



**NATIONAL
COUNCIL
OF CANADIAN
MUSLIMS**
Your Voice. Your Future.

CANADIAN MUSLIM ADVOCACY



A TOOLKIT FOR NCCM VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS

#STRONGERTOGETHERCA



1 //	<u>About NCCM</u>	3
2 //	<u>What is the Stronger Together Initiative?</u>	9
3 //	<u>How to Organize an NCCM Team</u>	12
4 //	<u>Engaging with Politicians</u>	22
5 //	<u>Engaging with Media</u>	29
6 //	<u>Engaging with Schools</u>	32
7 //	<u>Engaging with Police</u>	34
8 //	<u>How to Organize Community Conversations</u>	37
9 //	<u>Sample Community Conversation</u>	44
10 //	<u>Glossary</u>	46

1

ABOUT NCCM



The National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) is an independent, non-partisan and non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the human rights & civil liberties of Canadian Muslims (and by extension of all Canadians), promoting their public interests, building mutual understanding and challenging Islamophobia and other forms of xenophobia.

Built from within the Canadian Muslim community, the NCCM is a leading voice for Muslim civic engagement and the promotion of human rights. Working in partnership with grassroots communities, the NCCM engages in professional activism and develops strategies in anti-discrimination, community education & outreach, media relations and public advocacy to effectively represent the interests of a broad and diverse range of Canadian Muslims. As a long-standing Canadian organization, the NCCM has an exemplary record of defending rights and liberties, promoting active citizenship and upholding Canadian pluralism.

With its national office in Ottawa and a team of professional staff, Board members, and activists, the NCCM is building the next generation of Canadian Muslim advocacy.



OUR GUIDING VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

1. NCCM believes in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in upholding the fundamental rights of all Canadians.
2. NCCM believes that core Islamic values are aligned with and reflect Canadian values including equality, freedom, inclusiveness and justice.
3. NCCM believes that Canada's multiculturalism and the contributions of Canadian Muslims strengthen our nation's democracy.
4. NCCM believes active citizenship is the responsibility of all Canadians.
5. NCCM believes there is no dichotomy between human rights and public security; rather, they share a symbiotic relationship.
6. NCCM consistently and categorically condemns all acts of violence against civilians and non-combatants irrespective of the perpetrator and believes there is never any justification for terrorism.



PUBLIC ADVOCACY

Public advocacy is a cornerstone of the NCCM's mandate. The NCCM frequently appears before federal and provincial parliamentary committees on legislation and public policy measures that impact civil liberties, human rights and Canadian Muslim communities. We monitor legislative initiatives, submit briefs that articulate a vital perspective and engage with government officials, parliamentarians and other elected leaders. The NCCM has also testified before and participated in major commissions of inquiry including the Maher Arar Public Inquiry, the Air India Public Inquiry and the Iacobucci Internal Inquiry.

The NCCM further monitors and intervenes in major cases before the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) and other levels of court concerning fundamental rights and civil liberties. To date, NCCM has intervened in several human rights cases at the SCC on issues of national importance.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Have you ever experienced or witnessed injustice where you live? Have you wanted to take action to advance the protection of civil liberties but weren't sure how? Have you ever wanted to help others in your city or community better understand Canadian Muslims?

This toolkit will empower you with the tools and resources necessary to advocate for greater social justice. Taking a grassroots approach, the main purpose of this toolkit is to facilitate your work with NCCM at the local level, to engage in meaningful public advocacy and to promote the constitutional rights and freedoms of all Canadians.

Furthermore, this toolkit will help you organize a local NCCM advocacy team and build community conversations about significant civic issues, as well as guide you how to foster an effective working relationship with your local elected officials, school administrators and staff, media representatives, and police. Working with NCCM's national advocacy coordinators, you will also be connected to a network of individuals in other communities to create positive change at the national and local levels.

Are you ready to help build a more just society? Are you ready to be stronger together? If so, then read on!

Please direct any questions you may have about NCCM's grassroots advocacy work and this toolkit to one of our national advocacy coordinators by phone (toll free) 1-866-524-0004 or by email:



Fatima Sajan
fsajan@nccm.ca



Rizwan Mohammad
rmohammad@nccm.ca



This is your opportunity to be even more engaged and better informed around the issues that affect you and your communities.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYr68T5-zrU>



2

WHAT IS THE
STRONGER TOGETHER
INITIATIVE?



Advocacy

The act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, policy, or interest, or active support of an idea

NCCM'S NATIONAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

Imagine meeting with your local Member of Parliament and presenting a briefing on a major piece of legislation knowing that NCCM teams across Canada are doing the exact same with their MPs!

Or imagine speaking to local school board officials and discussing challenges that are faced by Muslim students across the country and offering workshops and resources.

We need a strong and coordinated national voice on issues that matter to us as Canadian Muslims. The National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) is that trusted voice. We've been at the forefront of promoting and protecting the public interests of Canadian Muslim communities for over 15 years.

Our goal is to create NCCM teams ready and able to address issues that matter to Canadian Muslims with local elected officials, community leaders, police services, media outlets, and others who engage with Canadian Muslims in a variety of ways. The central goal is to build or further nurture existing relationships between various stakeholders around issues that matter to all Canadians.

The NCCM teams will work on various campaigns throughout the year, including:

- **A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE SOLIDARITY AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA:** Inviting fellow Canadians to endorse a Charter for Inclusive Communities. This Charter aims to unite Canadians against Islamophobia, to further nurture safe and cohesive communities.
- **A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON BILL C-51, THE ANTI-TERRORISM ACT, 2015:** To brief local Members of Parliament about the NCCM's position on this controversial and far-reaching law.
- **ADVANCING THE NCCM'S NATIONAL HATE CRIMES CAMPAIGN:** By liaising with local communities and police to raise awareness and increase reporting and investigating of hate crimes.

- **MEDIA ENGAGEMENT:** Engage with local media to highlight achievements of the Muslim community, to talk about the issues affecting Canadian Muslims and to raise any concerns about biased or Islamophobic content.
- **PROMOTING INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS & ADDRESSING ISLAMOPHOBIA IN SCHOOLS:** Working closely with school administrators and staff to ensure educators and parents are working in unison to address the impact of Islamophobia on students, as well as to promote cohesive classrooms for students of all backgrounds.

The NCCM has developed the expertise, resources and the institutional capacity to support such an important grassroots movement and wants to advance the momentum and interest among Canadian Muslim communities to be civically engaged. The NCCM's professional staff and partners will work to train volunteers, helping to build community capacity right across the country.

To help make this happen, the NCCM will be calling on Canadian Muslim leaders to help build this movement in every region of Canada. We want you to be a part of it.

