

# Interpretive Plan

## Permanent Exhibitions

Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21

**DRAFT - WORKING DOCUMENT**

# 1. Introduction

The Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 (the Museum) is embarking on a process to meet its national mandate; to reach out and engage with all Canadians regarding the many stories surrounding immigration to this country from contact to the present. In its revitalized form, the Museum will develop a wide and innovative range of strategies to tell those stories—among these, new engaging permanent exhibition spaces—and to allow Canadians to tell of their own experiences, contributing content and interpretation to be disseminated by the Museum.

The Museum is located at Halifax's Pier 21 National Historic Site, which was an active arrival and processing gateway for new Canadians from 1928 to 1971. A National Historic Site since 1996 and a museum since 1999, Pier 21 has focused on the stories specific to this particular site and period from its 1999 opening until the present.

National museum status was secured in 2011 and as a result the Museum is undergoing a transitional period. No longer confined to the Pier 21 story, the Museum's mandate has expanded greatly, in time and in geography, to encompass all immigration to Canada from early contact to the present.

## 2. Interpretive Plan

### Permanent Exhibitions

At the heart of any visit to the Museum will be the experience in the new permanent exhibition spaces. The permanent exhibitions interpretive plan provides a detailed description or narrative of how visitors will encounter Canada's immigration story. Two exhibition spaces totalling 18,000 square feet will form part of the Museum experience: the Canadian Immigration Story exhibition and the Pier 21 Story exhibition.

#### 2.1 Thematic Framework

Both the Canadian Immigration Story and the Pier 21 Story exhibitions at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 will explore Canadian history and identity through the lens of immigration. Using the story of real people placed within historical context, both past and present, visitors will take a personal journey. Key objectives:

- To assert the pivotal role immigration has played in the histories of Canada
- To shed light on the historical development of Canada by sharing political and personal histories of colonization and immigration
- To promote public historical literacy through the exploration of Canadian immigration history
- To respect the commemorative responsibilities inherent in the Museum's stewardship of the Pier 21 National Historic Site

The following diagram outlines the strategy for organizing the visitor experience for the Canadian Immigration Story exhibition. The format is a linear, thematic approach in which chronology plays a secondary role to organize stories and events within each of the major themes identified. The Canadian Immigration Story is built on two elements: nation-building and the journey that immigrants take to start their new lives. These themes are further informed by sub-themes and topics that build layered, complex and engaging experiences.

In addition, the Museum will also tell the compelling story of Pier 21. While oral histories and content from the Pier 21 years will be incorporated throughout the Canadian Immigration Story exhibition, an exhibition space will be devoted to exploring the site's particular history and meaning both as a point of immigration and also as a key facility for military personnel movements during the Second World War. The visitor experience strategy for the Pier 21 Story exhibition will follow the Canadian Immigration Story exhibition's linear, thematic approach through the themes of Journey, Arrival and Belonging.

## 2.2 Thematic Structure Summary

The experience at the Museum can be summarized in the following diagram. A complete description of sub-themes and individual exhibit experiences follow. The experience will be characterized by personal encounters, high impact media, immersive environments and thought provoking didactic displays. The Canadian Immigration Story will be a journey that visitors take when they arrive at the Museum, spanning from early contacts between Aboriginal Peoples and Europeans to the modern era. At its heart will be the Pier 21 Story, commemorating this National Historic Site.

- **Building A Nation** – Through an exploration of colonial and national history we understand the role immigration has in shaping our nation. The story goes back to contact, colonization and interactions with First Nations; investigates the reasons behind immigration; and explores issues of inclusion and exclusion.
- **Journey** – The moment of departure to a new land is often the result of complex events. Some newcomers are forced to leave their homes with little preparation; others spend years getting ready to make the transition. Why choose Canada? What are the push and pull factors? How do people get here and what is that journey like? What are a newcomer's hopes and dreams and how do those dreams change?
- **Arrival** – What happened when people arrived in Canada or the preceding colonies and what happens today? Where and how have people settled? Here is an opportunity to explore how Canadians chose their homes or how these choices have been made for them. Exploration of Canada's largest cities will be significant. Additionally, this theme investigates attitudes towards immigration.
- **Belonging** – This theme delves into the complicated processes of settling in a new land—the layers of adaptation, integration, rejection or acceptance. Here we explore citizenship, identity and

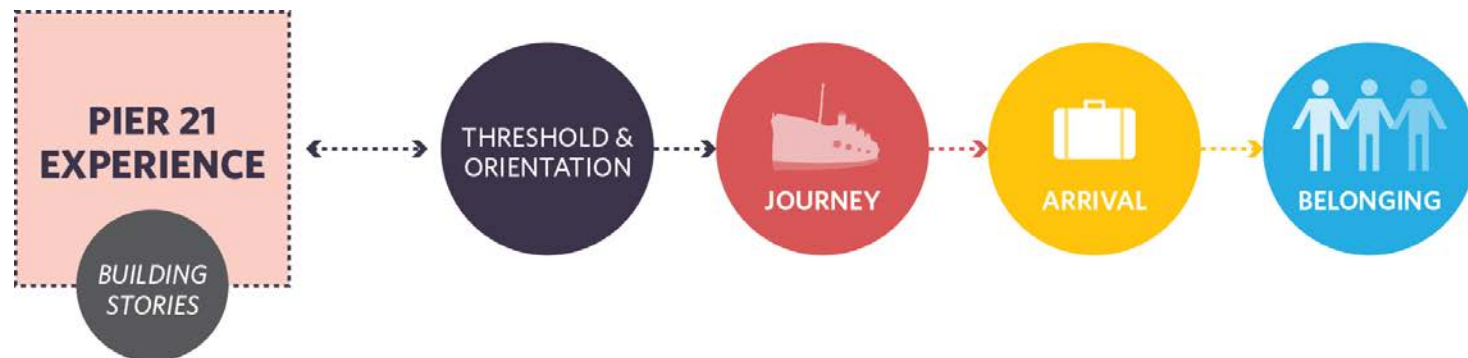
the role immigration has played in shaping Canada's social, political, economic and cultural landscapes.

