

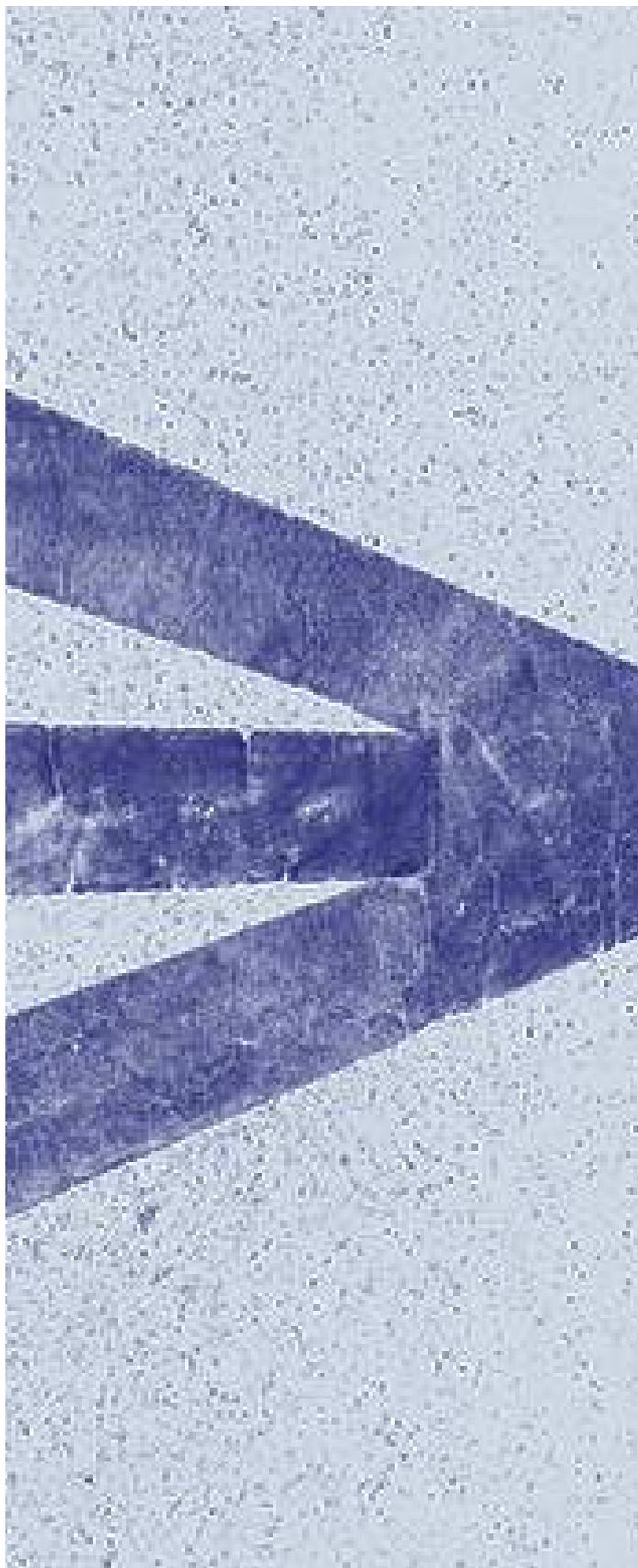
PeaceGeeks

2021 IMPACT REPORT

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About us

Since we began in 2011, we have grown from a grassroots volunteer group to a nonprofit leader in building technology for peace.



We know that for digital innovation to be effective, it must centre the lived realities of human beings. By aligning our tech savvy with the experiences and expertise of im-/migrants, refugees and our partners, we can work side-by-side to build digital tools that support more peaceful communities, in Vancouver, across Canada, and around the world.

Every 2.5 seconds, someone is forced to flee their home to escape conflict or persecution. As of January 2021, 70.8 million people were displaced globally. The impacts of displacement all around the world are seen in a myriad of ways, social and political.

The impacts of displacement all around the world are seen in a myriad of ways, social and political. Enacting solutions requires amplifying what we know works, and identifying where technology may be able to help resource-intensive systems operate more efficiently and effectively. Digital tools are being employed in meaningful ways to protect peacebuilders, defend and advance human rights, counter misinformation, and transform divisive discourse into narratives for peace.

