in Canada seeking refuge. To address their emerging needs, we have provided training, mentorship, and outreach in their native language. This year we launched the Ukrainian Women's Employment Support Circle and Young Ukrainian Women's Employment Skills training, made possible by funding from IRCC and United Way BC.



Our **Love for Ukraine** event brought community members together to celebrate Ukrainian culture and connect with our local Ukrainian community during this difficult time. Attendees enjoyed traditional varenyky (dumplings) and commemorated the 209th birthday of renowned Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko.

## Nature Field Trips to BC Parks

This spring, we had the opportunity to facilitate nature-based field trips for participants in our Community English Classes and families from the Food Skills program, thanks to the [25x25 Initiative](#) by the [BC Parks Foundation](#).

Connecting with nature is crucial for newcomers, as it allows them to develop a sense of place, belonging, and familiarity in their new community, as well as fostering relationships with the lands on which they now reside.





## School's Out Summer Camp

The summer brought joy and connection to PIRS! Thanks to generous support from [United Way BC's School's Out Summer Fund](#), we hosted a four-week camp for immigrant and refugee children.

Through educational activities, field trips, and family workshops, the young campers explored interests, built skills, and formed friendships, heading back to school with new confidence, eager to learn and engage.



## The Eyeglasses Project

Thanks to the [Eyeglasses Project](#) in partnership with Specsavers, our participants had the opportunity to receive free eye exams and prescription glasses! The Eyeglasses Project is a Vancouver-based, volunteer-led initiative whose mission is to Make Eyesight Accessible.

## Period Poverty Pilot Project

Thanks to United Way BC, PIRS conducted a pilot project to advance period equity, with the findings informing recommendations to be provided to the B.C. Government in March 2024.

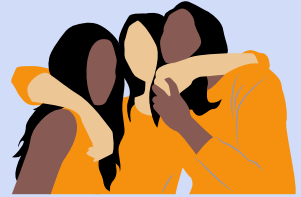
We conducted surveys and focus groups to identify barriers faced by immigrant and refugee women in accessing eco-friendly and culturally safe menstrual products. We also distributed nearly 14,000 eco-friendly products while providing trauma-informed and culturally sensitive education on their usage!



# PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

**THIS YEAR WE SERVED 1439 WOMEN  
AND 521 CHILDREN**

73% of participants were newcomers:  
41% had been in Canada for less than one  
year, 20% - one to three years, 12% - three  
to five years.



The majority of our participants were  
racialized, coming from 45 countries of  
origin and speaking 25 different languages.

Top 10 languages spoken: Spanish, Dari,  
Ukrainian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic,  
Korean, Russian, Tigrinya, Kurdish.



Countries of origin: China (24%), Afghanistan  
(20%), Mexico (10%), Ukraine (8%), Colombia  
(7%), Iran (6%), Taiwan (2%), India (2%),  
Eritrea (2%), Hong Kong (2%), Syria (2%).

92% of participants came to Canada as  
refugees. This is a 26% increase from last  
year.



# PIRS TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE TRAINING

There is an increasing understanding of the importance of trauma-informed practices within the settlement sector and social services more broadly. Recognizing the profound impact that trauma can have on an individual's mental, emotional, and physical health, and integrating this understanding into the services and support provided, we can ensure that newcomers and displaced populations receive the care and support they need to rebuild their lives and become active, resilient members of their new communities.

This year PIRS shared our trauma-informed approach rooted in the principles of control, connection and meaning at the [BC TEAL Annual Conference](#), Salvation Army's Pathway of Hope program, [City in Colour Cooperative](#), Vancouver Community College, and with other providers. It is also included as part of curriculum in the Pathways to Childcare Careers training program.

To learn more about our approach and training that we offer, please visit <https://pirs.bc.ca/what-we-do/trauma-training-for-service-providers/>.



# From Afghanistan to Canada: Wazhma's Journey to Rebuild Her Life

In 2022, Wazhma arrived in Canada, beginning her journey with PIRS. Born in Afghanistan, she earned a Doctor of Medicine degree, majoring in dentistry. However, when the Taliban regained control in Afghanistan, she was forced to leave.

Arriving in Canada was a major transition. Feeling lost at first, she discovered PIRS' programs and enrolled in LEAD and later Building Bridges programs. There, Wazhma was able to focus on rebuilding her confidence, honing leadership skills and connecting with a supportive community of women.

