

Annual Report 2023-24

Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia



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Our Organisation's Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision:

Australia offers more refugees opportunities to rebuild their lives in safety here, with everyday Australians encouraged and empowered to provide a warm and supportive welcome into local communities.

Our mission:

To lead in encouraging, developing and supporting programs that expand and improve refugee settlement in Australia by harnessing the generosity, goodwill and social capital of everyday Australians.

Our values:

Human kindness: We are a heart-centred organisation, powered by the goodness of people, community connections and mutual support. We are mindful of the experience of others and have compassion and empathy for all.

Courage: We are committed to our vision and mission; we take a fearless and focussed approach to finding ways to achieve our goals rather than playing it safe.

Autonomy: We collaborate with others as equals and celebrate the strengths of all of those who participate in our work. We treat all with fairness and respect and seek to empower all participants to fulfill their aspirations and potential.

Innovation: As aspirational change makers, we question the status quo, lead innovation in refugee settlement, and enjoy listening, learning and creative problem solving.

Trust: We trust in ourselves to create a powerful movement; in the community as global citizens and sharers of knowledge; and in the strengths and talents of refugee participants. We are trusted by established members of the Australian community, refugee newcomers and government.

Acknowledgement of traditional owners

CRSA acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin, the traditional custodians of the land where our offices are located. We also acknowledge the traditional custodians of other places where we work and where the impact of our work is felt. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our Strategic Goal

CRSA adopted the following long-term strategic goal at the beginning of the year:

CRSA aims to build a strong community refugee sponsorship movement in Australia. We will advocate for and lead the development and implementation of new migration pathways, using our unique understanding of community sponsorship to harness the compassion, networks and resources of everyday Australians. By 2030, we aim for our work to enable 10,000 additional refugees to successfully rebuild their lives in Australia each year.

We resolved to do this by utilising four key pillars and five key focus areas of work:

Key pillars	Focus areas
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our unique community sponsorship knowledge, know-how and tools 2. Our successful track record in implementing community-led sponsorship/settlement models in Australia 3. Our significant network of collaborators including Community Supporter Groups, Supporting Community Organisations, local champions and international experts 4. The trust that we've built with the community, the refugee advocacy/settlement sector and the government to advance shared goals of improving and expanding resettlement in Australia. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successful implementation of the CRISP: Maintaining and improving program quality and increasing scale of the program 2. Building the Movement: Harnessing new allies and networks through engagement with Supporting Community Organisations, Community Champions, Members of Parliament, Local Government and Businesses 3. Advocacy: Additionality, permanence and new community sponsored pathways 4. Research & Program Development: Work with program participants, international peers and other stakeholders to develop and improve community sponsorship 5. Organisational Fundamentals: As a relatively new organisation, continue to develop and strengthen oversight, governance and sustainability.

Chair's report

Noel Clement OAM



It's a great pleasure to introduce this year's annual report as we celebrate another 12 months of significant achievement.

Against an international backdrop of upheaval and conflict and amid a cost of living 'crisis' in Australia, it's important to reflect on what we can continue to build together.

We've seen further increases in the numbers of communities large and small, regional and metropolitan, welcoming new refugee arrivals from across the globe through the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP).

CRISP is a partnership between CRSA and the Australian Government. We deeply appreciate the support of successive Ministers, parliamentarians and public servants. The bipartisan support we've experienced for this work is critical to our ongoing success.

It is, of course, the hundreds of Community Supporter Groups that power this work. These groups of everyday Australians commit to supporting refugees in their communities, raising funds, finding housing, undertaking diverse settlement tasks and providing critical pathways into networks, schools, sporting clubs, jobs and entrepreneurial enterprises. More and more people are putting their hands up to undertake this rewarding task and we're indebted to their generosity, resilience and passion.

It's important to recognise that what we're building together is a movement not just a program. Firstly, we're part of a global movement of citizens increasing the opportunities for refugees to find protection.

And in Australia we're creating opportunities for communities to do what they do best, pulling together.

This movement creates new partnerships, and taps in to existing networks, ranging from social networks, workplaces, school communities, service clubs and faith groups.

As for CRSA, we continue to evolve the role we can best play as this movement grows, as an enabler, innovator, advocate, strategic engine room and amplifier.

While CRISP progresses through its pilot phase, we will use the coming

months to position it for a successful future through secure and ongoing funding and a permanent place for community sponsorship in Australia's settlement landscape. From this we're confident the movement will truly flourish and thrive. Put together – program and movement - we will achieve amazing outcomes:

- Increasing the numbers of refugees receiving protection;
- Improving settlement outcomes for refugees (complementing other more established settlement models);
- Adapting the model and movement capacity for other related settlement opportunities; and
- Contributing to stronger, and even more socially cohesive Australian communities.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our CEO, Lisa Button, all the CRSA staff team, as well as my fellow Board members and our volunteers, for the tireless work you all do. You continue to inspire and amaze.

To Community Supporter Groups, partner organisations and communities across Australia, a heartfelt congratulations and thank-you.

We're indebted to the Australian Government, our philanthropic and corporate partners and everyday Australians that donate to enable this work and that contribute to

positioning the movement for growth and continued success.

And above all, we're humbled and grateful for the trust that refugee individuals, families and diaspora communities place in us, along with the many riches they provide to our communities and society.