- **The Pier 21 Story** – The Pier 21 Story exhibition will include an interpretation of the Pier 21 National Historic Site, the events that took place here and the people that passed through this gateway.



## 2.3 Floor Space

As referenced in appendices, the exhibition space in the south will take visitors on a journey of the experiences of the Canadian immigrant, while the space in the north will focus on the Pier 21 Story. Both exhibition spaces have warehouse ceiling height which can provide an opportunity to expand content and make the most of square footage. The diagram below illustrates the main thematic structure for the exhibition footprint.



## 2.4 Canadian Immigration Story Exhibition Plan

### 1. Threshold & Orientation

**1.1 Gateway** – The entrance to the exhibition will be designed as a device that challenges visitors to imagine undertaking the immigration process. The initial, single portal will be designed as a stylized gateway, resting shut until a visitor opens it. Near or on the outside of the gate will be a prominent question, asking the visitor if they wish to enter Canada. By choosing to open the gate, the visitor accepts a physical and conceptual transition into a reflection on the immigration process.

Immediately inside the gate, the visitor is confronted with questions that establish their eligibility for entry into Canada: their age, gender, geographic and national origin, religious beliefs, political ideology, if they have a criminal record, how much money they have with them, if they have employment in Canada, if they are proceeding to relatives and so on. The questions are meant to remind visitors that a desire to come to Canada was rarely sufficient for entry, even during the colonial period. Others whose answers were not satisfactory, and therefore faced refusal, detention, denial and deportation, will be reflected with graphics or moving projections.

**1.2 Why Immigration?** – What is immigration and why is it important? Countries encourage immigration for many reasons—political, social and economic. In Canadian history, this question is further complicated by colonial, imperial and Aboriginal influences on early settlement. On either side of this graphic will be a series of quotes that can be either static, aesthetically designed graphics or moving projections on the floor and walls activated by the movement of visitors. Quotes from immigrants, past and present, describing their hopes, expectations and experiences, as well as from Canadians expressing their perception of immigration, including voices from Aboriginal communities and authorities, will help contextualize the political and personal influences around

immigration. These quotations should be selected to present the main themes of Journey, Arrival and Belonging.

**1.3 Timeline** – A layered and dynamic timeline introduces major events in Canadian immigration history as well as pre-confederation (starting late 1400s) in the context of related domestic and international events. This timeline is a broad overview, intended to situate visitors in a general narrative of immigration history.

This timeline will offer a combination of interspersed flexible, static and digital displays, so as to provide opportunities to change or add content in the future. The purpose of this display is to introduce various relationships between broad events and immigration responses over time, so that visitors may begin to explore, question and then create linkages as they encounter new information elsewhere in the exhibition.



**1.4 Before Canada Mini Theatre** – A graphic panel introduces the historical and continuing presence of Aboriginal Peoples on the lands that have become part of Canada. A five to seven-minute video introduces key concepts in the relationships between Aboriginal Peoples and newcomers. This will help contextualize information included later in the exhibition as colonial settlement spreads across the continent.

**1.4.1 Perspectives** – A series of three to five free-standing graphics and cases for artifacts present representations of Aboriginal perspectives on colonization, settlement and immigration. Archival materials, oral tradition and artifacts will be used to communicate the complexity and consequences of settler colonialism and national expansion on aboriginal territories. Ideally this area will include an audio component so that visitors can listen to these accounts in English, French and selected First Nations languages.

**1.5 Your Journey** –This optional experience will include streams of additional content. The Museum’s admission system will include the ability to issue a ticket that specifies certain streams of information as an interest for a visitor. Through technologies such as RFIDs or printed barcodes, an issued ticket can direct these Museum displays to respond to the visitor’s interests. The Museum can track usage information as part of ongoing audience research, and the flexibility of the associated displays opens a “quick response” avenue for the Museum to present information on particular themes without the complexity of creating a temporary display or a virtual exhibition. Visitors will be encouraged to become part of the Museum’s online community.





## 2. The Journey Begins

An immigrant's story begins before he or she gets on a boat or plane or crosses a border. Many newcomers only travel after long preparations for the journey. Further, the voyage itself has often been dangerous. Policies and regulations have sometimes been obstacles to travel or admission. Exhibits in this thematic area will explore the personal journeys of immigrants as they leave their country, whether voluntary or not.

**2.1 Why Canada?** – Text and graphics will introduce visitors to this thematic area with a particular focus on a newcomer's decision to leave their home and choose Canada. This section will also feature content ranging from print material such as propaganda posters, to recruiting film clips used to lure people to Canada, as well as story quotes in which individuals share their response to the material.

**2.1.1 Where in the World?** – A graphic map of the world or globe will show where newcomers to Canada have come from over time. The objective is to illustrate broad, global trends rather than to provide precise statistical data for particular nations. To that end, a delineation of information based on continents and periodization based on broad chronology is indicated.

**2.2 Leaving Home** – The decision to leave your homeland for a future in another country is a powerful one. Here we will address the topic of forced migration to ensure that the 'voice' of involuntary migrants, especially from the colonial period, is brought forward. There are many factors in making the decision to leave: push and pull factors such as war, poverty, environmental degradation, political turmoil, political and religious persecution, sexual orientation, desire for greater freedom of speech and many more.