At the forefront of our work, we use technology alongside peacebuilding principles to address the complex challenges of violence, displacement, division and oppression, and build more peaceful societies. We create impact by co-designing tools and solutions with newcomers and partners, collaborating to amplify shared goals, and co-learning alongside policymakers, sector leaders, and communities to advance systems change.

Theory of Change

Information for safer journeys If people who have been displaced can access accurate, up-to-date information from trusted sources all along their journey, and in their own language, then they can make their journey easier and safer.

Increased sense of belonging If newcomers arrive at their destination and can easily access information about the services available to them, then they will feel an increased sense of belonging.

Peaceful societies If people feel a sense of belonging, then our social fabric is strengthened, our communities are more cohesive, and our societies are more peaceful.



Interview with Jen Freeman,

PeaceGeeks CEO

PeaceGeeks is 10! How has it grown over the last decade?

A decade ago, we were a group of volunteer technologists unsatisfied with the status quo. From building websites for peacebuilding organizations who lacked the resources to have an online presence, to digitizing humanitarian systems so they could be more efficient and effective, our team was motivated by a vision of utilizing technology for good. Ten years later, I'm proud that we have retained our curiosity, creativity and commitment to transform outdated systems. But we have also grown into a more mature organization – our team, our professionalization and focus on our strategic plan means we're being more bold in considering what "good" means for newcomers and leading sector transformations at scale.

2021 was a significant year for PeaceGeeks, with several long-term projects entering new phases. How did that feel?

Watching projects we had conceived of, designed, and grown enter new phases is exciting. When we tackle large, systemic problems, organizations can feel like they're chipping away at a mountain, and inadvertently get stuck in path dependency. 2021 saw a number of important developments for our team.

In Jordan, we concluded our 3-year Meshkat project, and based on its success, received new funding to test its methodology on a new problem space, and expand our digital content creation work with young Jordanians. Two of PeaceGeeks' flagship products scaled to new locations. Services Advisor launched in Malaysia and Arrival Advisor expanded from B.C. to Manitoba, expanding users' ability to more easily find resources and information, in their first language, to tens of thousands of people in each new location. These demand-driven opportunities validate our ability to scale, and the value we continue to create for people who have been displaced, and newcomers to Canada.

What has been your biggest impact on the nonprofit and technology sectors?

Quantitatively, we are seeing increasing numbers of downloads of Arrival Advisor, and the impressive engagement metrics of youth-created content in Jordan. But that doesn't adequately measure our impact. I get up every morning thinking, how can we transform migration journeys? To do so, we need to radically improve people's migration experiences, and the systems that shape them.

In November 2021, PeaceGeeks was on stage at the Global Expo in Dubai, receiving the UN Intercultural Innovation Award for Arrival Advisor. When asked about technology's ability to facilitate migration journeys, I shared a core principle of ours: all tech is human. I feel like this is the key to the impact we are making in both the nonprofit and technology sectors: design and fund the integration of technology in settlement – but not for technology's sake. Change needs to be driven by the humans that are carrying cell phones in their pockets, as they board a plane from India, Afghanistan, or Congo, to Vancouver, Moncton, or Winnipeg. How can we reach them there, through the tool they're relying on - their mobile phones - to gain the knowledge and confidence that will set them up for success the moment they arrive?

In our work with Global Affairs Canada, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, we see these institutions now recognizing that to be effective, let alone innovate or build for the future, funding models and service infrastructure need to ensure people are served according to their needs, priorities, abilities, and circumstances. Technology is no longer an add-on; it is central to our communications, our work, our education, our commerce, our societies. It is a very exciting time to be involved with such large scale transformations.

President's note

In 2020 PeaceGeeks saw the appointment of a new and our current CEO, Jen Freeman, the development of a new strategic plan, as well as a change in board leadership. I assumed the role of President of PeaceGeeks Society, our main Not for Profit organization, including PeaceGeeks Jordan. At the same time, Simon Canning assumed responsibility for the Presidency of PeaceGeeks International, our Charity in BC.

These changes enabled us to apply a greater focus on PeaceGeeks' sustainability during 2021. It is a great honour to be President and Chair of PeaceGeeks Society and my goal through our tenth year of operation was to continue the work Simon had started in that regard.

