

Global Initiative Brings Canada's Refugee Sponsorship Model to the World

New York, United States, June 27, 2017— The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative announced the launch of a global consultation process for a guidebook that will help governments and citizens develop community-based sponsorship programs to resettle refugees.



The global refugee crisis is one of the world's most pressing problems. The number of refugees today is higher than at any time since the Second World War. The scale and urgency of the situation requires innovative solutions.

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI), an international multi-stakeholder initiative building global capacity and support for community-based refugee resettlement, was launched in 2016. Led by the Government of Canada, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the University of Ottawa, the Radcliffe Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations, it is inspired by Canada's private sponsorship program—through which individual citizens have offered protection and support to nearly 300,000 refugees since 1979. GRSI works to raise awareness of this model and help other countries develop their own sponsorship programs.

Earlier this month, GRSI participated in UNHCR's Annual Tri-Partite Consultations on Resettlement in Geneva, where the initiative engaged with representatives of countries from around the world. The outreach in Geneva followed a successful meeting of over 30 European stakeholders in Brussels in April, and a three day visit to Ottawa by representatives from Chile, Brazil, and Argentina in May.

During the Geneva events, GRSI launched its website, www.refugeesponsorship.org, and began a global consultation process to develop a guidebook aimed at supporting states and civil society organizations interested in piloting community-based sponsorship programs in their countries and communities. The guidebook will be released to the public in September 2017.

The United Nations Refugee Agency estimates that there are over 1.2 million refugees in critical need of resettlement. GRSI seeks to increase and improve refugee resettlement around the world; strengthen host communities; and advance public discourse around refugees and other new arrivals by empowering local actors. By promoting this innovative and effective approach to resettlement, the initiative aims to empower countries and communities to become directly involved in finding solutions for today's 22.5 million refugees.

About the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative was announced in September 2016 following the UN Summit for Refugee and Migrants 2016 and officially launched in December 2016 in Ottawa, Canada. The initiative is a partnership of the Government of Canada, the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees, the University of Ottawa, the Radcliffe Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations. For media inquiries, please contact info@refugeesponsorship.org.

Photo credit: © The Radcliffe Foundation

For more information:

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/>
[facebook.com/CitCanada](https://www.facebook.com/CitCanada)
twitter.com/CitImmCanada
[instagram.com/CitImmCanada](https://www.instagram.com/CitImmCanada)

Open Society Foundations

<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/>
[facebook.com/OpenSocietyFoundations](https://www.facebook.com/OpenSocietyFoundations)
twitter.com/opensociety
[instagram.com/opensocietyfoundations](https://www.instagram.com/opensocietyfoundations)

Radcliffe Foundation

<http://radcliffefoundation.org/>
[facebook.com/RadcliffeFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/RadcliffeFoundation)
twitter.com/radcliffefdn
[instagram.com/radcliffefdn](https://www.instagram.com/radcliffefdn)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

<http://www.unhcr.org/>
[facebook.com/UNHCR](https://www.facebook.com/UNHCR)
twitter.com/Refugees

University of Ottawa

<http://www.uottawa.ca/>
[facebook.com/uottawarefugeehub](https://www.facebook.com/uottawarefugeehub)
twitter.com/RefugeeHub

Additional information:

- [Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative promotes Canada's private refugee sponsorship model](#)
- [Media Advisory - Canada to Host High-Level Meeting of Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative](#)
- [News Release - Canada, UNHCR & the Open Society Foundations Seek to Increase Refugee Resettlement through Private Sponsorship](#)
- [Backgrounder: Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program](#)