Visitors will encounter five to ten displays (past and present) that explore these factors through the stories of individuals and their families. Each display will include audio and objects, where available and appropriate. These displays will be designed to allow for changing content.

**2.2.1 Would You Leave?** – This interactive exhibit is intended to get visitors thinking about why they might choose to leave their home. Visitors explore the factors that would force them or encourage them to leave and make them think about the implications of doing so. Visitors will be invited to respond to a series of questions that become more complex and difficult to answer. For example, the first question might be a simple multiple choice that ranges from "select the top three reasons that would force you to leave your home" to "you have graduated from university with a top degree and have been offered a high paying job in another country. Would you accept? Will you give up your citizenship? Why or why not?"

**2.2.2 What Do You Bring?** – This exhibit looks at what people brought and bring with them literally and culturally. The tangibles and intangibles that people bring with them will be explored through a display of artifacts, audio and audio-video content, as well as images acting as a backdrop. This section will also bring awareness to the fact that not all individuals had or have the time and opportunity to bring tangibles with them.

**2.2.2.1 Packing** – Tangibles will also be explored through the use of a role playing activity that requires visitors to step into the shoes of immigrants who left their home with only a few trunks containing their most prized possessions. This low-tech, hands-on interactive will encourage visitors to select from a series of objects to fill a trunk. Three to five trunks and/or large suitcases from different time periods will act as optional packing containers.

**2.3 Seeking Refuge** – This exhibit explores the stories of people who have taken refuge in Canada. Who were and who are they? Where did they come from historically and where are they coming from today? What were and are the reasons that people decide to seek refuge in Canada and how has Canada, at various historical points, negotiated the reception of refugees? How are refugees processed today? What happens to non-status immigrants? Visitors will also learn about the many organizations that help people who find themselves without status.

This section will also provide specific case studies to show the changing definitions and mechanisms to accept individuals or groups seeking refuge in Canada. Video content that reflects the immigration officer's perspectives/experiences such as the CBC archival news footage of Scott Mullin interviewing Vietnamese refugees will be included.

**2.4 Are You a Desirable Canadian?** – The policies that governed who entered Canada or the preceding colonies defined who was "desirable" as a settler or immigrant, and who was not. Religion, race, class, occupation, wealth and kinship were among the most common factors used to select who would be permitted entry. The process of admission was and is usually negotiated between at least two parties: the authorities of the government controlling the destination and the prospective newcomer. This dynamic is often uneven and sometimes very one-sided, as was the case for forced migrants such as slaves.

The question of admissibility is constantly reviewed, and the criteria changed, based on contemporary influences. The use of admission control as a mechanism of state formation remains even though the influence of certain factors, such as race or religion, varies over time.

This section will also include three flexible displays allowing for potential rotating content dedicated to topics such as the Chinese Head Tax, the *Continuous Passage Act* and Canadian anti-Semitism including correspondence on the topic of the St. Louis and its impact on policy and practice.

**2.4.1 Immigration Policy Timeline** – An interactive timeline will locate significant changes in Canadian immigration policy. In the context of its relationship with Section 2.4 (Are You a Desirable Canadian?), this timeline will emphasize the relationship between the imagined Canadian nation-state and the imagined immigrant. This timeline is organized around a specific body of material: legislation, orders-in-council and regulatory changes. Historical sources, including archival, personal and material evidence, illustrate and contextualize the consequences of the policy changes.

**2.4.2 What Would You Do?** – Using multi-touch technology visitors will have the opportunity to consider a selection of key historical case studies. Visitors will be asked what they would have done had they been the policy-makers and then be shown what the actual decision was.

Key historical case studies could include: the Komagata Maru (1914); Jews, Mennonites, Hutterites coming to Canada in the 1920s; Sudeten Germans (1938), the Walnut (1948-49); Hungarian Revolution (1956-57); Czechoslovakians (1968-69); Chileans (1973); Boat People (1970s-1980s); Tamils on the East Coast; Tiananmen Square—8,000 Chinese were granted permanent residence (1989); UNHCR asks Canada to take in 5,000 Kosovars (1999). In addition, some information could be shared about the MV Sun Sea arrival, which is still before courts but could provide an excellent introduction to encourage visitors to follow the case.



**2.4.3 What do you think?** – A series of changing “yes” or “no” questions tied to a low-tech or high-tech voting system, will ask visitors to respond to current issues on topics such as immigration, culture and identity. Visitors will be able to see their responses and those of other participants to date. This approach should be modeled on a format such as CBC’s daily poll. This interactive is designed to get people thinking about the issues, seeing what other visitors think and ideally wanting to learn more.

This area will also feature a large flat screen or a wall of screens on which current news reports about immigration-

related topics will play on a loop. This will be updated weekly or monthly depending on the arrangement made with broadcasters.

**2.5 Getting Underway** – All immigrants are linked by the common experience of a voyage—by sea, land or air. How have changes in transportation changed immigration? This exhibit explores the means by which immigrants came to Canada from horse-drawn wagons and vehicles to ships, trains and airplanes. This exhibit will include a large mural with both historic and modern images depicting modes of transportation.

A high-tech interactive will also bring transportation to life by allowing visitors to select maps detailing travel routes from different periods. The interactive will be complimented by photographs, audio (train whistles, fog horns, etc.), oral history interview clips and video. The Museum's current Aquitania ship model is available for possible inclusion in this area.

**2.6 Hopes & Dreams (Oral History Station)** - This exhibit will take the form of cube seating clusters with sound coming either from headphones or audio wands. Each cluster will feature oral history clips relating to a sub-theme.

