

Re: Settlement

Australia's first gathering to celebrate and grow community-led refugee welcome.

PROGRAM



Photo credit: Alana Landsberry

With a focus on community sponsorship and complementary settlement pathways, we're coming together to showcase local knowledge and innovation, connect, share and learn.

Getting there

& things to note

Venue

Kensington Town Hall
30-34 Bellair Street, Kensington, VIC 3031
[Google Maps](#)

Hotels in the areas (participants to book directly)

[Quest Flemington](#) - 12 minute walk - offering 15% discount
[Mercure North Melbourne Hotel](#) - offering 10% discount
For details on how to access discounts, [see here](#).

Transport

Train: Newmarket Station (Craigieburn line) - 3 min walk
Tram #57: Newmarket Plaza/Racecourse Rd - 2 min walk
From the airport: 25 minutes (allow 30-40)/20km by car
Parking: limited street parking available

Post event social

Hardiman's Hotel
521 Macaulay Road, Kensington, VIC 3031
[Google Maps](#)

Program

08.03.2024

Schedule

8:15AM	REGISTRATIONS
9:00AM	WELCOME TO COUNTRY
9:15AM	RE: VISION
9:45AM	EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE
10:45AM	RE: THINK
11:15AM	MORNING TEA
11:45AM	BREAKOUT SESSIONS
1:00PM	LUNCH
2:00PM	RE: DEFINE
3:30PM	KEYNOTE - JMB
4:00PM	RE: IMAGINE
4:30PM	RE: VIEW
5:30PM	RE: FRESH

Program

08.03.2024

Page 1 - Morning

8:15AM - REGISTRATIONS COMMENCE

9:00AM - FORMALITIES COMMENCE

Re: vision - Welcome and opening remarks about the future of community sponsorship and other complementary pathways from

- Lisa Button, CEO, Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia
- The Hon Andrew Giles MP, Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

Experts by experience - Panel discussion with community supporter group members and refugee participants on their experiences of the CRISP and community-led resettlement

Re: think - Panel discussion with leading academics on what research tells us about the benefits of community sponsorship in Australia and around the world

11:15AM - MORNING TEA BREAK

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11:45AM - BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Each breakout session will incorporate discussion on how we can achieve the shared goal of 10,000 community sponsored and complementary pathways places, what we'd need as a sector and community to get there and how we collectively sustain the appetite and capacity for it.

- **Community of Practice** - This session aims to provide a space for CSG members and others to actively engage in mapping existing resources and assets within the CoP as a way to find solutions to common challenges faced by groups in the CRISP.
- **The role of broader civil society in refugee resettlement** – a roundtable discussion on lessons learned, their impact and how they can support the movement now and into the future.
- **Building a complementary pathways ecosystem** - A session for sector practitioners to share their work and explore further collaboration.

1:00PM - LUNCH BREAK

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Page 3 - Afternoon

Re: define - Following breakout discussions, a chance to debrief, share key insights and define the direction of future work

Re: imagine - Over afternoon tea, an opportunity to speak informally with other attendees about your learnings thus far and your vision for the future of community sponsorship in Australia

Keynote - Jack Manning Bancroft is the Founder & CEO of AIME. Jack will share thoughts on the relational economy, systems thinking and the impact of knowledge sharing on community

Re: view - Reflections on the day's discussions and the future by Noel Clement, Chair of Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia

5:00PM - CONCLUSION OF OFFICIAL PRESENTATIONS

Re: fresh - Light refreshments, continued informal conversation and further connections at Hardiman's Hotel Kensington

END 7:30PM

Keynote Speakers



Hon. Andrew Giles

Andrew Giles is the Albanese Government's Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs and is the Federal Member for Scullin in Melbourne's north. Since his election in 2013, Andrew served as the Shadow Assistant Minister for Schools between 2016 and 2019, before serving as the Shadow Minister for Cities and Urban Infrastructure and Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs from 2019 to 2022.