Simon and I are happy to report that during 2021, we began work on examining and mitigating our overall risk. With much thanks for pro bono support from McCarthy Tetrault and an engagement with De Jager Volkenant, we have been collectively improving our overall governance structures, bylaws, internal agreements and board management.

We are improving our sustainability across three dimensions: Risk, Appointment of Directors, and our Board Management Processes. By installing a more robust governance structure across each entity, we will have a greater focus on the different activities, requirements, and outcomes per legal entity.

We remain disciplined around refreshing our Board of Directors with motivated Directors who are helping us grow to greater heights. Going into 2022, we have identified several excellent candidates for the Board of Directors that I'm looking forward to welcoming onto the board at our AGM.

We have been working on more robust board management processes. These include a review of our internal agreements and writing a new Board Policy Manual.

I'm excited daily to see the difference PeaceGeeks is making to those we serve. I look forward to seeing the organization achieve even more of its goals and outcomes in my final year as President and Chair in 2022.

Ashiq Ahamed and Simon Canning

Vision

A world where those who are displaced are not lost

Mission

We create digital tools to support greater connection, peace, and safety for those who have been displaced



Values

Build Peace

Addressing the complex challenges of violence, displacement, and division in order to build more peaceful societies is complex. It requires creativity, tenacity, boldness, and humility. It involves redistributing power, building trust, and working with diverse stakeholders to co-create our shared future.

Centre Hope

Focusing on violence and crisis can obscure the aspirations and agency that drive migration journeys. We centre hope and potential by working with those who have been displaced, not as victims in need of help but as experts and engineers of their present and future.

Collaborate

Through mutually beneficial and respect-driven partnerships, we co-create solutions with the insights and expertise of newcomers, researchers, frontline organizations, policymakers, and other tech partners to deeply understand the needs and concerns of newcomers and how to address them.



Learn

We commit to agile processes that require learning from our partners and communities, as well as from our own successes and mistakes. We also commit to sharing what we learn with policymakers and the public to foster positive change that impacts refugee and immigrant journeys.

Protect Against Harm

Tech and data can create harm by unintentional carelessness. Rapid innovations can have far reaching implications when applied to the contexts and lives impacted by displacement. In our development of digital tools, we prioritize user security, organizational transparency, and an exacting ethical standard to protect those we serve from foreseen harms.



Questions that drive transformation

PeaceGeeks occupies a rare niche as an international technology nonprofit, operating within the settlement sector in Canada, but also internationally through our work in Jordan, and creating digital tools for UNHCR in Malaysia, Iraq, and the International Criminal Court in Uganda. We are sought for our expertise in human-centred design, technical expertise in designing, developing, and scaling digital tools, and research on the strengths and limitations of the larger migration and settlement ecosystems.

In conversation with IRCC, Global Affairs Canada, BMW, UNHCR, tech companies, financial institutions, nonprofits, and newcomers, we query the pain points, and explore opportunities to disrupt and transform the status quo...