The selected oral histories in this exhibit will focus on why the decision to migrate was made, having to say goodbye, the experiences of the journey, the anxieties, fears and hopes for what was ahead. The stories should be both historical and contemporary and can change over time. *Note: a similar exhibit cluster form will be found in the "Journey" and "Belonging" themes in order to track the personal journey of immigrants.*



### 3. Arrival

In this thematic area, visitors learn about the events and processes that take place upon arrival and settling into a new country.

**3.1 Welcome?** – Newcomers, authorities and residents all have perceptions and expectations that influence the arrival experience. These have changed substantially over time, but these initial unfamiliar and challenging encounters remain a central part of Canada's immigration narratives. This display will offer an exploration of the arrival experiences of immigrants and settlers over time, focusing on the linkages between public sentiments, policy and the discretionary power of immigration agents.

This will be achieved through exhibit text supported by graphics such as newspaper headlines, memoirs, letters or diary quotes and oral history. The backdrop for this exhibit will be formed by a partial reconstruction or large series of photomurals, recreating a pre-confederation arrival scene juxtaposed with the immigration interview area of the Canada Border Services Agency at Toronto Pearson International Airport.

**3.1.1 With Open Arms** – This section tells the stories of groups who were welcomed by most Canadians, such as the war brides who married Canadian soldiers or the Hungarian and Czechoslovakian refugees of the 1950s and 1960s. Sometimes unexpected arrivals were met with positive press and almost unanimous support from Canadians.

**3.1.2 Closed Borders** – There are infamous examples of groups turned away on arrival in Canada, such as the passengers of *Komagata Maru* in 1914. Besides group refusals, many individuals have been turned away due to perceptions or policies related to 'race,' health or country of origin. Even those



claiming refugee status but not meeting official standards, such as American military deserters in the 2000s, faced barriers. As did those standing too far outside the official orthodoxy of the day (such as a known Communist during the "Red Scare" of 1919).

**3.2 Ports, Processes and Gate-keepers** – This exhibit explores the immigration process over time, including colonial period regulation, as well as post-Confederation and present day processes. Visitors will hear stories from immigrants expressing their successes and challenges, as well as meet and hear from the people directly involved in the process such as nurses, customs officials, immigration lawyers, immigration consultants and more. How has the process changed over time? These stories may be shared through archival video clips, oral history and story quotes.

**3.3 Settlement** – Where have immigrants settled over time? Here is an opportunity to understand how newcomers chose their homes—or how those choices were made for them. A large interactive map will allow for exploration of settlement patterns over time. Representative personal accounts anchored in a variety of resources that fit with historical population trends will inform the interactive display.

This will be complemented by a component exploring the factors that help influence the decision of where to settle such as employment, climate, geography, previous knowledge, the presence of friends and relatives, ethnic enclaves, the location of a sponsor, or in the case of the British Home Children, the location of their employer. These factors and others will be shared through archival resources, stories and oral histories. This exhibit will include either a replica of, or the original Middlemore home staircase from the Fairview home in Bedford, Nova Scotia.

**3.4 Settlement Support** – For many newcomers, among the first Canadians they met were representatives of a religious denomination, Red Cross workers, settlement organization staff or language instructors such as Frontier College teachers. This exhibit will be comprised of a photo mural and story quotes about the impact of these early exchanges.



**3.5 Becoming Part of the Community** – Immigrants often choose to live in communities with others of similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Using cases studies of particular neighbourhoods within key Canadian cities, this exhibit will share how factors such as culture, language, food and support have served to create rich and varied communities. What impact have these communities had on the existing populations of those cities? Was there conflict? Was there integration? The exhibit will feature three to five case studies of neighbourhoods that have been transformed by settlement over time.

Historic images and partial recreations of immersive elements of these neighbourhoods, as well as maps that show how these neighbourhoods have changed over time, and oral histories will all be important parts of this experience.



**3.5.1 Where to live?** – This interactive exhibit will put visitors in the shoes of an immigrant about to decide where to settle. Visitors can choose to be someone from another era or the present day. A series of questions and scenarios will guide their decision-making so that they can begin to understand the complex factors involved.

**3.5.2 Creating Your Own Community** – This exhibit examines those communities in Canada that were founded by immigrant groups, such as the story of the Barr Colonists who founded Lloydminster in what is now Alberta and Saskatchewan, French settlement in Manitoba, Icelanders who founded Gimli, Manitoba, or the German immigrants who founded Lunenburg, Nova Scotia (creating a population now known as the “South Shore Dutch”, a corruption of the original “Deutsch”). This exhibition will illustrate the reasons why some immigrants chose to live in similar ethnic or geographic communities, the outcome of which led to the founding of some Canadian towns and cities.

**3.6 Looking for Work** – One of the reasons people have always immigrated to Canada is in search of better economic opportunities—from owning land and farming to starting a new business. This exhibit will look at some of the challenges and opportunities of entering the workforce in Canada. Personal stories including oral histories and archival documents from throughout Canada’s history, will showcase some of the first or early jobs that individuals had upon coming to Canada and their experiences tied to the search for employment.

Issues surrounding the recognition of credentials and University of Toronto professor Philip Oreopoulos’ resume field experiment may also be included.

**3.7 First Impressions** (Oral History Station) - This exhibit will take the form of cube seating clusters with sound coming either from headphones or audio wands. Each cluster will feature oral history clips relating to a particular sub-theme. Oral histories in this exhibit will focus on first impressions of Canada. What surprised people the most? What disappointed them? Stories about what newcomers thought, and how they felt, about everything from snow to taxes will resonate with new Canadians and offer insight to those who have not had the immigration experience. *Note: a similar exhibit cluster form will be found in the “Journey” and “Belonging” themes in order to track the personal journey of immigrants.*

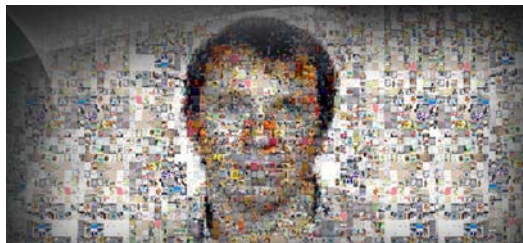
## 4. Belonging

In this section of the exhibition, visitors are introduced to the governmental, societal and personal processes of 'belonging' in Canada.

