

Conversation Circle Facilitator

Conversation Circle Facilitator volunteers work with HMC to lead a group of newcomers through casual English conversational practice. Volunteers play an important role in encouraging newcomers to become more confident in their day-to-day conversation skills while learning about new resources around Halton and common Canadian practices. This conversation circle is designed to help newcomers learn conversation, communication and soft skills. Volunteers will want to invest time in a meaningful program that supports newcomers to Canada and will have an interest in learning and sharing cultural experiences.

Location: Various locations in Halton Region – Oakville, Burlington, Milton

Skills Required

- Valid police clearance required
- Advanced written and spoken English language skills
- Must be 19 years of age and up and have good literacy skills.
- Cross-cultural experience or a personal commitment to learning about other cultures
- A good listener, patient, supportive, and empathetic to newcomers
- Reliable and able to carry out duties independently
- Must maintain confidentiality
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Patient, imaginative and flexible
- Able to converse with people from various backgrounds, and levels of English
- Must attend Conversation Circle Facilitator training
- Interest in interacting with individuals from various cultural backgrounds
- Previous experience interacting with individuals with various cultural backgrounds an asset
- Previous experience teaching English is an asset
- Show dependability and responsibility
- Friendly and welcoming manner
- Volunteers should have a desire to work with and guide newcomers to Halton
- Should be patient and friendly and have a positive outlook.
- Effective communication skills required, as well as an ability to communicate with people who do not have English as their native language.
- Ability to make a consistent, long term commitment at this time

Duties

- Prepare resources for each meeting, encouraging participation and facilitating opportunities to practice verbal communication skills in English.
- To assist recently arrived newcomers to Canada with English language skills in small conversational group setting.
- Preparation of materials & topics for upcoming meetings
- Initiate and stimulate conversation during the sessions. Make every effort to involve each member equally.
- Provide participants with encouragement and constructive feedback.
- Take attendance with sign-in sheet at every meeting
- Pick up & drop off sign-in sheet at the end of every month

- Monthly check in via email or phone
- Encourage everyone's voice to be included.
- Assist with room set-up, put away work sheets and displays and tidy up after each meeting
- Provide a friendly, welcoming greeting to participants as they arrive.
- Facilitate discussions using the activities that will be provided by library staff.
- Help with group activities and arrange people into conversation groups.
- Sharing cultural experiences and expressions that are common in Canadian culture.
- Enter completed hours on a weekly basis via www.myvolunteerpage.com(link is external) account
- Report concerns, needs or incidents to the Community Connections Specialist or Coordinator, or other appropriate staff.

Benefits

- Opportunity to learn and gain experience in teaching English to newcomer adults
- Opportunity to work independently
- Volunteers will connect with people from different cultures and backgrounds in order to help participants improve their spoken English.
- Volunteers will also have the opportunity to develop leadership, presentation and facilitation skills.
- Reference letter upon request for those who successfully facilitate for the six (6) months to one year time commitment

Clients

- Newcomer Adults

Level of Commitment Required

- Anytime during the week
- Minimum two weeks
- Position may be at HMC locations, Community Centers or Public Libraries
- A long-term commitment (6 months to a 1 year) is required to ensure continuity in the relationship with students

Application Process

- Applying online
- One-on-One meeting
- Submission of resume, volunteer Application Form, valid police clearance, along with a personal interview
- Training for Conversation Circle Facilitator
- Job Shadowing another facilitator

Due to the nature of working with HMC Connections clients, a valid criminal record check for vulnerable populations will be required prior to volunteering. In addition, all applicants must attend training as needed. We ask for applicant's patience as these strict selection criteria and processes can take time to complete.

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