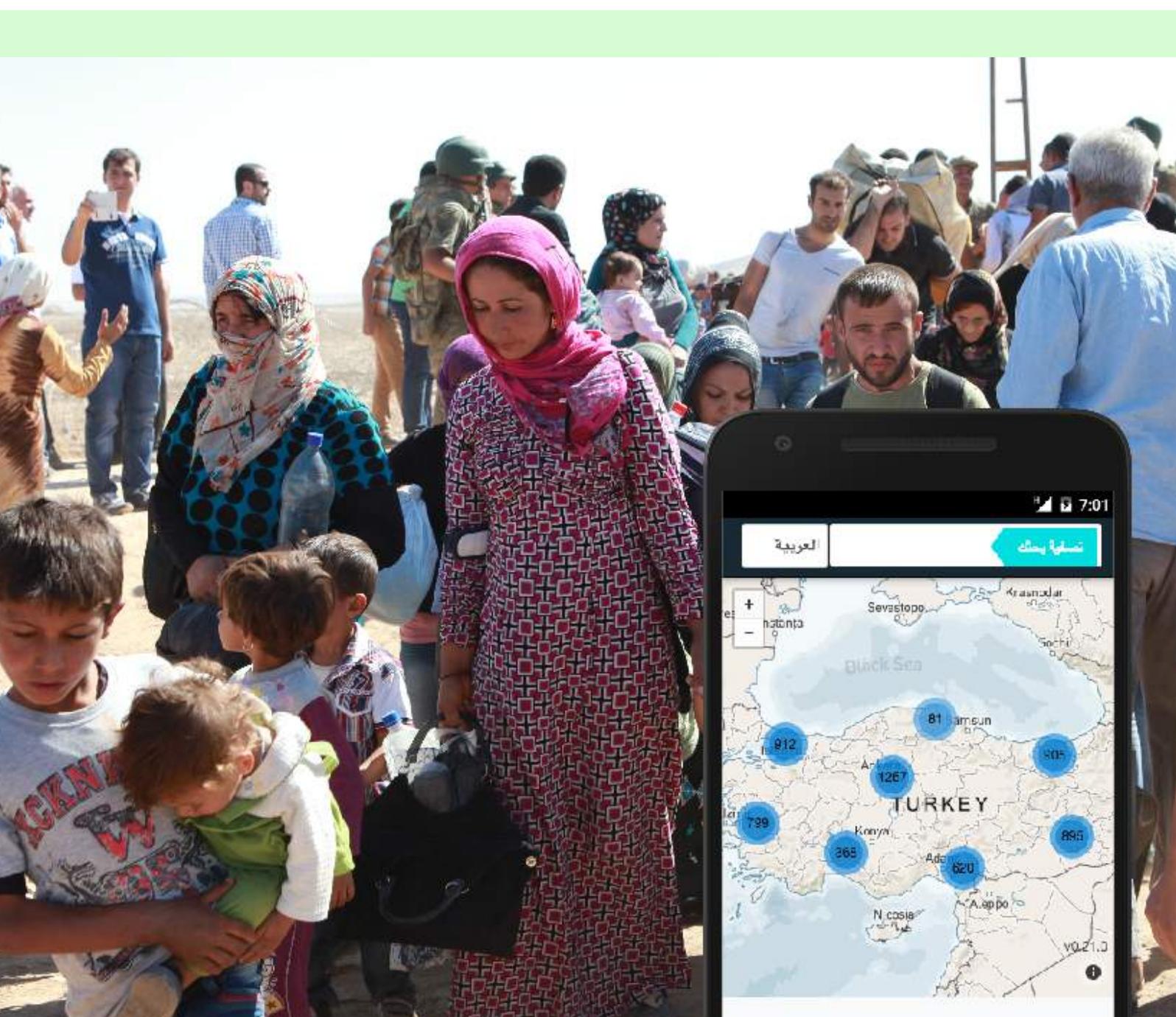
1 How do we create a modern, digital migration experience that better serves those fleeing war and persecution, as well as those seeking educational and economic opportunities?



Services Advisor

Services Advisor, our multilingual web app built in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2016, continues to help more than 3 million refugees in Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey access critical services in real time.

In 2021, we were asked by UNHCR to build Services Advisor in Malaysia, providing a service map for 185,920 refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR in Malaysia.