Jack Manning Bancroft

Jack is the Founder & CEO of AIME. He is a graduate of The University of Sydney and Stanford University, a former NSW Young Australian of the Year, and an author of books for children and adults. Jack has received a Human Rights Medal, an Honorary Fellowship from the University of Western Sydney and is the youngest person in Australian history to be awarded an Honorary Doctorate, which he received from the University of South Australia. He is currently an Honorary Fellow at Deakin University with the Indigenous Knowledge Systems Lab.

Speakers & presenters

MC



Shabnam Safa is a driven community development practitioner passionate about cultivating true partnerships between communities and structures of power to create lasting solutions. Inspired by her own experience of forced displacement from Afghanistan, she is a strong advocate for meaningful participation of refugees in addressing the complex challenges of resettlement, inclusion, and belonging. She has founded and led multiple initiatives in Australia and abroad supporting refugees and host communities, particularly focusing on strengths-based and capacity-building approaches. Shabnam is the inaugural chairperson leading the National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group (NRAAG), a refugee-led organisation creating spaces for effective elevation of voices with lived experience in key decisions, policies, and discourse about refugees. She was recently inducted to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women for her tireless work in promoting refugee rights and social cohesion.

Re: Vision / Opening Address



Lisa Button has been leading the work of CRSA and its predecessor, CRSI, since she instigated its establishment in 2018. She began her career as a commercial lawyer and has been working in refugee law and policy for more than a decade with organisations such as the Centre for Policy Development, Save the Children and Refugee Legal. Lisa is also a Fellow with the Centre for Policy Development and has been a director of a number of refugee-led organisations. Lisa holds a Masters in Public and International Law in addition to her BA/LLB(Hons) from the University of Melbourne. Lisa is one of the seven members of the Settlement Advisory Council advising the Australian Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs. She lives in Melbourne and is the proud mum of three boys.

Speakers & presenters

Experts by Experience



Romy Vitalien has spent more than a decade working in refugee settlement, leading a range of government, philanthropic and participant-funded programs that enable people with refugee backgrounds to establish a home in Australia and to participate fully in all aspects of the Australian community. Romy has a Master of Social Work, a Bachelor of Law and a Bachelor of Arts, and has worked extensively with people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including with Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, Australian Red Cross, AMES Australia and the Legal Aid Scheme in Ghana. She is a proud mother of two and is driven by the sheer joy of welcoming people with refugee experiences to Australia, and the opportunity to harness the enormous contributions that this resilient cohort can offer to Australian society.



Carole Pondevie-Lay is an English as an Additional Language Educator with over 25 years' experience in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) and the community education sector. She is currently the Community Liaison and Engagement Manager at Melbourne Polytechnic and oversees the Volunteer Tutor Scheme in the Melbourne AMEP. Carole volunteers as the group coordinator for a community supporter group called 'Connecting', who are supporting a newly arrived family from Afghanistan to settle in the northern suburbs of Melbourne through the CRISP.



Claudia Gross, coordinator of Tweed Welcomes Refugees is a psychologist who is passionate about social justice and a more multicultural rural Australia. She has been working with people with disabilities and with First Nations people in remote Australia as well as in general mental health Now, she is focussing on helping new arrivals to put down meaningful roots in a new rural community, while continuing her professional and community work. In welcoming people to Australia, Claudia draws on her own personal experiences as a newcomer to Australia almost 30 years ago.



Farzad Naimi is 16 years old and originally from Afghanistan. He arrived in Melbourne in 2023 and has been settling into life in Australia with his mum, dad and three younger siblings. Farzad initially went to English language school and has recently started school at Parade College in Bundoora, Melbourne, pursuing a Vocational Major with a keen interest in becoming an electrician. Farzad loves Muay Thai, being with family and visiting new places.



Mayra Mendoza was born in the Venezuelan capital city Caracas and arrived in Australia in November 2023, where she is settling in the Northern Rivers of NSW, near Murwillumbah in the Tweed Shire. Mayra has two university degrees, in Computer Science and Administration, however her passion is in cooking, music, dancing and teaching children in their first stage of learning.

