

Title: **Changing the Mind of the City: The Role of the Hastings Institute / EEO in Building Multicultural Readiness in Vancouver's Host Society**

Author(s): Samara Brock

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Research Question: Do municipally-based cross-cultural training programs like those offered by the Hastings Institute/ EEO offer an effective approach to helping Canadian cities prepare for immigration and greater cultural diversity?

Importance: While immigration helps help to enrich our cities, it can also mean increased ethnic tensions and, in the worst cases, ghettoization or violence. This study looks at ways to engage Canada's current residents or "host culture" in an active multiculturalism, in which they learn to co-adapt with diverse new immigrants. It does so by examining the activities and outcomes of the Hastings Institute, which was established in 1989 in order to carry out intensive diversity and cross-cultural communication training with employees of the City of Vancouver as well as employees of other municipalities, crown corporations, community agencies and the private sector.

Research Findings: This study gives an overview of the work of an innovative municipal approach to cross-cultural training and recommends how Vancouver and other cities can better build multicultural readiness. Specifically, it finds that the Hastings Institute was most successful in creating high-profile and intensive training that influenced employees throughout various government, community and private sector institutions. However, the Hastings Institute was not able to maintain an evolving and relevant approach to training when faced with shifting societal and governmental priorities. Key recommendations emerging from this study are that cross-cultural programming should be understood as a core function of municipal government and that multicultural training initiatives should be conceptualized, and thus supported by all levels of government, as long-term, multi-generational initiatives with iterative evaluation and re-visioning built into them.

Implications: Multicultural policies and programming are largely left to senior levels of government. This case outlines why cities, as the loci of immigration, are key players in creating cohesive multicultural societies and outlines some approaches that local government can take to building multicultural readiness.