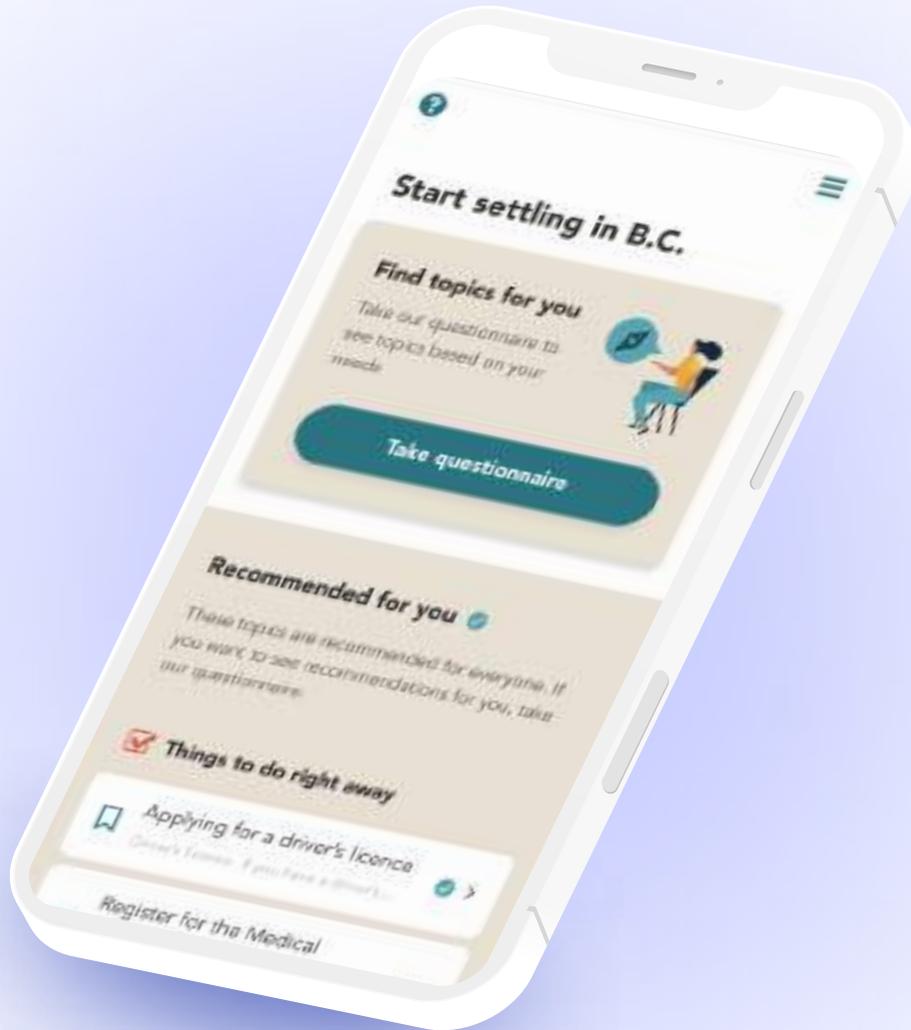


Arrival Advisor

“

I am not the person who leave the review/feedback but i should do this now because I got so many useful information while i am settling down through this application. It must be newcomers' bible...

• Grace from Korea in iOS app store



Arrival Advisor's user base grew by 36% in 2021, surpassing 11,500 downloads

Our free, multilingual mobile app, Arrival Advisor, allows newcomers to navigate their settlement journey by delivering trusted, relevant information and personalized recommendations straight to their fingertips. In 2021, we successfully expanded Arrival Advisor to Manitoba. The leap from one province to two was a landmark achievement on our roadmap to expand the app nationally. Our goal is for Arrival Advisor to be the main source of information to access trusted, up-to-date, and relevant information and services.

Our launch in Manitoba, together with our partner, Manitoba Start, will enable 15,000 newcomers in the province to access information to settle more quickly and easily, helping them find a greater sense of belonging in their new home.