This section of the exhibition will also include an audio-video artwork displayed on a large screen, which speaks to the theme of 'Belonging.' To be placed where most appropriate in terms of content and design, in vicinity of 4.3 and 4.4.

**4.1 Introduction** – An introductory panel will feature questions and a selection of responses from those born in Canada, those who immigrated and those who arrived as displaced people and refugees. Some of the answers to these questions will have been collected through the Museum's website and will include but not be limited to some of the following: *What is a 'Canadian'?*, *What does it mean to belong or not belong in Canada?*, *When did you first feel like a Canadian?* A digital display with these questions will allow visitors to read others' responses and to submit their own.

**4.2 Our Canada** – This interactive element is a highly accessible way to make the exhibition relatable and relevant to the visitor by reinforcing the fact that our identity is shaped by our experiences and encounters with other people. It will help forge an emotional connection not only with our subject matter, but with fellow visitors. It will take the form of a large and dramatic visual display conveying the message that we are all connected and we are all part of something larger. If visitors choose to participate, facial recognition software will capture their image and add it to a bank of portraits which will be seeded by the Museum's existing collection. A large wall of monitors will assemble the portraits into a pixelated image of the participant. Their portrait will be a mosaic of other people's images.



**4.3 Object Stories** – Five free-standing cases will contain one object that represents an individual immigrant or immigrant family and symbolizes what being Canadian means to them. Each object will be interpreted with text, images and an audio or audio-video listening station. This will be a changing exhibit that reflects the complexity of identity and the personal expression of it in our country. These exhibits will explore identity through language, culture, freedom of expression, family, etc.

**4.4 A Question of Belonging** – This section contains a series of mini-exhibit displays designed for flexibility and with rotating content in mind. It will draw upon historical case studies representing different groups, time periods and regions of the country. These will illustrate particular situations where newcomers were made to feel welcome, as well as situations where significant barriers challenged immigrants' sense of 'belonging.' Each exhibit component will be designed for ease of update and provide the option of including graphics, artifacts or objects, images, text and audio or audio-video that could be presented through digital tablets. The Museum will be responsive to topics as they become relevant to the public.

**4.4.1 Expulsion of the Acadians** – From the early 17<sup>th</sup> century through to the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Acadie was at the centre of complex conflicts. First Nations, nearby colonies and European powers negotiated and fought in Acadie, and around Acadian communities. This pushed many Acadians to identify with their geography rather than with politics. The Acadian population grew to almost 20,000 by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when one of the definitive events of Acadian history took place: the "Grand d rangement" or Expulsion. The British feared that the Acadians might be unreliable in time of war. As a result, the majority were deported. The Acadians were sent to other British or French colonies throughout North America and some were even sent to France. Despite the tragedy of the expulsion, Acadians often maintained a strong identification with Acadie as their home. Many later returned to rebuild their community in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

#### 4.4.2 The Black Loyalists of Birchtown, Nova Scotia –

Black soldiers who fought with the British in the American Revolutionary War were offered land and transportation to Canada. Upwards of 2,000 Black Loyalists came to Birchtown, Nova Scotia and formed the largest independent Black community outside of Africa. The land that they were awarded by the British was unsuitable for cultivation due to poor soil, a short growing season and rocky terrain. High unemployment, a harsh climate and unfair treatment from authorities and neighbours combined to force many into poverty. Many Black soldiers accepted low wages to secure employment which upset many disbanded white soldiers and culminated in a riot in 1784. In search of fair treatment, many left Nova Scotia less than a decade later. This exhibit should be created in partnership with the Black Loyalist Heritage Society.

**4.4.3 A Loyal Catholic?** – These stories will discuss views of Irish Catholic immigrants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century who were suspected of divided loyalties. What was their primary allegiance? Would they rebel to support the cause of a free Ireland? The Fenian raids propelled issues of immigration, security, defense and loyalty into the conversation around Canadian Confederation.

**4.4.4. A Fine Line** – During times of national stress, the line that marks the boundary between who is and who is not a “real” or “loyal” Canadian tends to harden, as the members of the Boston Bruins’ “Kraut Line” found during the Second World War. All native-born Canadians from Kitchener, Ontario, Milt Schmidt, Woody Dumart and Bobby Bauer found themselves booed and heckled as the war intensified because of their German ancestry, forcing the Bruins to change the name of the line from “Kraut Line” to “Kitchener Kids.” All three subsequently enlisted in the Canadian military to prove their loyalty.

**4.4.5 Internment Camps** – Continuing on the theme of identity during times of national emergency, many native-

born Canadians found themselves stripped of property and interned in inland camps after the outbreak of hostilities during the Second World War. Many Canadians of various ethnic backgrounds were affected and this exhibit will explore internment, prejudice and fear.

**4.4.6 Testing the Limits of the Mosaic** – A changing, contemporary exhibit around topics of accommodation and the subsequent interactions with Canadian social and political systems that wrestle with issues of accommodation.