**STRONGER TOGETHER
TAKE THE PLEDGE**

3

ORGANIZING AN
NCCM TEAM IN YOUR
COMMUNITY

1-866-524-0004 | www.nccm.ca



Joining the NCCM's Stronger Together initiative means becoming a more active and engaged Canadian Muslim. This is not the time to sit on the sidelines. NCCM will give you the training and tools to become an empowered citizen. The vision is simple: we're building the next generation of Canadian Muslim advocacy.

**Kashif A. Ahmed,
NCCM Board Chair,
Vancouver**



We all want to see positive change in our communities. Stronger Together provides all of us a clear way to do that; through national strategies and enthusiastic and informed teams mobilized across the country.

**Ihsaan Gardee,
NCCM Executive Director,
Ottawa**



The Muslim community in Canada must become influential enough to affect how the public perceives important issues in our post-9/11 climate. I volunteer with NCCM because it will help Canadian Muslims reach this goal by putting pressure on our elected officials and media outlets to do the right thing.

**Steven Zhou,
NCCM Stronger Together
Team, Toronto**



Community is our most important defense when it comes to nearly every social ill. I volunteer with Stronger Together because it builds and fortifies our community.

**Assya Moustaqim-Barrette,
NCCM Stronger Together Team, Toronto**



De nos jours, l'image des musulmans est constamment salie et déformée dans la sphère publique. Ainsi, je pense qu'il est de ma responsabilité de m'impliquer dans une organisation tel NCCM qui travaille sans relâche à projeter une image positive des musulmans dans la société canadienne."

**Eduardo Alves Dos Anjos
NCCM Stronger Together Team, Montreal**



NCCM team members with The Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister of Democratic Institutions (pictured at center), at the national launch of the Stronger Together Initiative in Toronto, December 2015.

Since its inception, the NCCM has recognized that its continued strength and credibility lies with grassroots support and participation from communities across Canada. Volunteers are truly our greatest asset. Their efforts are integral to helping Canada to become more inclusive and even more welcoming.

Our volunteer team members will work independently, or where possible, with existing local community groups, in coordination with NCCM's national staff to promote informed engagement in four key areas:

1. Engaging with elected officials on public policy.
2. Engaging with law enforcement on hate crimes.

3. Engaging with local media on more accurate and representative coverage.
4. Engaging with schools on racism and bullying.

NCCM teams form for a variety of reasons. There is no single way for a team to form, but there are some steps we need you to go through in order to ensure that you have the necessary tools and training to maximize your impact and success. As a Team, you will work closely with NCCM's national Advocacy Coordinators. It's important to establish a clear working relationship at the outset.

5 STEPS TO TAKE ACTION!



1. **TAKE THE PLEDGE** If you haven't already done so, commit to joining a team in your community: <http://www.nccm.ca/programs/stronger-together/>



2. **CONTACT** the national Advocacy Coordinators of the NCCM to start a conversation about the idea of creating an NCCM Team in your community. Find out if there is already a team in your community, or if there are others who have already taken the Stronger Together Pledge.



3. **GATHER** a group of at least three people, if there isn't already a team in your community, who agree to be lead members of the Team and are committed to the goals of the NCCM.



4. **ORGANIZE** a Start Up Meeting for your NCCM Team.



5. **GO ONLINE** to fill out the [Stronger Together Volunteer Confirmation Form](#)

INTRODUCTORY WEBINAR

Once you have created a team, the Advocacy Coordinator will work with you to decide a date for an introductory webinar about the Stronger Together Initiative and on volunteering with NCCM. It will be an opportunity to answer any questions team members may have.

Hold your own meeting to get rolling!

Decide on a date that works for your 3+ members and does not conflict with other events in your community. It's best to hold all meetings in a local community space that is welcoming and comfortable for all team members. Let others know about the start-up meeting at local mosques, community centres, and via social media in case others are interested in joining or learning more.

At this meeting you'll need to establish some roles for members of the team - most importantly who is going to be the contact person for us to work most closely with and their proxy if they are not available. Ideally, volunteers should commit to being involved in the team for at least one full year.



MANDATE OF A TEAM

The NCCM Teams shall, in addition to carrying out the Stronger Together Initiative campaigns:

- **OPERATE DEMOCRATICALLY**
Operate in a manner consistent with the inclusive, participatory, and democratic aims of the NCCM. Teams should be as representative of the local communities as possible.
- **LIAISE WITH NCCM NATIONAL**
Liaise regularly with and report to the NCCM's national office about their activities.
- **ENGAGE THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**
Engage with the community about local issues that reflect NCCM values and principles and reflect the objectives of the national Stronger Together Initiative.
- **ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION**
Encourage broad participation in NCCM campaigns by volunteers and the community through public meetings and events.
- **ESTABLISH A PRESENCE**
Work to establish a presence in the community such that the NCCM is visibly engaged in taking a leadership role in the broader movement for human rights, civil liberties and social justice.

DEFINITION OF A TEAM

NCCM Teams work to realize the mandate of the national organization in their communities. A Team is defined as: at least three (3) active volunteers with the NCCM who work together, on a regular basis and in a democratic manner, to participate in NCCM initiatives like Stronger Together, local coalition building and local civic engagement. A Team is comprised of volunteer members of the Council who attend team meetings on a regular basis. A Team is not considered to be comprised of the entire Council membership in a given region.





BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL TEAMS

- Knowledge of NCCM and its work. Get familiar with the details at www.nccm.ca (Be ready for a pop quiz!)
- At least three active members who share the responsibility for the Team in a democratic, participatory manner.
- A reliable contact person, with an e-mail address, who will share information received with members of the team. This person must consent to have their name, phone number, email address, and photo published on the NCCM website and in our newsletters.
- Regular meetings that are open to people who wish to become active with the Team.
- Adherence to the NCCM's Guiding Values and Principles.
- Submission of annual Team Reports at the end of the year (ie. December 2017).

HOLD THE MEETING!

Remember, before the START UP meeting, every team member is required to go online to fill out the following:

STRONGER TOGETHER VOLUNTEER CONFIRMATION - the most important form to establish that you agree to work with the National Council of Canadian Muslims and in accordance with its Guiding Values and Principles.

This Form includes:

NCCM VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT - clarifies a commitment to protecting and maintaining the integrity and privacy of information, organizational or personal.

NCCM MEDIA RELEASE AGREEMENT- allows the NCCM to publish your picture and/or video of you as part of NCCM's educational or promotional material.