Speakers & presenters



Penny Vine has been involved in refugee settlement since 2005. She lives in Albury-Wodonga on the border of Victoria and NSW, which has a population of 100,000, and a long history of settling migrants. Penny is part of the Murray Valley Sanctuary Refugee group which was formed in 2005 with the aim of providing third-party sponsorship of 202 Humanitarian Visas, including interest free airfares and settlement support. The group has been involved in bringing over 25 families (around 200 people) to Australia through that program, mostly from Democratic Republic of Congo, and have established strong links with the general population of the 2000 Congolese who have settled in the area. Penny was involved in the initial meetings around setting up the CRISP program back in 2018, so she has been especially pleased to be able to lead Murray Valley Sanctuary for Refugees' work in welcoming three families through the CRISP program so far, with a view to continue welcoming one family per year.



Ibrahim Sulaiman Alchikh was a bus driver in Syria who transported students to schools and universities and also worked for tourist companies. After 10 years of displacement in Lebanon, he and his family arrived in Australia in December 2023, where they are settling in Albury Wodonga, on the VIC/NSW border. Ibrahim's hobbies include farming and loving the land.

Re: Think



Dr Asher Hirsch is a Senior Policy Officer with the Refugee Council of Australia, the national peak body for refugees and the organisations and individuals who support them. His work involves research, policy development and advocacy on national and international issues impacting refugee communities. Asher is also a Lecturer at Monash University in public law, human rights, and refugee law. His PhD investigated Australia's extraterritorial migration control activities in Southeast Asia.



Dr Anthea Vogl is an Associate Professor of Law at the University of Technology (UTS), Sydney. Her research takes a critical, interdisciplinary approach to the regulation of refugees, migrants and non-citizens. Anthea co-runs a clinical refugee law program at UTS and she is currently co-leading an Australian Research Council Discovery Project Grant on private refugee sponsorship in Australia (2022-2025). She is also an Associate Co-Director of Border Criminologies at Oxford University Faculty of Law and Co-Director of the Brennan Justice and Leadership Program at UTS.



Dr Nathan Gardner is a post-doctoral researcher at the Melbourne Law School (University of Melbourne) and a historian of Australian immigration, multiculturalism and the country's diverse ethnic communities. His forthcoming monograph will be published by Sydney University Press and is the first comparative historical study of Chinese Australian communities since the end of the 'White Australia Policy'. Nathan is currently working on a project funded by the Australian Research Council (with Professor Susan Kneebone, Associate Professor Kate Ogg and Associate Professor Anthea Vogl) to produce a comprehensive historical study of community sponsorship of refugees in Australia.

Speakers & presenters

Breakout Sessions



Clifford (Cliff) Eberly is a thoughtful and reflective people and culture leader who works across community organisations, business and government to help communities create a sense of place through community-led action. With experience in community development, public policy and organisational leadership, he has spent the last 18 years developing and delivering community projects in the United States, South Africa, and Australia. Clifford holds a Masters in Organisational Development from Monash University that builds on a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies from studies in the United States. He is an advocate for place-based, strengths-focused and community-led approaches to engagement, development and service delivery.



Dr Sally Baker is an Associate Professor of Migration and Education at the Australian National University. Sally's teaching and research interests centre on equity in higher education, particularly the educational access, pathways, and experiences of students with forced migration backgrounds. Sally is the founder of the [Refugee Education Special Interest Group](#) for/with students from refugee backgrounds.



Steph Cousins is Global CEO of Talent Beyond Boundaries. Steph has over 15 years of experience in human rights, humanitarian and development advocacy and leadership. She has led advocacy and external affairs teams at a number of non-profit organizations, including Amnesty International Australia and Oxfam Australia. She has worked extensively on refugee policy issues and with refugee communities in Australia and globally. Steph is a Churchill Fellow and has a Masters of Public and International Law, a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Public Policy and Management (Hons) from the University of Melbourne.