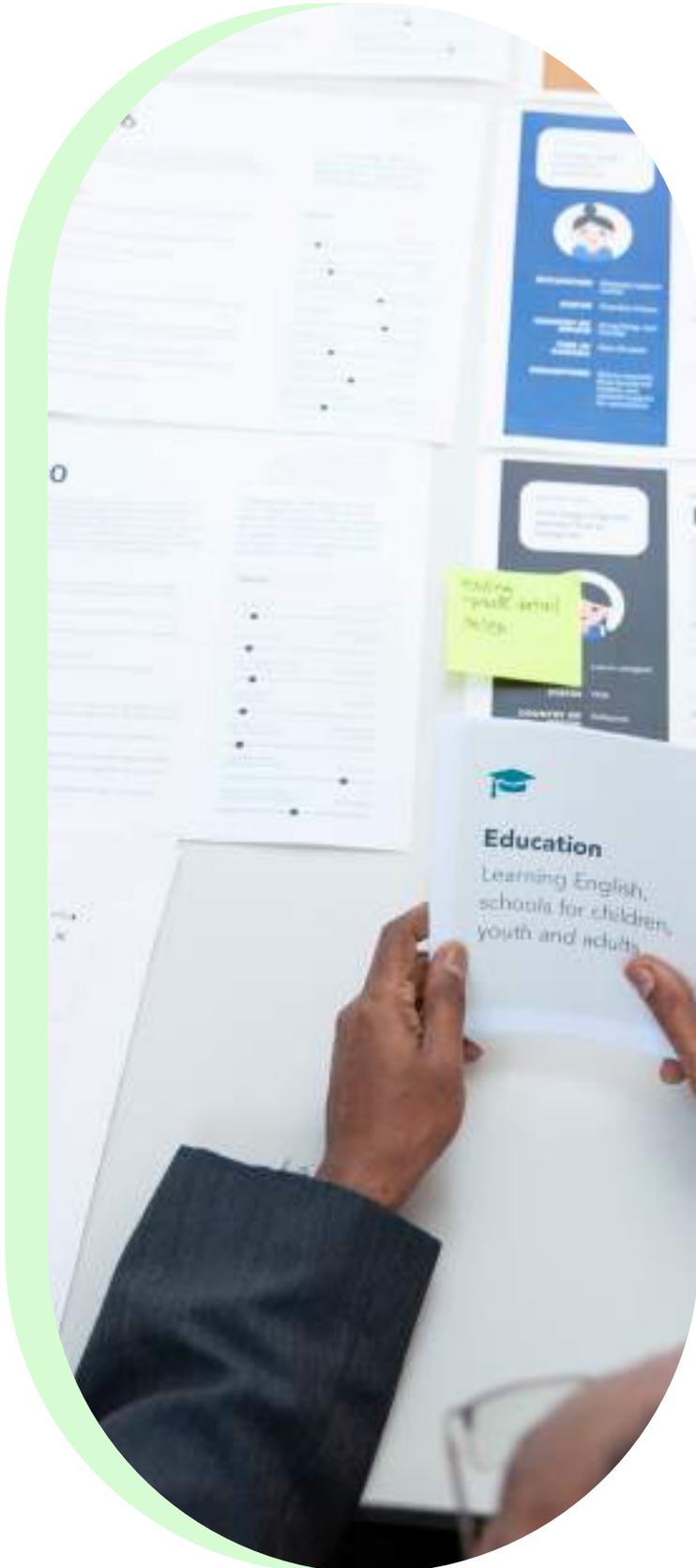
Designed in tandem with immigrants, refugees, community service providers, and settlement organizations, Arrival Advisor bridges current in the accessibility of information available to newcomers to Canada. Read more or download Arrival Advisor [here](#).

2

How do we create an enabling environment for innovation and collaboration in the immigration and refugee-serving sector?



Settlement 2.0



In mid-2020, we delivered our Settlement 2.0 report to Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada. Settlement 2.0 encompassed an evidence-based strategic vision and action plan incorporating technology and innovative practices (online and off) to best facilitate positive settlement outcomes for newcomers to Canada.

Settlement 2.0 identified – through extensive interviews and focus groups with sector stakeholders at multiple levels – that innovation is already a crucial part of the DNA of the settlement sector at the community level. This finding couldn't have come at a more critical time: the COVID-19 pandemic forced service providers to rapidly adopt a hybrid service delivery model to meet newcomers' needs, within the constraints of the current sector landscape. IRCC recognized this complex situation and asked us to undertake a national expansion of the Settlement 2.0 project – Settlement 3.0 – to identify the sector's needs in a perhaps permanently changed landscape.

Considering the geographic, cultural, and linguistic diversity across Canada, Settlement 3.0 offered an opportunity to evaluate and compare findings across communities, revealing a diverse set of perspectives while surfacing a common set of recommendations for IRCC.

With organizations having to innovate in new ways in response to COVID-19 – including embracing technology in order to continue delivering services – expanding the dialogue to a national level brought the potential to promote a whole-of-society approach to supporting newcomers in all steps of their settlement journey. We presented the Settlement 3.0 report to IRCC in August 2021.

Settlement 3.0 helped spur the creation of a National Steering Committee on Technology, comprised of 18 experts from across the country, and co-chaired by PeaceGeeks' CEO, Jen Freeman and the Executive Director of Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre, Janet Madume. Ahead of IRCC's next Call for Proposals in 2024, the Steering Committee is tasked with creating a strategic plan for the sector, identifying the resources required to advance innovation, digital transformation, and cross-sector collaboration.

Want to learn more about Settlement 3.0? [Dive in here.](#)

3 How do we counter the misinformation, polarization and abuse that is happening in our online spaces?



Meshkat Community



Since 2016, PeaceGeeks Jordan has created and grown the Meshkat Community, amplifying Arab voices for social inclusion in response to hate, violence, and polarization. Meshkat works to strengthen community cohesion by identifying and training local artists, digital content producers, innovators, women, and youth, as digital content creators, utilizing PeaceGeeks' alternative narrative and transformative change methodology.