NATIONAL TEAMS



Teams of NCCM volunteers have already begun to form coast to coast in:

**Vancouver | Calgary | Edmonton | Winnipeg | Windsor | London
Toronto | Ottawa | Montreal | Halifax | Charlottetown**

To find out how you can join an existing team or start a new team in your locality, contact NCCM at **1-866-524-0004** or email our national advocacy coordinators:



Fatima Sajan
fsajan@nccm.ca



Rizwan Mohammad
rmohammad@nccm.ca

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEAM



Teams members shall:

1. Meet in person on a monthly basis, at least.
2. Become knowledgeable about the NCCM's mission and mandate.
3. Complete requisite training for the **Stronger Together Initiative** and NCCM campaigns as provided by an Advocacy Coordinator and the national office.
4. Encourage regular participation of NCCM's volunteers in the team's work.
5. Strive to have a presence in the community through media work, organizing events, and participation in community activities.
6. Develop and adhere to defined processes for the operation of the team that encourage and facilitate the participation of local NCCM members and result in the sharing of responsibility for activities.
7. Keep a written record (minutes) of proceedings at all team meetings.
8. Ensure that commitments made, materials, correspondence or articles written or produced in the name of the NCCM Team be approved in advance by NCCM national and that the team is clearly identified on all paperwork, announcements, and correspondence.
9. Take responsibility for ensuring that any public speaking or media events in which the NCCM Team is involved convey accurate information and in keeping with the NCCM's campaigns, mission, Guiding Values and Principles. Consult NCCM staff prior to any media or public speaking events.

Keep them on record in a Google Docs Folder and share with an Advocacy Coordinator within one day of the meeting.

10. Consult an Advocacy Coordinator if your NCCM Team wants to work on local issues not directly related to the NCCM's national *Stronger Together Initiative*. A decision can then be made about how much support NCCM can offer and/or if it fits the organization's mandate.
11. Agree that no individual member of the NCCM Team will receive any personal remuneration for work done in the name of the NCCM or the Team unless otherwise authorized in writing by the national organization. Contact NCCM's national office for clarification. All honoraria received for presentations or payments for publications must be remitted to the national office along with any accompanying documentation (e.g. email correspondence, etc).
12. Understand that only basic expenses may be reimbursed, and that any expenditures must be first approved by an Advocacy Coordinator.
13. Agree and ensure that no government money, foundation money, or donations from any political party or interest group shall be solicited or accepted for use by the NCCM Team. Donations from any foreign government or foreign organizations or individuals are prohibited.

We hope that this provides you with enough information to get your team started and we look forward to working with you!

WORKING ON AN ISSUE

Depending on the size of an NCCM team, members can group themselves according to their interests, or based on where they feel they already have existing relationships. As mentioned, NCCM teams will be initially focusing on four areas: engaging with elected officials, media, police, and schools. What follows is a general overview of what teams need to know and begin thinking about around each of these areas. Work on these areas can occur simultaneously, or one at a time, or even as issues arise. Teams will ideally include members who are specifically interested in at least one or two of these areas. Community outreach within local Muslim communities is integral to the success of all of these campaigns.

Remember: What follows is a general overview of each of the areas the Stronger Together Initiative is focusing on. NCCM will be providing opportunities to explore each of these areas further through a variety of ways including through webinars, conference calls, and in-person training. Additionally, as new issues emerge, NCCM teams will be provided with guidance on how to respond appropriately.

COLLABORATION

Whenever possible, NCCM teams are encouraged to work alongside existing local organizations for a common purpose. However, such collaborations should be first discussed with the Advocacy Coordinators to ensure compliance with NCCM's mandate and the aims of the *Stronger Together Initiative*.



4

STRONGER
TOGETHER
CAMPAIGN 1:

ENGAGING WITH
ELECTED OFFICIALS



ENGAGING YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (MP)

As Canadians, we vote for our Members of Parliament to be our voice in government. Therefore, it is part of our MPs' mandates to engage their constituents and be aware of their concerns. And while MPs may not have direct authority over policy decisions, they can influence the policy making process through party caucuses, standing committees and private members' bills in Parliament by bringing their constituencies' concerns to the forefront of policy discussions. This is exactly why engaging MPs is an important advocacy tactic.

You can identify your local MP by entering your postal code on [*this online service*](#). You can call, e-mail or fax your MP's office but the best way to engage your MP is through an in-person meeting. To schedule a meeting, e-mail or call your constituency office, provide your name, postal code and the reason you would like to meet with the

MP. It is a good idea to have a look at the [*parliamentary calendar*](#) to know when your MP will likely be in the office. Ideally, you should contact the constituency office at least three weeks prior to when you would like to have your meeting, and be flexible in providing them meeting times to choose from. It is also a good idea to time the meeting strategically, for example, in advance of a key parliamentary vote.

Below are some tips to keep in mind before, during, and after your meeting with your MP:

BEFORE THE MEETING

- Do your research on the issue that you seek to address. Contact the NCCM national office for briefing or policy materials on the issue, and to discuss your main messages before you meet



with an elected official. Based on this, prepare speaking notes on how to define the issue, its implications and the proposed solutions.

Familiarize yourself with your MP's stance on the issue that you are raising so that you can tailor your arguments accordingly. A helpful tool for this is openparliament.ca

- Be mindful of the time that you have been allotted and prepare your material accordingly. Be friendly and knowledgeable about your local community.
- Dress business casual.

AT THE MEETING

- Outline your objective for the meeting and frame it in a way that emphasizes your common values and goals. Focus on and make it clear you are seeking to establish a working relationship with your MP.
- In advocacy efforts, it is important to use language that helps individuals

see ideas in a way that acknowledges everyone's shared values. Use terms such as fairness, justice, equality, etc.

- Use analytical rather than descriptive language to explain why addressing the issue at hand is so critical.
- Relay to your MP that if they choose to champion your cause, they will not be alone. Convey the interest that has gathered around the issue and the support that is in favour of your stance. A good way to do this is to present a petition with signatures from your fellow constituents and community leaders.
- Acknowledge counter-arguments and deliver well-prepared responses.
- Propose your solutions! Explain why your recommendations are credible and offer yourself as a resource to help work out solutions to problems that may arise.
- The best way to end meetings with MPs is by proposing some short-

term actionable items or “asks”. The following are some examples:

- Invite them to participate in a community event or public awareness campaign surrounding the issue that you are seeking to address.
- Ask them to make a statement in the House of Commons. There is a fifteen minute period allotted for ***Statements by Members*** prior to Question Period, in which MPs are each given a minute to make statements on matters of national, regional or local importance.
- Suggest questions that they can ask during Question Period. This is ideal if your MP belongs to one of the opposition parties in parliament.
- Ask them to raise your concerns during a committee hearing or meeting they are part of.
- Request them to relay your questions and concerns to a relevant Minister or someone who is a strong critic of your stance in parliament.
- Encourage them to make a motion by proposing a new piece of legislation.
- Ask them to suggest a course of action you could pursue to champion your cause!
- After discussing some actionable items, leave a one-page briefing note that summarizes the issue that you are raising, its significance and implications, and possible recommendations. This should also contain your contact information.
- Finally, thank your MP for giving you the opportunity to meet with them.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Talk to your Team members about what worked, what didn't and what could be done better the next time you meet your MP.
- Follow up with your MP with a thank you card or e-mail, and ask them what course of actions they have taken up since your first meeting. Request to schedule a follow up meeting to discuss next steps!
- Build alliances with other organizations that support your cause and ask them to reach out to their MPs to build country-wide momentum around the issue.