Zaki Haidari is a 2020 Australian Human Rights Commission Human Rights Hero, an Ambassador for leading refugee legal centre Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS), and works at Amnesty International Australia as a Refugee Rights Campaigner. Zaki is also a respected commentator in the media on refugee rights. Zaki is himself a refugee. He fled Afghanistan after being targeted to be killed by Taliban. He survived a terrifying boat journey and arrived in Australia seeking protection in 2012. Since then, despite social, legal and financial obstacles, he has thrived. First, he learnt English, then he transformed into a human rights advocate, courageously sharing his experience with schools and the wider community, speaking out about the cruel regime of permanent temporariness faced by people like him who came to Australia by sea seeking safety.

Speakers & presenters

Re: Define



Dr Louise Olliff works as a senior advisor for the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), where she has been employed in policy, research and advocacy roles since 2009. She currently leads RCOA's advocacy work relating to resettlement and complementary pathways. Louise completed a PhD in Anthropology and Development Studies at the University of Melbourne in 2018, where her research explored the ways in which refugee diaspora communities in Australia are involved in helping people living in refugee situations in different parts of the world.



Louise Redmond - After a decade of nomadic life (working in Cairns, Vietnam and Nepal, and travelling in Australia as Red Nomads), Louise is now settled in the Blue Mountains, NSW. She became involved in the leadership of Rural Australians for Refugees in 2019, and led RAR to being a founding member of CRSA. Louise is a founding member of the Mountain Mentors, originally supporting three Tibetan families via the Group Mentorship Program and going on to sponsor two young Afghan men in 2023. Louise and the Mountain Mentors are now preparing to welcome a Syrian family arriving in 2024. Louise trained as a social worker, and an ESL teacher. She loves to spend time with her adult children, grandchildren, her garden and bees!



Rita Hakkoum is an advocate with a profound personal journey, making her a beacon of hope and inspiration in the refugee support sector. Having fled her homeland of Syria seven years ago, Rita has since found solace and purpose in Australia, embracing it as her new home. Her compelling lived experiences have deeply informed her passionate commitment to advocacy, community outreach, and organisation. In her role at CatholicCare Social Services, Rita leverages her personal narrative to foster a culture of empathy and understanding, bridging the gap between Australian communities and those seeking refuge. At the core of Rita's work is her innate ability to engage the broader Australian community in the process of welcoming and supporting refugees. Her approach is about nurturing a sense of belonging and collective responsibility. Rita has become instrumental in creating inclusive spaces where refugees can feel valued and supported. Rita actively participates in community events and dialogues, aiming to educate and inspire others about the importance of solidarity and compassion in the face of displacement.

Speakers & presenters



Victoria Stevenson has a long-held interest and experience working in the migration and refugee settlement space. Beginning her career working in international settings focussed primarily on community development and human trafficking (Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar), Victoria subsequently gained firsthand experience working with newly arrived refugees in Australia. Since then, she has held several policy and program positions within Commonwealth and State Government departments and has a Masters of International Social Development from UNSW. She currently works in the Refugee, Humanitarian and Settlement Division at the Department of Home Affairs, focussing on the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot.



Vivienne Chew has more than 15 years of experience in forced migration policy advocacy, research, and program implementation in the Asia Pacific region. She has worked with diverse groups inside and outside of government to develop and implement complex strategies to support migration policy reform. In her previous roles at the International Detention Coalition and Asylum Access, and as former chair of the Immigration Detention Working Group of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, Vivienne has led advocacy and research initiatives on migration governance, immigration detention, and alternatives to detention at the regional and global levels. Vivienne holds a Law degree from the University of Cardiff, Wales, and a Masters in International Human Rights from the Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver.

In hosting this event we are grateful for the generous contributions of a number of key supporters of CRSA's work:



- **Berg Family Foundation**



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