This section includes two examples from the Sikh Canadian community. A Sikh, Baltej Singh Dillon faced a decision when he was accepted into the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)—serve Canada or wear his turban. In 1990, after much public debate, the federal government removed its ban preventing Sikhs from wearing turbans while serving in the RCMP. In 2001, Gurbat Singh brought a metal kirpan to his school. After the local school board sought to limit the wearing of the kirpan, Singh’s family accepted the decision. In 2002, another school board believed the kirpan to be a weapon and banned it from its schools. In 2006, the Supreme Court of Canada decided that a ban on the possession of a kirpan by a student in school violated an individual’s rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**4.5 Leaving Canada** – Some immigrants choose not to stay in Canada for various reasons. This exhibit explores those factors and how this trend has changed over time and why. In some cases, potential immigrants have been forced to leave. Stories about forced deportation will also be included.

**4.6 Immigration and Citizenship** – This is an exhibit about the steps to becoming a Canadian citizen from first applying to come to Canada right up to the Citizenship ceremony. This necessitates two separate sections, one exploring changing policies and mechanisms for immigrating, the second exploring the changing laws governing naturalization and citizenship. The process will be followed through three historical periods.

This section will also include photographs from citizenship ceremonies and testimonies from new Canadians collected from the online feedback mechanism described in section 4.1. The following question will be asked and reflected in this section: *If you had a citizenship ceremony can you please describe how you felt about it?*

Visitors will also be invited to take a contemporary sample citizenship test and see their scores in comparison to the compiled results of others who have taken the test at the Museum.

**4.7 Reflections on Becoming** (Oral History Station) – This exhibit will take the form of a cluster of communal booth-like seating where people can have a shared auditory experience. The audio spillage will be minimized through the use of a sound dome or directional ‘sound bug’ speakers built into the booths. Booths and surrounding seating area will be easy to maintain, with non-reflective material to minimize sound spillage. Visitors will be able to choose from a large number of oral histories from a console. The selected oral histories in this exhibit will focus on peoples’ experiences after they arrived in Canada. These stories will include the challenges people encountered beginning a new life in Canada, as well as the reasons people decided to stay. Content will reflect how people negotiate their identities and connections to people, places, ideas and language in the process of becoming Canadian. This exhibit space may include personal anecdotes that relate to transnationalism, dual citizenship and intergenerational transmission of identity. *Note: a similar exhibit cluster form will be found in the “Journey” and “Arrival” themes in order to track the personal journey of immigrants.*

**4.8 Interpretation and Projection Stage Area** – A stylized stage with a backdrop for projection will primarily feature selected oral history excerpts, digital stories or short film projects. The floor and surrounding area will be non-reflective material to minimize sound spill. This space will be designed to also support programs and events such as talks, first-person animation, interpretation or theatrical performances. Space allowing, a small area for costumes or other preparation should be included in the design. Seating for this area will be flexible.


**4.9 Cultural Landscape** – When people immigrate to Canada, they bring along many aspects of culture. As they settle in their new homes, their cultures overlap with those of their neighbours. They are sharing a cultural landscape. Cultural Landscapes are social spaces that people create and change over time. These spaces reflect the cultural practices, shared meanings and beliefs of their inhabitants. The concept of Cultural Landscapes helps us explore questions about how groups of people maintain and produce their cultural identity. Cultural landscapes are everywhere, are multilayered and always changing.

The purpose of this exhibit is to explore differences, celebrate accomplishments and study the impact of immigration on the fabric of Canadian society.

**4.9.1 Built Heritage** – Large photomurals will depict the way immigrants have physically changed the landscape. This will be a photographic (historic and modern) journey across Canada of built heritage including religious structures, communities, homes, store fronts and more. Some of the details in the photomurals could be recreated in ‘bas relief’ to provide a tactile element.

**4.9.2 Food** – Food is a cultural unifier, and one of the most tangible ways to share with, or share in, another culture. Through a display of artifacts related to the preparation and serving of food, to the preservation and transmission of recipes and cooking techniques, visitors will see how immigration has enriched our palette and how the cultural expressions of food have fused to form uniquely Canadian dishes. A portion of this exhibit will have flexible elements and have features such as a recipe of the month take away and a low-tech interactive where visitors can share their favourite food traditions.





**4.9.3 Arts and Literature** – Celebrates the evolution of music, visual arts, theatre, dance and literature. It will include a display of musical instruments, books, poems and theatre and dance programs. An audio component will feature clips of spoken word art and music created in Canada. Near this section could also be featured an art piece inspired by the theme of ‘cultural landscapes.’

**4.9.4 Political, Economic and Social Impact** – This exhibit looks at setting precedents and gaining ground in the business, political and social areas of Canada. Focusing on individuals and whole communities who have through creativity, vision, and hard work transformed perceptions and created meaningful change in their communities and beyond.

Sections 4.9.3 and 4.9.4 will be designed with flexibility in mind to allow for potential rotation of content. Each exhibit component will be designed for ease of update and provide the option of including graphics, artifacts or objects, and images, text, and video or audio that could be presented through digital tablets.

## 2.5 The Pier 21 Story Exhibition Plan

### 1. The Pier 21 Story – Journey

The Pier 21 Story will follow the themes of Journey and Arrival. As a National Historic Site designated in part because of the authority of place related to immigrant arrival, this section will be heavily weighted in the exhibition.

**1.1 National Historic Site (Site Model)** – Visitors will encounter a model of the Pier 21 site, preferably before entering the exhibition space (or at the entrance to the gallery). The model will provide an overview of the site and allow visitors to understand what the site looked like during its years of operation. The model is a great place to orient tour groups and help them understand the spaces in the building that are no longer accessible.

The Museum's existing Pier 21 site model will be re-used but updated with new graphics and text. The model will need to be lowered to accommodate viewing by children and wheelchair users.

**1.2 Introduction** – A large graphic welcomes visitors to the Pier 21 experience and explains the historic significance of Pier 21 within the context of the Canadian immigration story, as well as its status as a National Historic Site.