QUICK TIP:

Remember, this approach applies to any issue you would like to raise with an elected official, at any level of government!



Policy

WHAT IS THE ANTI-TERRORISM ACT (BILL C-51) & WHY DO WE NEED TO TAKE ACTION?

COLLECTIVE EFFORT

Stronger Together is NCCM's largest and most comprehensive national grassroots advocacy initiative to date. Activists, leaders, and community members in general have come together in order to advocate on issues pertinent to Canadian Muslims. In order to be heard and to bring change to public policy and the legislative agenda, it is vital that Canadian Muslims be a part of national policy discussions.

ANTI-TERRORISM ACT, 2015

The Anti-terrorism Act, commonly known as Bill C-51, became law on June 18, 2015. It has been described as the most comprehensive national security reform act of its kind since the passing of the Anti-terrorism Act, 2001. Bill C-51 has serious ramifications for us all.

Canada's constitutional document, *the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, upholds our civil liberties by ensuring citizens have the freedom of speech, conscience, religion and the right to peaceful assembly. Bill C-51 is full of problems. Some of these include granting Canada's national security

apparatus the unprecedented power to restrict people's freedom of movement, the ability to rely on reduced thresholds for arrest and detention, and withholding evidence on national security grounds.

It is the duty of Canadian Muslims to ensure that our civil liberties, as enshrined in the Charter, continue to be protected by participating in strengthening Canada's democracy.

NCCM has identified six troubling areas within Bill C-51 which significantly endanger or reduce the rights and freedoms of Canadians:

1. The lack of clearly defining the phrase "security of Canada";
2. The ability of Federal Court judges to issue warrants on the basis of secret court proceedings;
3. Vague provisions about the banning, advocacy or the promotion of "terrorism offences in general";
4. The unfettered sharing of personal information of Canadians between government agencies;
5. Preventive arrest: indefinite detention up to seven days without charge;
6. Passenger Protect: Canada's No-Fly List.

The national objective is to empower and train teams of Canadian Muslims across Canada to advocate with their local MPs about the NCCM's recommendations for Bill C-51 as prepared by our team of experts.

Seminars held by NCCM intend to educate Canadian Muslims on Bill C-51 in easy-to-understand language, and by informing them on how Bill C-51 can affect all Canadian citizens by infringing their basic rights and protections. Finally, we are aiming to empower Canadian Muslims on how to create change by using a take home action plan about challenging and eliminating these draconian laws through sustained civic engagement.

For a more detailed summary of NCCM's position on Bill C-51, read our policy document: <http://tinyurl.com/j8urcb8>

DON'T FORGET:

In addition to Bill C-51, there are other issues that Canadian Muslims care about, and these can vary depending on community context and emerging issues. As teams establish relationships with MPs, Members of Provincial Parliament or Members of Legislative Assemblies (MPPs/MLAs), and city councillors, the issues that directly impact civil liberties and human rights can be further discussed at subsequent meetings as part of the local NCCM team's outreach.



CHARTER FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

NCCM TEAMS ACROSS CANADA WILL BE WORKING TO ENCOURAGE BROAD BASED SUPPORT FOR THIS CHARTER. TEAMS WILL BE ENGAGING WITH LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS, CIVIL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES, AND OTHER ALLIES.

PREAMBLE

The recent rise in anti-Muslim incidents in Canada is disturbing and risks eroding the strength of our country's rich social fabric. When Muslim women are attacked in the streets, when mosques are vandalized or when people face prejudice in their workplace or school, it is not only Canadian Muslims that suffer; Canadian society as a whole is weakened because our values of equality, respect, justice and dignity for all are threatened.

Hate crimes against Muslims have risen dramatically in recent years both in Canada, and around the world. Given the unfortunate climate of fear that seems to have entered some segments of public life, it appears that this trend is increasing.

Islamophobia is real and it is wrong, despite what some may say to downplay it or dismiss it. This type of hate and discrimination tells Canadian Muslims that they do not belong by isolating them and their communities through stigmatization and casting them as outsiders and the 'other'.

OUR COMMITMENT

By signing this Charter, we commit to standing up for the rights and dignity of everyone in order to promote inclusive, just, and respectful communities in Canada.

We strongly affirm that:

- Islamophobia, like all other forms of racism, hate, xenophobia, and bigotry, has no place in Canadian society.
- Discrimination and acts of hate against anyone marginalize individuals and communities and exclude them from participating fully in society and fulfilling their potential.
- The dignity of every person in Canada is essential to a healthy and vibrant society.
- Everyone in Canada has a role to play in creating safe environments for us all.
- All levels of government, civil society, communities, and public officials have a duty to work together in developing policies, programs and initiatives to reduce and eliminate Islamophobia in all of its forms.
- By working together, we can nurture inclusive communities and strengthen our shared commitment to Canada's values of equality, respect, justice, and the dignity of all persons.

You can sign and view the endorsements for the Charter at: www.nccm.ca/charter



5

STRONGER
TOGETHER
CAMPAIGN 2:

ENGAGING WITH
LOCAL MEDIA



ENGAGING LOCAL JOURNALISTS

- In recent polling, Canadian Muslims have cited media coverage of Islam and Muslims as one of their top concerns.
- An emerging issue has become how media outlets refer to the violent extremist group Daesh, also known as the so-called “Islamic State”. The NCCM is working hard to encourage media outlets to use the term Daesh instead of “Islamic State”, because they are neither a “state” nor acting in accordance with the mainstream teachings and values of Islam. The Toronto Star became the first media outlet to do so, in part, through NCCM’s advocacy on this issue.

- NCCM Team members can request to meet with local editorial board staff at newspapers, and/or local radio/television producers to discuss these points.
- The first and most important goal of any discussions is to establish relationships with local media so as to promote healthy exchanges of information and story ideas. As well as to be able to respond to any Islamophobic coverage.

QUICK LINKS:

NCCM Op-Ed on why using “*Daesh*” makes more sense

<http://tinyurl.com/jtsdbkr>

Toronto Star decision to use ‘ term “*Daesh*”

<http://tinyurl.com/gvpwr37>

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR / TALKING POINTS

Dear [Insert Full Name of Editor]

I am writing to you today to bring to your attention the decision by the *Toronto Star* to use the term Daesh to describe the terrorist group that calls itself the Islamic State/ISIS/ISIL.

Daesh is the acronym for the long-form Arabic title of the group, al-Dawla al-Islamiya fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham.

The term “Islamic State” is one that is both harmful and inaccurate. It is harmful because it directly links abhorrent and criminal acts with the religion of Islam and Muslims. In addition to harming social cohesion and casting an unfair pall of suspicion over an entire religious group, it could also lead to backlash against innocent community members and their institutions.

It is inaccurate because the group is not a recognized state of any kind.

