



COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP FOR REFUGEES:

A NEW WAY TO HELP PEOPLE REBUILD THEIR LIVES IN AUSTRALIA

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM?

A community sponsorship program for refugees allows people in Australia to support a refugee's resettlement in Australia.

Essentially an individual, community group or business chooses to contribute towards the refugee's resettlement costs, which would normally be paid by government. They also commit to helping the person settle into the community – such as helping them find employment and housing – and generally making them feel welcome!

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SPONSORSHIP?

A well-designed community sponsorship program means more people have the opportunity to come to Australia and rebuild their lives.

Other benefits include improved integration and more positive attitudes towards refugees in the community.

When community sponsorship is fair and accessible, we know it works.

In the last 40 years Canadians have welcomed over 280,000 refugees into their neighbourhoods through community-led sponsorship. These people arrived in Canada in addition to their government's annual humanitarian intake, thanks to community groups, families and individuals.

WHAT IS AMNESTY ASKING THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO DO?

Promisingly, the Australian Government has piloted a community sponsorship program for refugees.

But there are several flaws with the current program. For every privately sponsored refugee, the government takes a space away from our annual humanitarian intake – depriving another person of the help they so badly need and passing the government's own commitments along to everyday Australians.

It also has a very high application cost, making it difficult for average Australians to help.

WE ARE CALLING ON THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO CREATE A FAIRER COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM THAT:

- doesn't take places away from others in need
- provides adequate support and services to refugees settling into the community
- reduces the costs for participating sponsors and refugees
- allows more people to become sponsors – communities, families and businesses.

Read more about community sponsorship for refugees and call for a fairer community sponsorship program at www.amnesty.org.au

