

## Literature Round Up – Sponsorship, Resettlement and Pathways to Protection

Theme: Private Sponsorship in the US

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### Background and History of Private Sponsorship in the US

La Corte, Matthew (Nov 16, 2021). [Sponsor Circles: How a Program Designed as an Emergency Response can Transform the U.S. Resettlement System](#). Niskanen Center.

Sponsor Circles, an initiative led by a private-sector coalition in partnership with the U.S. government that seeks to connect community sponsor groups with Afghan refugees, launched in October 2021 month to great fanfare. Cabinet secretaries, members of Congress, resettlement agencies like the International Rescue Committee, companies like Airbnb, and advocacy groups applauded the program, which was launched in a matter of weeks to support Afghan refugees arriving in the U.S. The Sponsor Circles program effectively capitalizes on the historic outpouring of support from the American people for the Afghan refugees who fled the Taliban in 2021.

Libal, Kathryn, Scott Harding and Madri Hall-Faul (2022). [Community and Private Sponsorship of Refugees in the USA: Rebirth of a Model](#). 3 *Journal of Policy Practice and Research*, 259-276.

This article traces the history of private sector involvement in the US refugee program and the re-emergence of community and private refugee sponsorship programs in recent years. The authors emphasize the significance of new efforts to promote “innovation” and private and civic engagement in US refugee resettlement. While the prospect of heightened public support for refugees is enhanced by this change, we also identify risks associated with this approach. As responsibility for welcoming refugees into US communities expands beyond the direct oversight of professional resettlement agencies to more diffuse (and often less experienced) community groups, it is incumbent to understand the potential consequences—positive and negative—of this policy shift.

Prantl, Janine (Jan 24, 2023). [Community Sponsorships For Refugees And Other Forced Migrants: Learning From Outside And Inside The United States](#). *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* (forthcoming).

The Biden administration recognizes that private sponsorships can help rebuild the US refugee system and has launched a private sponsorship program. Against this backdrop, this article argues that community engagement and sponsorship are historically rooted in US migration law and policy and elaborates on what future US private sponsorships for refugees on a permanent basis could look like. To derive lessons for the design of a sustainable program, the article looks at Canada and six other countries with community-based refugee sponsorship programs: Australia, Argentina, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. The article addresses specificities of the US system and reveals pertinent practical issues, as it complements this comparative analysis of programs outside the United States with elaborations on recent community sponsorship models in the United States.

[Recommendations for Private Sponsorship Design in an Expanded Community Sponsorship System.](#) (2021) Niskanen Centre, International Refugee Assistance Project, and Amnesty International USA.

President Biden’s Executive Order 14013 ordered the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to deliver a plan by June 4, 2021 on the expanded use of community sponsorship, including private sponsorship as well as existing co-sponsorship models. As the Departments of State (DOS) and Health and Human Services (HHS) consider design for this expansion, the authors make the following recommendations: (1) Key definitions and clear timelines; (2) Co-design based in equity, inclusion, and diversity; (3) An iterative program with a strong monitoring and evaluation component; (4) Resettlement and resources additional to existing USRAP; (5) Opportunities to “name” refugees for sponsorship; and (6) A broad range of potential private sponsors.

Talla, Vasudha (2016). [Private Sponsorship of Refugee Resettlement in the United States: Guiding Principles and Recommendations.](#) International Refugee Assistance Project and Human Rights First.

Individuals and organizations in the United States are seeking significant ways to assist refugees caught in the worst refugee crisis since World War II. There is fast-growing support for a private sponsorship program in the United States. Private sponsorship offers communities, organizations, companies, and philanthropies the opportunity to support the resettlement of additional refugees to the United States. Building upon the well-established model of the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP)—a public-private partnership between the federal government and nonprofit resettlement agencies that successfully resettles thousands of refugees each year—private sponsors would be paired with refugees upon their arrival, providing financial support as well as cultural orientation and community integration. In the short-term, refugee families—especially those with special vulnerabilities—would enjoy dedicated attention and support from sponsors, while in the long-term, sponsors would expand the constituency of those invested in refugee resettlement and drive innovation in resettlement.

### Welcome Corps Program

Gunderson, Erica (Feb 4, 2023). [Welcome Corps Program Allows Private Citizens to Sponsor Refugees to US.](#) WTTW News (Latino Voices).

Refugees to America often find themselves starting from scratch, but a new program is offering everyday Americans a way to give refugees a softer landing. Modeled after a Canadian program, Welcome Corps is the U.S. Department of State’s new private sponsorship program for American citizens to assist refugees. In the program’s first phase, sponsors will be matched with refugees who have already been approved to enter the country. Cecilia Muñoz, co-chair of Welcome.US, said the program is designed to distribute the work of resettling refugees to everyday citizens who want to help, and the program’s private funding model effectively means there is no cap on the work it can do.

Office of the Spokesperson (Jan 19, 2023). [Launch of Welcome Corps – Private Sponsorship of Refugees.](#) Fact Sheet, US Department of State.

The Department of State, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services, announced the creation of the Welcome Corps, a new private sponsorship program that empowers everyday Americans to play a leading role in welcoming refugees arriving through the US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) and supporting their resettlement and integration as they build new lives in the US. The Welcome Corps will create a durable program for Americans in communities across the country to privately sponsor refugees from around the world.

Office of the Spokesperson (Jan 19, 2023). [Senior State Department Officials on the Launch of the Welcome Corps, a Private Sponsorship Program to Welcome Refugees to the United States](#). US Department of State.

Senior State Department Officials field questions on the announcement of the Welcome Corps program from media sources. Questions are posed related to financial obligations of sponsors; involvement of staff of local partner organizations; oversight of the program; long-term expansion of the program; precedents for the program; financial incentives for sponsors; countries of origin of beneficiaries; and potential changes to the refugee screening process.

Orth, Taylor (Jan 20, 2023). [Most Americans support 'Welcome Corps,' Biden's new refugee sponsorship program](#). YouGovAmerica.

The Welcome Corps initiative is widely popular among the American public, according to YouGov's latest poll fielded the day of its announcement. The results show 60% of US adults say they strongly or somewhat support Welcome Corps and just 19% are opposed to it.