

GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

Australia announces a new pilot community sponsorship program and a lower cost Community Support Program



A man holds a "Refugees are welcome here!" sign at a Melbourne rally in October.

© Daniel Pockett/AAP

The Australian government has announced a \$37.3 million investment in new initiatives aimed at improving refugee and humanitarian entrants' settlement and integration in Australia. This commitment includes a \$9.2 million investment for the introduction of a new Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP) program to trial community-based sponsorship of refugee and humanitarian entrants with no link to Australia. The four-year pilot, slated to begin in 2022, will enable community sponsorship of up to 1,500 refugee and humanitarian entrants across Australia. Interested community groups, volunteers, and faith-based organisations will be involved in the resettlement efforts. This program will draw on features of Canada's community sponsorship program.

Additionally, the Australian government is introducing a lower cost Community Support Program (CSP): from July 1st, 2022, the Australian government will "reduce the Visa Application Charge for the Community Support Program to 40 per cent of the current rate for primary applicants and remove it entirely for secondary applicants." Currently, it typically costs **more than \$90,000** to sponsor a family of five to

Australia. This monumental change will enable more community groups to sponsor refugees.

Are you a policymaker or civil society leader designing a refugee sponsorship program?
Download the GRSI's policy design workbook.

Vietnamese Americans help Afghan refugees: 'This is a time for us to give back'



Afghan refugee Mrs. Qadiri holds a tea kettle given to her family by Thuy Do, whose family fled Vietnam.

© Francine Orr/Los Angeles Times/TNS

Upon seeing the distressing images of Afghans climbing onto U.S. Air Force planes, Thuy Do was reminded of Vietnamese refugees climbing onto helicopters over 40 years earlier, and knew she needed to help. Do's family left Vietnam when she was a child, resettling to Seattle, Washington. Do joined a **sponsor circle** (the term for a group of five or more Americans who help Afghan refugees resettle in the US for at least three months) called *Viets for Afghans*. She also had an empty home which she offered up for housing. Within a few days, a local Jewish Family Service, which worked with resettlement agencies to find housing for Afghan refugees, placed an Afghan family with six children in Do's home. The family left a week later for a new house, and were replaced by another Afghan family in need: Abdul Matin Qadiri, his wife, and their four children. Qadiri worked as a mechanic for the U.S. military in Afghanistan. He expressed relief about their new life in the United States:

"[Leaving Afghanistan] was draining. But we were finally in America, so there was joy. I'm just grateful to be out of Afghanistan." Qadiri is searching for permanent housing and a job as a mechanic in Seattle.

Check out the [Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative on Twitter!](#)

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Architecture student born in a refugee camp draws on childhood experience to win major award



Myint San Aung stands in a park and smiles at the camera.

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In his final year of architecture school in Auckland, New Zealand, former refugee Myint San Aung has been awarded the prestigious 2021 Te Kāhui Whaihanga Student Design Award. His award-winning design was a bamboo refugee housing complex that fostered self-determination, as his concept enabled refugees to design and build their own houses. San's design was based his on his own childhood: he was born in a refugee camp in Thailand to Burmese parents, who fled Burma (now Myanmar) in 1988. San lived in a refugee camp with his parents and two siblings until the age of 12, when his family came to New Zealand in a refugee resettlement program.

San told reporters that he has always appreciated the ability to help others and give back, adding: "Lots of people would give their lives to be able to come and see this country and get an education as I have. I want to be able to help make their situation better."

Fundraiser to resettle refugee family in community in Wales, UK

In Llanidloes, a small town in Wales, a community sponsorship group called Croesco I Llanidloes has raised over £8,000 with the goal of resettling an Afghan refugee family in their town. The group was formed in September 2021 as a response to the Afghanistan crisis, as concerned community members wanted to help more refugees than the UK Government's initial pledge to house 5,000 Afghans. The co-chair of Croesco I Llanidloes, Joe Arrowsmith, said: "The community of Llanidloes has been very supportive of the project and so many people have pledged to help welcome a family when they arrive." As of January 2022, the group has raised £10,165, just 8% shy of their £11,500 goal. Their fundraising campaign remains active.

What is the GRSI?

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is a partnership of six organizations – the Government of Canada, UNHCR, the Open Society Foundations, The Giustra Foundation, The Shapiro 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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