"The programs I have taken with PIRS provided me with great opportunities. Through these programs I was able to deepen my leadership skills and expand my knowledge on different aspects in Canada. I was connected with wonderful people and I received lots of support for fulfilling my goals in Canada. These programs are empowering and I encourage every newcomer woman to become a part of PIRS," Wazhma says.

Following her goal, Wazhma is now pursuing dental certification. The Amy Dalglish Memorial Endowment Fund distributed by PIRS in 2023 supported her registration and preparatory courses at the National Dental Examinations Board of Canada (NDEB). Wazhma now advocates for racialized immigrant women. As she explains, "Women should get involved as women cannot be dependent on husbands here, they need to work and empower themselves... to be strong here, to work here and to have a good future."



# BURSARY 2022-2023

Through gracious support of the George Sisters and Amy Dalgleish Memorial Fund, PIRS proudly offered educational bursaries to eleven deserving immigrant and refugee women who wished to enhance their skills and employment opportunities through education or professional development training. The bursary recipients of 2022-2023 are:



Regine Lijuan Zhang



Wing Han Lok



Eunjung Lee



Chengjun Wang



Jingxian Liang



Amandeep Kaur



Shogofa Alizada



Kyoung-Min Park



Joyceline  
Aligawesa



Wazhma Hakimi



Z.C

# FUNDRAISING

## Year End Fundraising

In the final two months of 2022, PIRS raised \$45,522 with the assistance of campaigns like Giving Tuesday, Winter Warmth, and others.

## Workout for Women's Day (Third Party Fundraising)

Workout for Women's Day is a coming together of local movement studios and instructors to offer by-donation classes for charities that support girls, women, and other humans who experience gender discrimination. The campaign significantly bolstered PIRS's fundraising efforts, generating an impressive \$16,949.41. Notably, this initiative attracted 78 new donors and garnered media attention, with PIRS being featured in four news articles. This took place during March 2023.

## Vancouver Half Marathon

On June 25th, 2023 PIRS participated in the Vancouver Half Marathon to raise funds for our trauma-informed programs. We had 12 runners and raised over \$10,000! Thank-you to our staff, runners, and donors for their tremendous support. We look forward to another successful event next year!



To donate or fundraise for PIRS please visit our website:  
<https://pirs.bc.ca/>



# STAFF

Amal A.N. Nsaif, Amandeep Kaur,  
Amira Ibrahim Chache, Anab Abdi Ali, Anastasia Gaisenok,  
Anastasia Sapelnikova, Anika Anwar, Ann Asselstine, Arlene  
Ordonez, Azadeh, Shakeri Hossein Abad, Bibi Nazira Frotan,  
Camila Torres, Clara Garcia Morales, Dilpreet Tatla, Fereshteh  
Dehdar, Freshta Mohibi, Gui Ling Sheng (Alisa), Guohong Xia  
(Anna), Honey Aujla, Jaeyeon Jung (Jane), Jankeez Hasan  
Alahmad, Keila Berenice Bohorquez, Kyoung-Min Park (Mina),  
Leanna Inokoshi, Maliha Mayeed, Mariam Bouchoutrouch, Maria  
Gabriela Cervantes Valarezo, Mariana Susana Gassmann,  
Martha Elizabeth Alkenbrack (Betsy), Natalie Siewert,  
Nongkran Ho (Yuki), Nooshin Rabierad, Olena Zabrodska, Qing  
Du (Chelsea), Rabia Kaihan, Razia Waziri, Roghayeh Ganbarian  
Toodeshki (Lena), Ruta Sebhatu Hidat, Sahar Allahdadi, Sanja  
Sladojevic, Sanzida Z. Habib, Sawsan Hamie, Shogofa Alizada,  
Steffi Burgi, Sukhmeet Kaur, Valerie Wing Lai, Wenxiao Bi,  
Yuanyuan Chen (Stephanie), Yuchen Li, Zarminah Mohammad  
Ali