This decision matters to me because every time the term Islamic State is used, there is a false impression that the actions of these terrorists are somehow condoned by Muslims or the religion of Islam. Some of our parliamentarians have indicated they would use the term *Daesh* if it was more commonly used in Canadian media.

I would appreciate if your editorial board would also consider using the more accurate term *Daesh*.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name, city]

Respond to NCCM’s Action Alert on this issue here:

<http://bit.ly/1VVL58T>



6

STRONGER
TOGETHER
CAMPAIGN 3:

ENGAGING WITH
LOCAL SCHOOLS



Canadian Muslim students are impacted by world events which implicate their faith and identity sometimes in quite negative ways. We must be ready to work with schools to mitigate the harm on their sense of self and belonging that may come about as a result of these incidents and events.

Ministries of Education across the country are committed to creating positive spaces for increasingly diverse student populations. We must be ready to work with them.

Unfortunately, in many cities across the country, Canadian Muslim parents are not engaged with local parent councils or with their school administrations. What we need to promote is more robust engagement of with schools and school boards to help educate teachers and students about the lived experiences and diversity of Canadian Muslims.

Schools are committed to reasonably accommodate the various needs of their students, and parents must be equipped with the information and resources they may require to address legitimate questions, and/or problematic school

materials and/or negative teacher or student attitudes.

The NCCM has developed effective workshops on reasonable accommodation and Islamophobia in the classroom which can be delivered by NCCM-trained volunteers across the country.

With the recent influx of Syrian refugees, the NCCM's Educators Guide on Islamic Religious Practices is also highly sought after, available both online and in print. All of NCCM's Guides are currently being translated into other languages.

Most school boards have a Diversity & Equity Officer, or similar role. NCCM team members designated to work on this campaign should get to know those responsible for promoting inclusive schools. They should get to know the needs and issues facing their local school boards in order to help address existing questions and/or to explore proactive ways of ensuring classrooms are safe spaces for all students.

QUICK LINKS:

NCCM'S LIST OF WORKSHOPS

<http://www.nccm.ca/connect/training/>

NCCM'S EDUCATOR GUIDES

<http://www.nccm.ca/take-action/order-publications/>

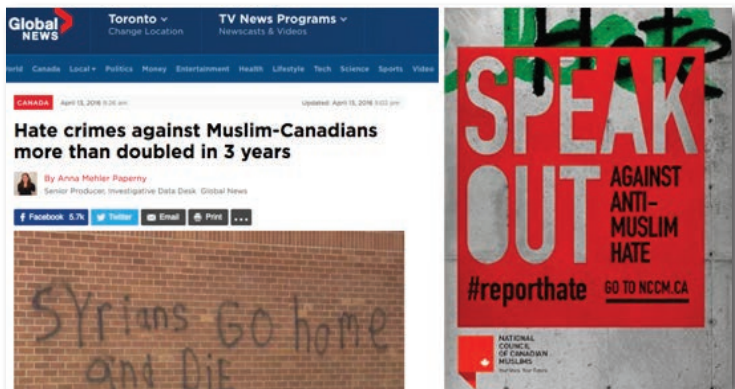
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STRONGER
TOGETHER
CAMPAIGN 4:

ENGAGING WITH
LOCAL POLICE
SERVICES

Canadian Muslims are increasingly concerned about being the target of a hate crime or incident, and while the vast majority of our fellow Canadians stand united against hate, or anti-Muslim incidents must be addressed proactively.

We have seen a documented increase in reported hate crimes and incidents across Canada. This only captures a tiny fraction of what may be happening, as



we know that two-thirds of hate crimes, like general crime, are never reported (according to Statistics Canada).

We also know that women who wear head scarves (hijab) are most often the victims of assault and verbal harassment, but that incidents include vandalism and other kinds of harassment and victimization.

NCCM team members will be encouraged to positively engage with local police services, and with Diversity and Race Relations and/or **Hate Crimes Units** where they exist.

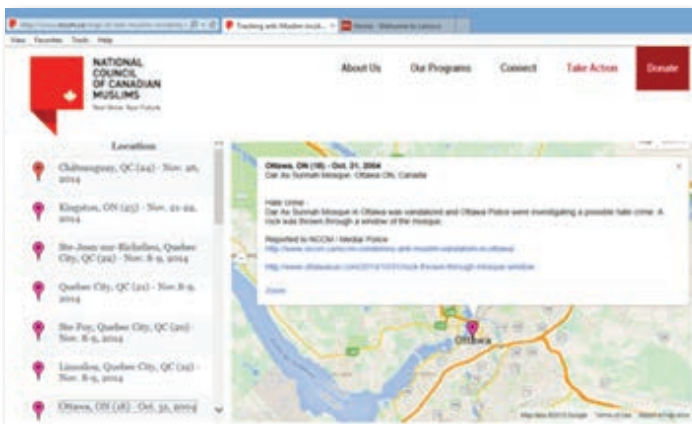
NCCM team members will also work to educate communities about the importance of reporting incidents or alleged hate crimes to local police services as well as to the NCCM, which tracks cases on its interactive **Hate Crimes Map**, as well as issues calls for communities to positively respond and support those who are victimized.

The NCCM team is also committed to understanding how police services respond to reports of hate crimes or incidents, and to follow up on cases to determine what action has been taken to hold perpetrators to account.

The NCCM has already conducted numerous workshops for police services on Islamophobia as well, and will continue to train local team members to do the same in their own communities.



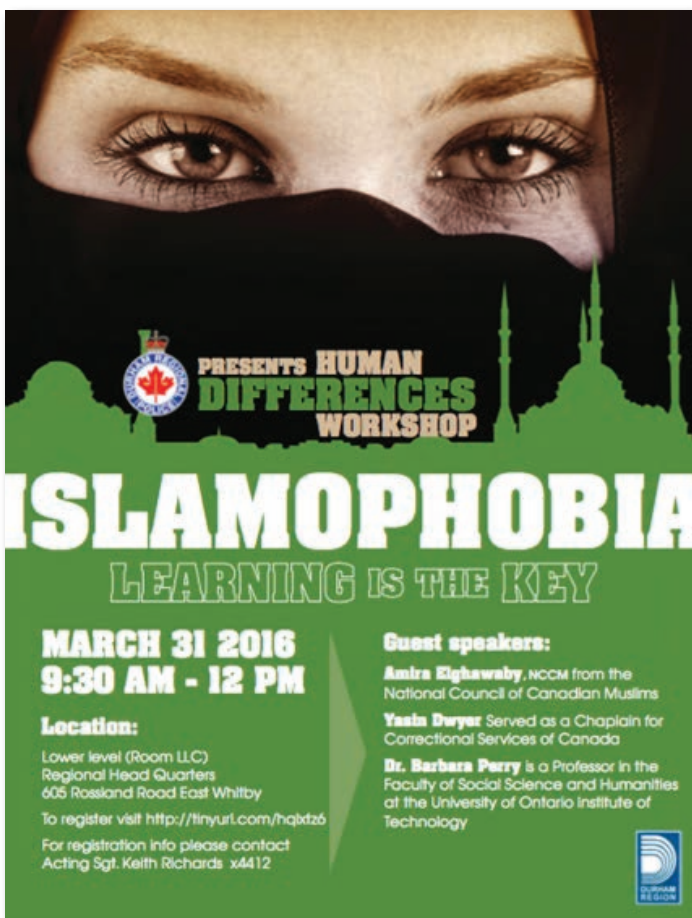
NCCM's presentation with Ottawa Police: "Prevention is Better Than Cure", June 2015



The NCCM is currently working on creating a new Guide for Police Services & Corrections Officers on Islamic Religious Practices as well.