**1.2.1 Pier 21 Now and Then** – As visitors take self-guided tours around the building, they will encounter signage featuring an historic photo of the location they are in that indicates an Augmented Reality option. Using their own mobile technology visitors will be able access photographs of what those areas looked like during, or in a few cases after, the Pier 21 years. Visitors will also be able to read story excerpts or hear oral history interview clips about activities that occurred in those locations. The Museum's current collection supports content for this virtual component for the Pier 21 foyer, the current exhibition space (Pier 21 immigration hall), the WWII Deck, Customs pedway, the

exterior of Annex building. Additional images should be sourced.



**1.3 Trunks Display** – The Museum's collection of authentic trunks and luggage used by those who immigrated to Canada via Pier 21 will be featured here. This will be an interpreted display, with preference regarding the actual artifacts going to those with good provenance and stories attached. Luggage will also be employed throughout the Pier 21 exhibition as a method of display featuring mini-exhibits presenting key stories related to the themes.

**1.4 Child's Trunk** – This component recognizes that not all newcomers immigrate to Canada as adults. Throughout the Pier 21 exhibit, adapted steamer trunks will offer a child's perspective of the Canadian immigration experience. These will be included in each exhibit section. The trunks will include drawers and compartments that open which will be filled with replicas of objects and documents related to the theme being explored. This will include, but not be limited to, items such as laminated archival images (photographs and documentation), maps, replica ship and train memorabilia (tea party menus and activity programs, etc.), hands-on artifact replicas of items like children's treasures from home and toys given to them by Pier 21 volunteers. Some of these trunks will include listening

wands with oral history interview clips in which those who immigrated as children reflect on their experiences.

**1.5 Reasons for Leaving** – This exhibit explores the reasons why people left their countries of origin during the Pier 21 years (1928 to 1971). International events, domestic policies and personal motivations that influenced immigration decisions will be presented through mixed media and layered historical sources.

**1.6 Seeking Refuge** – This exhibit will build on section 1.5 with a focus on the refugees and Displaced Persons who passed through Pier 21. Potential case studies including the pre-Second World War Sudetanland refugees, the Baltic refugees who fled Sweden (including those who arrived aboard the Walnut), the Hungarian Revolution refugees, the refugees from the Prague Spring and others who fled communism by defecting to Canada.

**1.7 Journey** (Oral History Station) – This exhibit will take the form of audio nooks. Each recessed banquette-style seating will comfortably accommodate two adults, with sound coming from directional ‘sound bug’ speakers, headphones or audio wands to minimize audio spillage. The selected oral histories in this exhibit will focus on newcomers’ memories related to their decision to immigrate, their preparations to leave, saying goodbye and traveling.

**1.8 The Trans-Atlantic Voyage** – Immigrants who entered Canada through Pier 21 usually arrived by sea. Visitors will be able to enter two reconstructed environments, a cabin and a dining area, to get a glimpse of what it may have been like to cross the ocean aboard a ship in the 1950s. The reconstructed environments will include the display of artifacts and replicas, as well as images where appropriate, to recreate the environment. Elements proposed for the child’s trunk should be incorporated directly into the immersive (inside drawers or cabinets).

These environments will also incorporate oral history clips about experiences in the dining rooms and ship cabins. Another feature will be a chronological image-based timeline that shows the changes to passenger ship design over the Pier 21 years. This section will conclude with contextual information on the gradual introduction of

air travel, including Pier 21’s changing role as an immigration processing site with the increased popularity of air travel.

**1.8.1 Voyage** – Nearby, archival footage such as the home movie of an Aquitania crossing currently in the Museum’s collection, or another option if it presents itself, will be either projected onto a wall or presented on a television screen.



**1.8.2 Ship Façade** –The Museum’s existing theatre façade takes the form of a ship’s deck. The ship façade will be updated and repainted to create a more realistic look. The ship’s deck floor will be updated to feature a shuffleboard court and game elements, as well as images of children and adults playing the game on ship, while on their way to Canada.

**1.9 Ports of Call** – The backdrop of this exhibit will be a motion graph showing where immigrants, Displaced Persons and refugees who arrived through all Canadian ports and border stations came from during the Pier 21 years. Content will be based on country of birth statistics from Citizenship Immigration Canada. The exhibit will include photographs of, and information about, Pier 21 and the other port immigration facilities. It will also include a display of objects related to other ports of call.

**1.10 Barriers to Immigration** – This exhibit will focus on the policies and procedures in place during the Pier 21 years that prevented many potential immigrants from gaining admittance to Canada. The restrictive amendments to immigration regulations during the Depression, the expansion of prohibited classes in the *Immigration Act* of 1952 and the use of discretionary powers of refusal throughout Pier 21’s years of operation were all important barriers that lead to denial, detention and deportation of aspiring immigrants from gaining admittance to Canada.

## 2. The Pier 21 Story - Arrival

**2.1 Welcome to Canada** – As visitors leave the reconstructed voyage area, they will encounter a photo mural that depicts and describes the official processes that went on at Pier 21. This exhibit will share the typical experience of the process through authentic voices. The following steps will be represented: arriving, being processed by immigration, being processed by customs officers, interacting with volunteers in the immigration annex, buying food for the trip and settling in on the train. The experiences of those held in Pier 21's detention quarters will also be included.



Quotes from memoirs, letters and diary entries in the current Museum collection will be used to walk visitors through the Pier 21 immigration process. Sound domes, directional 'sound bug' speakers or another approach designed to minimize audio spillage will enhance the immersive effect of the photo mural by allowing visitors who stand near them to hear relevant audio, like the sound of a fog horn and the high volume of the crowded immigration hall (many people speaking at once, multiple languages, babies crying, officials making announcements). This section will also include a display of objects related to the immigration process.