# VOLUNTEERS & INTERNS



38 Volunteers contributed 2500 Hours

Anab Ali, Ann Talbot, Bassil Alabadilah, Clara Garcia, Coleman Lai, Edith Ramirez Vazquez, Edilma Flores, Eunjung Lee, Farrin Kheramand, Fatima Zahrae, Fiona Wu, Hamida Parvin, Hannah Lai, Ho Ching Tam (Blanche), Izamara Maro, Kai Qi Lin (Poly), Karmen Wong, Keefe Wong, Keila Bohorquez, Khwaish Kochhar, Luiza Teixeira, Mandeesh Atwal, Nancy Cervantes-Gaes, Nancy Ramirez Vazquez, Natalia Botero, Noora Al-Otaibi, Nooshin Rabierad, Olena Zabrodska, Perla Retiz Hernandez, Shakeela Faizi, Shalini Prakash Lal, Suha Salih, Talissa De Frias, Tamie Veras Miyahira, Xindy Wang (Cindy), Yanling He, Zakaria Ahmadi, Zarlisht Noori,

PIRS wishes to take this opportunity to recognize the support of all the interns towards achieving the mission and vision of PIRS:

Morgan Georgia Coates Hutchison,  
Carlos Duran-Cabanas,  
Harpreet Kaur, Kim Ma,  
Talissa Elizabeth Defrias, Wai Ku Chan (Vikki)



# BOARD MEMBERS



**Kathy Price**  
(Chair)



**Angela Heino**  
(Vice Chair)



**Melissa Guillergan**  
(Co-Treasurer)



**Sonam Swarup**  
(Co-Treasurer)



**Fatima K. Ahmed**  
(Secretary)



**Annie Aftab**  
(Secretary)



**Perna Thaker**



**Coral Gonzales  
Gutierrez**



**Renuka Sarup Seru**



**Shams Alibhai**



**Sidra Mobin**

# **PARTNERS, KEY FUNDERS, FRIENDS**

**PIRS is active in many coalitions and networks,  
including the following:**

Alliance for Gender Justice in Migration  
Alliance for Racialized, Refugee and Im/migrant Women  
AMSSA Regional Service Provider meetings  
Burnaby ECD Table  
Burnaby Immigration Partnership Table (BIPT)  
Burnaby Inter-Agency Council  
Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table  
BC Poverty Reduction Coalition  
Cedar Cottage Area Service Providers  
Early Childhood Educators of BC (Sector Steering Committee Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy)  
Family Initiatives CAPC Coalition  
Feminist Deliver Organizing Committee  
First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition  
Multi Agency Partnership (MAP)  
New Westminster Immigration Table (WINS)  
South Fraser Refugee Readiness Team (RRT)  
South Fraser RRT - Food Justice Working Group  
South Van Neighbourhood House Food Hub Spoke  
South Vancouver Area Service Providers  
South Vancouver Early Years Table  
Surrey Local Immigration Partnership (LIP)  
Vancouver Local Immigration Partnership (VLIP)  
Wage Grid Advisory Committee - The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

## Partners

- BC Council for Families
- Cameray Child and Family Services
- City in Color Cooperative
- Columbia College
- Decoda Literacy Solutions
- Greater Vancouver Food Bank
- Healthy Together Program
- Holy Trinity Cathedral
- Journey Home Burnaby
- Immigrant Employment Council of BC
- Institute for Canadian Citizenship
- Institute for Sustainable Food Systems, Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- Kids Have Stress Too Program
- MOSAIC
- Muslim Food Bank
- PlayLearnGrowTogether.ca
- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC
- Women's Economic Council

## Funders

- BC Parks Foundation
- City of New Westminster
- City of Vancouver
- CLICK Foundation
- Columbia College
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Greater Vancouver Food Bank
- Hamber Foundation
- Houssian Foundation
- Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada
- Institute for Sustainable Food Systems, KPU
- MAZON Canada
- Metro Vancouver
- Province of BC - Community Gaming Grant
- Province of BC - Work Experience Grant
- Public Health Agency of Canada - CAPC
- Surrey Cares Community Foundation
- TELUS Friendly Future Foundation
- The Federation of Community Social Services of BC
- The University of British Columbia
- United Way British Columbia
- Vancity Community Foundation
- Vancouver Foundation
- Women and Gender Equality Canada

## Neighbourhood Houses

- Burnaby Neighbourhood House
- Collingwood Neighbourhood House
- Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House
- Kiwassa Neighbourhood House
- Marpole Neighbourhood House
- South Vancouver Family Place
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House



**1874 Kingsway, Vancouver B.C. V5N 2S7**  
**www.pirs.bc.ca email: info@pirs.bc.ca**  
**Tel: 604-298-5888 Fax: 604-298-7115**

**© PIRS Annual Report 2022-2023**