Finally, NCCM team members will liaise between community members, police, and local elected officials on this issue to ensure that everything is done to promote safe communities.

To report a possible hate crime or anti-Muslim incident, fill out a report form here: <http://nccm.ca/programs/incident-report-form>





HOW TO ORGANIZE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



Below, you will find a list to help you plan a community conversation. In a general sense, a community conversation is an open and accessible event that enables community members to engage in honest and meaningful communication about any issue related to the community's interests.

Community conversations can be used in several ways. You can use a community conversation to raise awareness about injustice, such as an apparent hate crime, or to raise awareness about a certain political issue, 2015. The conversation can take many forms: a town hall, a workshop, a teach-in or similar community event.

Community conversations are a critical component of raising awareness and developing an informed and civically engaged community.

To organize your own community conversation, we have some tips for you below!

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

When organizing a community conversation, here are some steps to remember:

- Reach out to key community members who participate in and influence decision making in the community. Database this outreach.
- Choose a central location where community members can easily get to by public transit, and where you can make your presence visible.

- Reserve meeting space early and check with officials to verify if you need any special permits to hold your community conversation in your chosen location. If so, get the permit and also follow all rules and regulations.
- Make sure the location is wheelchair accessible.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

To organize a community conversation that will make a difference, we need to reach out to each other and to engage. How do you do that in a city or community where you are not connected with its key leaders and stakeholders? One way to get to know your community is through a simple process of community asset mapping. We need to map our community's assets to identify, prepare, and coordinate members who will represent our issues with the various stakeholders. To work with the NCCM and to participate in this community mapping exercise, take the following steps after team members complete the Stronger Together webinar and sign the Stronger Together volunteer form.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Organize a training workshop for the community mapping exercise to ensure that volunteers understand what community mapping is and how it works.

2. Designate roles and responsibilities of volunteers conducting the mapping exercise. One or two members can coordinate the volunteer team. One or two volunteers should be responsible for communicating with NCCM's Advocacy Coordinators.
3. Generate a list of key people to database, "i.e. make a list of key community stakeholders in your local community that the survey needs to reach.
4. Use the Google form survey provided by NCCM to collect information about relevant community assets:
 - a. Online: share the Google form survey via email and social media and follow-up with face-to-face or phone conversations.
 - b. Paper: print and share the Google form survey in-person at community events and programs, and follow-up via phone, email, or social media.
5. Document all information collected using the database linked to the Google form survey.
6. Troubleshoot any problems as they arise with NCCM's Advocacy Coordinators. They will support you to find solutions.
7. Share your results with NCCM.



HOW TO USE FACEBOOK FOR OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

OVERVIEW

Facebook is the most popular social networking tool on the market right now, with over 1.23 billion monthly active users. It remains popular amongst the Millennial generation, with over 91% of 18-34 year olds using Facebook. This section will guide you how best to leverage Facebook for spreading awareness and getting people to take their action from online to the real world.

FACEBOOK EVENTS

Facebook events are one of the most powerful features when it comes to activism. Facebook events can be used to advertise real-live events, of course, but are also commonly used to advertise webinars, launches and other virtual events.

The challenge with any Facebook tactic is that people are generally overloaded with Facebook notifications and alerts. They've been primed to ignore notifications and dismiss events by default

The clever Facebook activist should use the following tactics to increase the chances that people will attend the event they are advertising via Facebook:

1. A catchy and descriptive event title: A good event title is descriptive, grabs attention and generates intrigue. Don't use vague wording or excessively long titles. Long titles will be cut off in many situations. Try to insert a descriptive adjective if possible. Here are some examples of good event titles:

a. **COLOR ME RAD 5K TORONTO:**

Tells me all I need to know (it's a 5K race in Toronto), but gets me interested (what's this "Color Me Rad" business)?

b. **THE POWER OF WOMEN**

CONFERENCE: The word "power" has a lot of emotion associated with it, making it more likely that people will click the event to learn more.

c. **MIDNIGHT MASSIVE PARTY:**

This could be better by adding "at the AGO", but the addition of the word "massive" generates curiosity and evokes emotion.

2. Push for attendees to invite their friends. When you create an event, Facebook generally allows you to invite your entire friends list. But that will only get you so far. You can generate a ripple effect if you push the people who have pressed "going" to invite their friends list as well. This may require you to Private Message (PM) or directly 'tag' people you know, and ask them to do this.

3. Ask attendees to share the event on their walls. This is another effective way of getting the word out. You will generally have to ask people directly to do it - this does not generally occur organically.

Facebook is now sending notifications alerting people to when they have a friend attending an event nearby where they are located. Thus, the more people press "going" or even "interested", the more attention your event will get.

FACEBOOK PROFILE PICTURES

Having a large group of people on Facebook change their profile pictures is a powerful way to generate awareness and demonstrate solidarity. Sometimes, as in the aftermath of the Paris attacks in November 2015, Facebook provides an easy way to add an overlay, allowing people to demonstrate their solidarity without changing their profile pictures. There are programs that can enable people to do so outside of Facebook functionality, but it is often just as much work as getting people to change their profile pictures.

FACEBOOK DIRECT MESSAGES

This should be used sparingly, as people do get annoyed by spam, and "copy and paste" personal messages. Nonetheless, it is another notification sent to someone, thereby increasing awareness. It's best to personalize the message as much as possible.



FACEBOOK GROUPS

Facebook groups have become a powerful tool for online community building. Businesses are increasingly using them to create support groups around their brands. Groups typically have very good engagement, and tend to be very active.

While creating a successful group is more of a long term effort, there are ways that activists can leverage existing groups. When looking for appropriate groups, try to aim for community-based groups of over 500 people. These tend to have the best engagement and activity.

Activists may make alliances with the Administrators or 'admins' of these groups, who can help promote their causes. If the rules of a group permit, groups can also be an effective way of promoting local events. Even if not specified in group rules, it's valuable to get in touch with the group admin if possible. Group admins often dedicate large amounts of time moderating their groups, and will delete your post if they find it is not appropriate.