In 2021, through a grant from the Fund for Innovation and Transformation, we focused on understanding community conceptions of gender equality and creating content to advance gender equality from the community level.

Simultaneously, we launched the 18-month-long "Local Stories, Local Voices, Local Action" project, funded by the US State Department, which builds on the Meshkat program's foundation that established the Digital Youth network (DYN) in Jordan. The new project engaged youth across three governorates to transform narratives of marginalization, cyber bullying, disempowerment and division in order to nurture agency, ownership, and positive community action on the most important issues facing them. By generating youth agency and powerful, positive engagement in online spaces, this project helped to increase community resilience to harmful messages, misinformation, marginalization and polarization.

Program participants created 57 locally-relevant pieces of content that challenge discrimination against women and promote attitudes of gender equality:

- 1 song**
- 31 short films**
- 21 podcast episodes**
- 13 written pieces**
- 16 pieces of visual art**
- 2 murals**

These pieces of content reached over **918 000 users** across online platforms in the **Middle East North Africa region**.

Since PeaceGeeks' Jordan's inception in 2016, more than 400 pieces of content focusing on themes of tolerance, diversity and equality, challenging narratives of hate and polarization, have been created by Jordanian film, media and graphic artists through the Meshkat Community.

Due to the growing reputation and demand for their alternative narratives (AN) transformative change (TC) methodologies, the Jordanian PeaceGeeks team are now being sought as trainers, partners and consultants on digital content creation and youth engagement work across Jordan and more widely in the region.

[Learn more about PeaceGeeks Jordan here.](#)

4

Amidst record-setting immigration to Canada, how can we engage citizens and businesses in the ongoing work to create a more welcoming and inclusive society?



GIU4P

“My match has been kind and patient with me. I’ve felt empowered in speaking with them. Being able to talk to somebody who walked the same path and taking the time to give advice while being and empathetic is priceless!”

–GIU4P Newcomer Neighbour



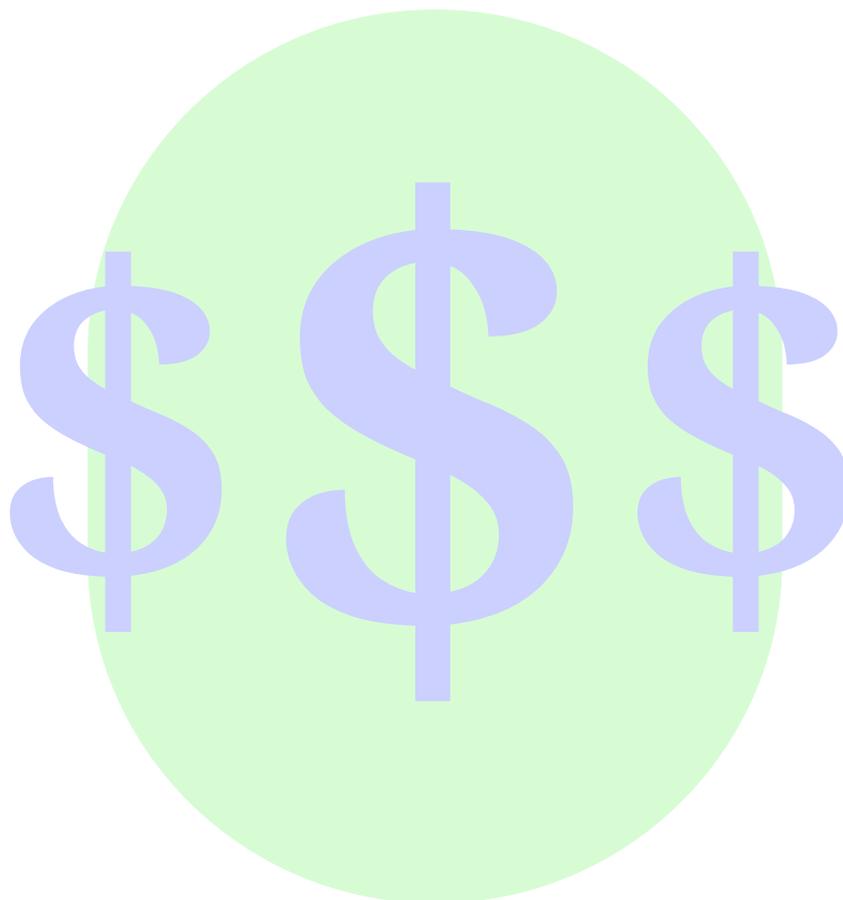
This year, we re-envisioned our annual fundraising campaign “Give It Up 4 Peace” to respond to this question. A 2019 report by Vancity indicated that while 90% of newcomers say they are glad they immigrated to Canada, and 86% feel generally welcomed by Canadians, 62% admit experiencing significant barriers to employment, including bias and racism in hiring. We decided to utilize SNAPP, a mentorship platform we piloted, to help break down barriers newcomers may face when seeking to enter the job market here. Sometimes, all it takes is a human connection to help open doorways.

