

GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

Sponsorship on the Rise in the United Kingdom

On June 17, the United Kingdom's Home Office and the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid MP, **announced** that the UK will continue to resettle refugees, including through its **community sponsorship program**, following the conclusion of its flagship program this year.

Reset @ResetUKorg · Jun 19
The @ukhomeoffice Immigration Minister, @carolinenokes chatted to Reset about the gov's intention to grow #CommunitySponsorship beyond 2020 after seeing its brilliant success. Wonderful to see the gov recognise the hard work of #CommunitySponsorship groups to welcome #refugees!



Reset **tweet** on community sponsorship beyond 2020 with Immigration Minister Caroline Nokes.

Starting in 2020, the community sponsorship program will also be in addition to the government commitment. This encouraging news comes during a time when many other countries have been looking to the UK for inspiration and leadership as they have also considered or launched their pilot programs. The UK's affirmation contributes to the global momentum around community sponsorship.

UK **immigration statistics** (April 2018 to March 2019) highlight that 173 refugees were resettled through the scheme in the year, bringing the total sponsored refugees to 281.

Celebrating #WorldRefugeeDay

"Even at a time when countries are cutting back on resettlement, private sponsorship is increasingly popular. Every couple of weeks we have a country... interested in learning about private sponsorship."

—Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) on June 20th

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP IN THE NEWS

- Kiwis encouraged to privately sponsor refugees
- LETTER: Communities should help refugee families
- Canada expanding cap on LGBTQ2 refugee sponsorship program
- News and updates from Reset Communities and Refugees



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Argentina Deepens Its Sponsorship Expertise

As part of its work to explore tools for scaling the successes of its **sponsorship program**, the Argentine government visited Ottawa and Winnipeg in Canada in early May. The delegation met with a range of Canadian sponsorship experts and policymakers to discuss strategies for expanding the sponsor community, practices for sponsor-refugee matching, and settlement plan development, among many other topics.

Winnipeg was an ideal place to explore approaches to resettlement outside of major urban centres. And the final activity of the study tour, a networking event for organizations serving refugees and sponsors, was especially valuable, as the delegation saw first-hand a number of diverse actors supporting refugee sponsorship.

What is GRSI?

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is a partnership of five organizations – the Government of Canada, UNHCR, the Open Society Foundations, the Giustra Foundation and the University of Ottawa. It aims to help other countries set up their own community-based refugee sponsorship programs, strengthening local communities and improving the narrative on refugees in the process.

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Refugee resettlement and settlement professionals in the US gathered to dialogue on community co-sponsorship.

Growing Community Co-Sponsorship in the United States

On June 6th and 7th, refugee resettlement agency directors and representatives of national resettlement organizations from 13 states across the United States - as well as GRSI representatives - gathered in New Haven, CT for a 2nd National Workshop on the **Community Co-Sponsorship Program** as a model for refugee resettlement. This program was hosted by Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS) to demonstrate the model they have developed for community co-sponsorship, where groups of volunteers take on a significant portion of the resettlement tasks, under the oversight of and in partnership with IRIS.

Over the past three years, IRIS has partnered with 47 groups across Connecticut to resettle 300 refugees using this model. The workshop focused on the "nuts and bolts" of the IRIS model, as well as what the attendees could add from their own experience to make the IRIS model even more effective for the self-sufficiency and integration goals of refugees in the U.S., not only in urban areas, but also in small towns across the country.

Ireland's Sponsorship Pilot Takes Off

Since launching their **community sponsorship pilot** in March, Irish partners have been working devotedly on rolling out the next phases. In these early days, there is already growing excitement in the broader Irish community: trade unions, colleges, and community foundations are all expressing interest in getting more involved.

Sponsor mobilization and training and policy development also continue to move forward well. GRSI engaged with the Irish in action while in Dublin from April 30 to May 2. Productive policy-focused workshops took place with experts and officials from Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the UNHCR.

GRSI also co-hosted an intensive day of training for Irish sponsors, developed in collaboration with experienced sponsors and program experts from the UK and Irish governments, UNHCR, and civil society organizations responsible for sponsor support. The day also presented an opportunity for GRSI to use new, customizable sponsor training tools being developed for use by governments and civil society organizations.

The visit closed with an inspiring meet and greet for existing and prospective sponsors and champions who came together to celebrate Ireland's progress.

A highlight included testimony from an Irish and UK sponsor. The Irish sponsor shared how powerful the impact had been on his community and the supportive responses from neighbours when he went door-to-door to let them know about the initiative.



During a meet and greet in Dublin, sponsors connect with the Director of the Irish Refugee Protection Program (IRPP), Eibhlin Byrne.