One of the more popular types of Facebook groups are community-based buy/sell groups. These groups have become powerful areas for networking, support and commerce for hyper-local communities,

such as neighborhoods and small towns. Making alliances with these group admins can be valuable. They may allow you to:

- Post about of your event/cause regularly
- Include your event information in the post
- Create an event specifically for the group

If possible, it's always best that one of the group admins post on the group instead of yourself. Admins typically have a lot of influence in the group, and will add legitimacy and importance to your effort if they are seen as an advocate.

Once you have engaged in sufficient community outreach, both offline and online, it's time to organize your community conversation. It can take the form of a town hall, a workshop, a teach-in, or any kind of public, accessible, community event.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION EVENT ORGANIZATION

The three phases of putting together a community conversation include:

1. Preparation
2. Day Of
3. Follow Up

CHECKLIST OF ACTIONS

- Develop action plan
- Make sure plan is in accordance with overall Stronger Together initiative goals
- Make sure to document your community conversation by taking pictures (being sure to let people know this is happening so that they can indicate if they do not wish to appear in photos) and share these with the NCCM Advocacy Coordinator

Logistics: All the materials we need

- Signs, banners, labels, posters, etc.
- Microphones and working sound system [+ batteries if using remote mics].
Projector, laptop and remote clicker if you plan to use a PowerPoint or other presentation.
- Registration sheets, clipboards, pens
- Program and MC/moderator instructions
- Transportation plan (public transit /vans or cars) & designated drivers
- Communication equipment (phones)

Program: What are we communicating at the community conversation on (e.g. Bill C-51) and how?

For materials to help you determine program content for a community conversation on Bill C-51, take a look at the Bill C-51 primer in this toolkit.

Security: What are plans and contingencies to ensure safety and wellbeing of participants in an emergency or if hostile community members attempt to disrupt the program?

- Recruitment & training of community volunteers
- Legal observers [lawyers, law students]
- Medics [volunteers with first aid training on standby in case of emergency]

Media: Do we need media? If so, how do we publicize our issues and message?

- First media advisory
- Day of media release (before and after event)
- Advance calls to reporters pitching story/ giving background/angle
- Just before calls to reporters and editors
- Social Media Activator designation (ie. someone who is active on social media and can lead volunteer efforts to generate awareness)

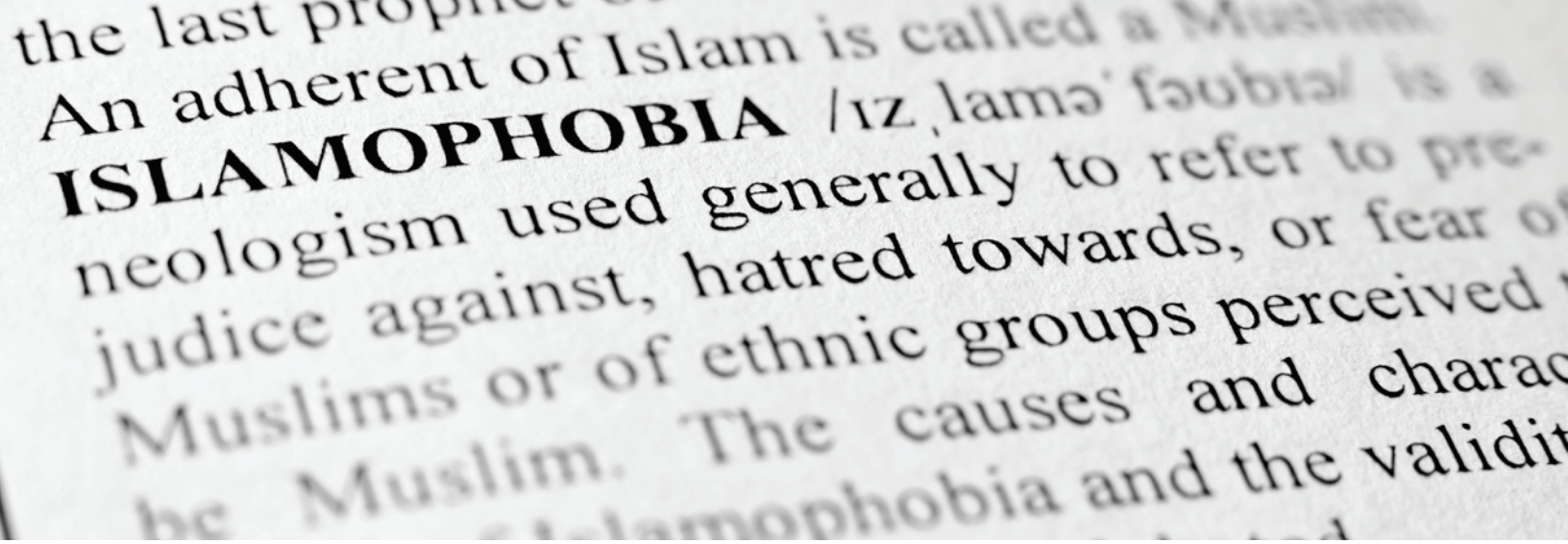
Staffing & Decision Making:

How do we organize our volunteer team?

- Develop decision-making structure (no more than 3 people)
- Identify all staffing needs for action
- Team leader designation
- Spokesperson designation
- Set up crew & clean up crew
- Equipment distribution & collection
- Troubleshooting / emergency response team

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SAMPLE ACTION
PLAN FOR
COMMUNITY
CONVERSATION
ON ISLAMOPHOBIA



Note: Community Conversations should have a designated Master of Ceremonies (MC), Political Liaison, Police Liaison, or other liaison for officials (as appropriate) & Timekeeper. Events should be as accessible to diverse community members as possible.

1. Introduction / Welcome / Opening [include acknowledgement of Indigenous land].
2. Brief educational presentations relevant to campaign to kick-start the conversation by a few knowledgeable, experienced, and NCCM-trained community members.
3. Open forum moderated discussions with community members present (this can also be done by facilitated smaller breakout groups with report-back to whole group or other ways)
4. Call to Action – Endorse Charter, Write Letters, Make Calls to MP, etc.

Announcements about upcoming events, relevant initiatives, how to stay informed.