We invited professionals at Microsoft, Unbounce, Hootsuite, Traction on Demand, East Side Games, and other tech companies in Vancouver to volunteer their time to connect directly with a newcomer. Each local professional and newcomer pair shared insights, forged new relationships, and connected on topics like culture, employment, and language skills. For each hour of time an employee donated, the company would match with a donation of \$60.

In total, the campaign raised \$44,163, and engaged 144 mentors from 8 companies, who donated their time to connect with 43 newcomers. While volunteer mentors initially only needed to commit one hour of their time, many continued to meet with their newcomer matches on an ongoing basis.

“[I enjoyed] being able to chat with someone with similar experiences despite being in different locations in the world”

–East Side Games Neighbour



Financials

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- Liabilities and net assets
- PeaceGeeks Statement of Activities

PeaceGeeks Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS	2021			2020		
	Canada	Jordan	Foundation	Canada	Jordan	Foundation
CURRENT						
Cash	\$277,563	\$11,621	\$34,767	\$239,473	\$10,090	\$192,664
Accounts receivable	47,865			59,559	\$58,368	
Accounts receivable from employees				\$27.00		
Goods and services tax recoverable				3,254		
Prepaid expenses	9,548					
Due from related parties	15,505		15,505	15,578	\$1,440	\$15,578
	\$350,481	\$11,621	\$50,272	\$317,891		
CAPITAL ASSETS (Net of accumulated amortization)	949	6,610		3,798		
TOTAL ASSETS	\$351,430	\$18,231	\$50,272	\$321,689		

Liabilities and net assets

CURRENT						
Accounts payable	\$64,931			\$19,739		
Goods and services tax payable	10,090				\$30	
Wages payable	8,009			3,189		
Employee deductions payable	55,970	500		12,157	\$8,177	
Deferred revenue	285,606			291,840		
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$404,606	500		\$326,925		
NET ASSETS	(53,176)	17,731		(5,236)	61,751	177,086
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$351,430	\$18,231		\$321,689		

PeaceGeeks Statement of Activities

REVENUE + SUPPORT	\$2,021.00			\$2,020.00		
	Canada	Jordan	Foundation	Canada	Jordan	Foundation
Unrestricted contributions	\$4,426		\$9,637	\$18,642		\$43,699
Amortization of Deferred Contributions				663,979		
Professional Services	341,047			26,218		
Grants	830,335		25,000	414,364		
Other Income and FX loss/gain	131,953			55,828		
Income from PeaceGeeks Society (Canada)		318,428			261,780	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,307,760	\$318,428	\$34,637	\$1,179,031	\$261,780	\$43,699
EXPENSES	Canada	Jordan	Foundation	Canada	Jordan	Foundation
Program services	\$577,779	\$318,428	\$192,124	\$808,499	\$151,604	
Management + general	274,671		337	195,594	57,058	934
Fundraising	107,630			64,177		
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$960,080	\$318,428	\$192,461	\$1,068,270	\$208,662	\$934

Funders



Jade Buchanan





International Criminal Court

PeaceGeeks Society has always been a collective of people united by a shared desire to use technology to strengthen diverse and inclusive societies. We could not do the work we do without the support of our members, including our dedicated board and volunteers, and our generous donors. The impact evident in this report is a credit to each of you.
Thank you.

We'd love for you to join us as we continue to transform newcomer journeys! Become a member [here](#), or support us as a donor or volunteer [here](#).