**2.1.1 Doctor's Window** – This exhibit will feature a hologram of a doctor pacing and peering out the window. The doctor's window will be interpreted through a mural-size photograph depicting the doctor's view of the gangplank. Accompanying text will describe how doctors employed the window to inspect passengers as they came down the gangplank into Pier 21, as well as the relationship between public health, quarantine and immigration in Halifax. A brief introduction to Lawlor's Island and Rockhead Hospital will be featured.

**2.2 Immigration Desk and Benches** –The centre of the exhibition will feature durable replicas of the post-war immigration benches and immigration officer's desk. This immersive area will allow visitors to sit where immigrants would have sat throughout the Pier 21 period. It will also serve as a programming area.

**2.3 Customs** –This exhibit will show the process of entering the country via an interactive display that compares customs officers' concerns and approaches then with now. The questions they asked, the methods they used and the things they were looking for will be the subject of this fun and informative interactive.

Artifact cases displaying items that were and were not allowed in, and those that are and are not allowed in today, will also be included in this area. The backdrop for this area will be a mural-size of Ken Elliot's photograph of the Pier 21 customs area depicted above.



**2.4 Strangers for a Day** - The NFB short film featuring a typical day at Pier 21, with people moving through the physical space as they are processed, will be included. This film will either be projected onto a screen or presented on a large flat screen television. A small seating area will be located behind the immigration desk and just before the train exhibit.

**2.5 Treasures from Home** –This exhibit will display objects that people brought with them. The key feature of this display will be a cross-section of a Dutch kist, displaying a wide variety of tightly packed items ranging from china to a kitchen sink. Surrounding the kist will be display cases of other treasures brought from home.

**2.6 Arrival: First Impressions** (Oral History Station) - This exhibit can take one of two forms, both providing access to a large number of oral histories. The first option takes the form of a large, old fashioned operator's switch board; the other a large table with seating where visitors can listen to oral history clips using headphones or audio wands. In the latter, the table top acts as a horizontal display. Under glass are images, documents and artifacts displayed via a combination of inset and raised display cases.

The selected oral histories in this exhibit will include people's memories of seeing the Canadian landscape for the first time and of passing through Pier 21. It will also include memories of encounters with immigration and customs officers, medical staff, interpreters, Pier 21 staff and volunteers from religious and other organizations.

**2.7 People of the Pier** – Visitors will have the opportunity to learn about the staff and the various volunteer organizations that had a presence at Pier 21, and the role these organizations played in welcoming newcomers. This will include panels featuring text, story quotes, photographs and letters to and from staff and volunteers. An audio/video station featuring oral history clips of interviews with staff and volunteers as well as reflections from those they interacted with.

**2.8 Goodbye Pier 21, Hello Canada** – Most immigrants travelled to their new home by train. This exhibit will be a large-scale, realistic replica of an immigrant rail car with a detailed exterior and interior. Although many authentic interior elements will be included, in order to accommodate shared auditory experiences as well as opportunities for the display of related materials, two styles of rail car will be combined. Half of the proposed immigrant car will resemble a passenger car, including replicas of original wooden benches, and the other, a dining car, to accommodate and distinguish between the two exhibits below. The windows of the train car will feature large photographic images or moving images.

**2.8.1 Off to a New Life** (Oral History Station) - This area provides a brief description of the process of leaving Pier 21 and the excitement, anticipation and anxiety that surround thoughts of reaching a new home. The area will feature authentic voices of people who will describe their


experiences of traveling from Pier 21 to other parts of Canada—their first impressions of the country including geography, architecture, climate, what the trip was like, what arrangements they had (or had to make) in order to reach their destinations and the unexpected incidents and people they encountered along the way. This exhibit will take the form of a dining car where visitors will be invited to sit at tables to listen to oral history clips coming from a sound dome above or directional 'sound bug' speakers to minimize audio spillage. Displayed on the tables under glass will be archival images and train memorabilia such as Canadian National Railway and Canadian Pacific Railway rail maps, train ticket stubs and menus.

**2.8.2 Where Are They Now?** – This exhibit will take the form of a passenger car. It will follow the same people featured in the previous exhibit, telling the stories of their lives after settling in Canada leading up to the present day—their successes, their failures, things they were grateful for and things they regretted. It will bring the story of immigration through Pier 21 full circle.

**2.8.3 The Role of the Rail**—The histories of selected railway companies, and their role in immigration, as recruiter, employer and transportation, will be featured through an illustrated digital display spanning from the laying of the rail up to today.

### 3. The Pier 21 Story –The WWII Deck





**WWII Deck** – This space will remain the same structurally and continue to feature content about the departure and return of Canadian service personnel, the war brides and the British evacuee children through three displays using touch screen technology. These will provide the opportunity to feature a variety of media, including short documentaries which the Museum currently has, as well as oral history interview clips, stories, archival footage and images.

The far end walls of this space would provide a great opportunity to display two mural-size photographs, each depicting a scene related to of the three topics listed above.

A panel to explain the original doors and deck will also be added as will the Lady Nelson ship model which is part of the Museum's current collection.

#### 4. The Pier 21 Story – Pier 21 'Yearbook'

**Our Alumni, Pier 21 'Yearbook'** – A large touch screen monitor featuring quotes from, and photographs of, people who have returned to Pier 21 since the Museum opened in 1999 describing why they came back and how it felt. This can easily be populated with materials currently available to the Museum and easily updatable as needed. It can also be mirrored on the Museum's website, to give those who haven't shared feedback on their visits to Pier 21 an opportunity to do so with notes and photographs. Alumni, their children and grandchildren will be included. This display will be located near the entrance to the Pier 21 Story exhibition in the Museum's Chrysler Canada Welcome Pavilion.