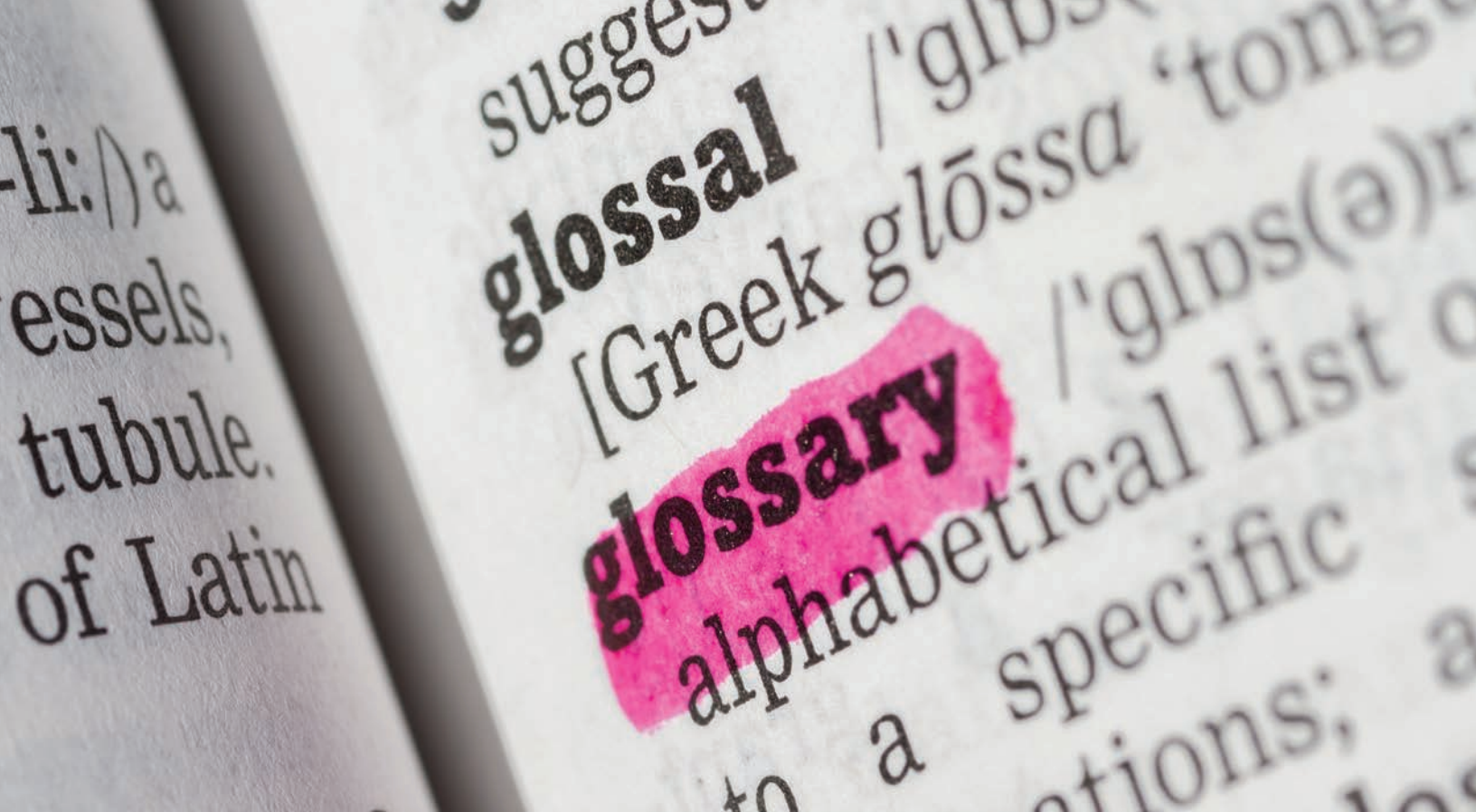
ONE CAN NEVER REALLY PREDICT HOW A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION CAN TURN OUT, BUT AFTER YOUR COMMUNITY CONVERSATION HAS ENDED, HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Conduct a pros & cons activity, where you weigh in on what went well, and what can be improved.
- Give acknowledgement and appreciation to the planning committee for things that were exceptional during the community conversation, and constructive feedback to the planning committee for things that can be improved.
- Have members of the central planning committee for your community conversation write a paragraph about the action and their role. You can do this to engage people who may not be clear on their roles, and/or to engage folks who may not be as talkative in meetings.
- Rest as a group. Go do something fun together, take some time off, and be engaged with your own interests. Organizing while in school or while working a full-time job can be difficult, so find time to keep yourself healthy and on top of your work.



10

GLOSSARY



ADVOCACY: Individual and/or collective efforts that involve identifying a problem at the local, regional, national or global level and then recommending a solution. These efforts can include activities such as: lobbying, campaigning, networking with relevant government and non-governmental partners and raising awareness.

CAMPAIGN: The process of carrying out organized, planned actions to build awareness on a particular issue and influence public policy on that issue.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: The participation of citizens in the life of a community to address issues of public concern. An example of this is exercising one's right to vote.

CIVIL LIBERTIES: Individual freedoms protected by law from unjust governmental interference, such as freedom of assembly.

DEMOCRACY: A system of government in which the power to make decisions that


affect public life is vested directly in citizens or representatives elected by citizens.

EQUALITY: The state of being equal in a society, i.e. having the same rights, freedoms and opportunities as other individuals.

EQUITY: The state of having opportunities that are tailored to an individual's needs so that he/she can attain the same level of success in life as other individuals.

FREEDOM: The ability to practice one's rights fully without any restrictions, except in exceptional circumstances laid out under the law.

HATE CRIME: The Criminal Code of Canada describes a hate crime as an act that is committed to intimidate or harm not only an individual, but the entire community to which the individual belongs. The individual is targeted not because of what he/she has done but because of who the person is.



HUMAN RIGHTS: Rights that belong to all human beings regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, language or any other status.

INCLUSIVITY: The action of including individuals who might otherwise be marginalized.

ISLAMOPHOBIA: Fear or hatred of Islam and Muslims that is translated into individual, ideological and systemic forms of oppression.

LOBBYING: The practice of influencing the opinion of a policy maker, in order to ensure that an individual's or organization's stance on a particular issue is represented in government.

MEDIA: The means of communication, (e.g. *radio, television, newspapers, magazines, the Internet*), that reach or influence people widely.

NON-PARTISAN: Lacking of affiliation with or loyalty to any particular political party.

POLICY: Course of action proposed by an individual, organization or government.

RACISM: A form of oppression that assumes that members of an entire race possess characteristics that make them inferior to members of another race or races.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: Course of action taken to ensure that an individual's needs are met such that he/she is able to benefit equally from services and opportunities offered to the general public.

SEXISM: Discrimination that is carried out against an individual on the basis of their gender.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: The practice of promoting a just society by challenging injustice and discrimination in all its forms.

XENOPHOBIA: Prejudice against or fear of the other, of difference, of people from other countries ("*foreigners*").



KEY TOOLS

1. Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-15.html>

2. Environics 2016 Survey of Muslims in Canada

<http://www.environicsinstitute.org/institute-projects/completed-projects/survey-muslims-canada-2016>

3. Statistics Canada

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/>

4. Canadian Human Rights Commission

<https://www.canada.ca/en/human-rights-commission.html>

5. Open Parliament

<https://openparliament.ca/>

6. Canadian Civil Liberties Association

<https://ccla.org/>

7. Elections Canada

<http://www.elections.ca/>

8. The Canadian Muslim Vote

<http://www.canadianmuslimvote.ca/>



**NATIONAL
COUNCIL
OF CANADIAN
MUSLIMS**

Your Voice. Your Future.

National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) © 2016

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