There is of course still so much to do, with our focus going forward on how we best scale the numbers of supporter groups even further, increase arrival places, and adapt the basic model to support other groups that might benefit, such as through a program that allows 'naming' or in response to specific emergency needs.

In what can feel like an increasingly divided and self-focused world, it's more important than ever that we leverage the power of communities to support those in need of protection while simultaneously reaping the benefits of more socially cohesive communities ourselves.

Noel Clement OAM

CEO's report Lisa Button



Looking back, this year has been a year of consolidation, continued improvement and expanding our vision for the future. The main operational focus has been on continuing to improve our delivery of the CRISP in response to increasing streams of data and feedback, both internal and external.

As of 30 June 2024, the CRISP had facilitated the welcome and support of 464 refugee newcomers (117 households), with more than 1,000 individuals volunteering their time as members of Community Support Groups (CSGs) in every state and territory. The settlement outcomes that groups are helping newcomers to achieve are a source of immense pride to the CRSA team and, we trust, all involved. CSGs are proving to be highly effective in not only supporting the key aspects of early settlement (airport reception, opening bank accounts, registering

with essential services) but also the longer-term needs of refugee participants with respect to securing long term housing, educational opportunities and employment.

The success of CRISP is not only important in and of itself, but also provides the blueprint for other community sponsorship programs and complementary pathways for which we continue to advocate.

The government's pledge at the December 2023 Global Refugee Forum to work towards increasing community sponsored and other complementary places to 10,000 places per year was a big win for this advocacy, though much needs to be done to make this vision a reality.

The key way in which CRSA is able to support the success of community sponsorship programs is by developing the framework, tools, knowhow and infrastructure to support local groups to activate and develop their own knowledge, networks and resources.

This year has seen many inroads including a new fundraising partnership that allows groups to undertake tax deductible fundraising through the Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Australia (ANCHA) via an ANZ-powered online fundraising site – Shout for Good.

In March 2024 we brought together more than 100 people involved in the community sponsorship movement from all around the country in Melbourne for Australia's first

dedicated community sponsorship conference.

The success of our work was showcased to the world when the global Consultations on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways invited us to showcase the CRISP during its Working Group meeting in Sydney in February 2024.

Our team is working hard to develop partnerships with a wide range of other civil society organisations who share our vision for the future of community sponsorship in Australia. This growing network of 'Supporting Community Organisations' includes human rights organisations, humanitarian agencies, regionally focussed organisations, faith groups, service clubs, LGBTQIA+ focussed organisations and many others. We are extremely grateful for all that they are doing to inform their members and networks about the transformative opportunity to become involved in community sponsorship, as well as develop and improve the operation of the CRISP.

The year has not been without its challenges. Most recently, the federal Cabinet reshuffle has necessitated renewed efforts to socialise our work and vision with new Ministers and Assistant Ministers. However, support for our work remains consistently strong with Parliamentarians across the political spectrum.

More broadly, cost of living pressures impact the willingness and capacity of Australians to commit to being involved in community sponsorship

initiatives. Fears about the shortage of affordable housing make some reluctant to take on the responsibility of supporting the settlement of a refugee household, notwithstanding that CSGs are proving to be very successful in finding and securing appropriate housing (often including 'hidden housing' not on the commercial real estate market).

Looking ahead, we face immense opportunity as well as several challenges.

It was encouraging to see the May 2024, federal budget include a further \$1 million in funding for the extension of the CRISP until at least June 2026. Looking ahead, CRSA is seeking a clear indication from the government by the next full federal budget (at the latest) as to the longer-term prospects of the program.

The government's Global Refugee Forum pledge provides an excellent springboard to pursue our goals of:

- The CRISP becoming permanent and ultimately 'additional' to the government's resettlement commitment
- A new model for 'named' or 'linked' community sponsorship
- Educational pathways for refugees
- Labour pathways for refugees
- Emergency humanitarian intakes underpinned in part by Australian community support.

We expect that government and sector support for the community

sponsorship model will continue to grow as independent evaluative data about the CRISP commissioned by the federal government hopefully becomes available in mid-2025.

The shift in public and political discourse towards reducing Australian migration levels, and ongoing affordable housing crisis, not only threaten political support for our vision but may also have an adverse impact on the willingness of CSGs to galvanise support from within their own communities and networks. Nevertheless, those who are willing to try consistently report being pleasantly surprised – that people are very willing to help when they talk to friends and neighbours about helping ‘just one’ person or one family.

We remain committed to our strategic goal of securing the policy settings, programs and funding required to see 10,000 additional refugees each year supported through community sponsorship programs by 2030.

It is with immense gratitude that I acknowledge and thank the passion and commitment of our dedicated Chair, Directors, Ambassadors and staff, as well as our philanthropic donors and other financial supporters. We are also very grateful to relevant Ministers, our Parliamentary supporters and colleagues at the Department of

Home Affairs who work beside us in a spirit of genuine collaboration, focussed on the inspiring potential for community sponsorship to improve the lives of refugees as well as enrich social cohesion and community life in Australia.

And finally, an enormous thank you to the refugee newcomers who put their faith in this novel but innovative Australian approach and who enrich Australia by coming here; and to growing number of wonderful Australians who are signing on to being involved in this work by forming local Community Supporter Groups. Together, you are the both reason for and the heroes of this endeavour!

Lisa Button

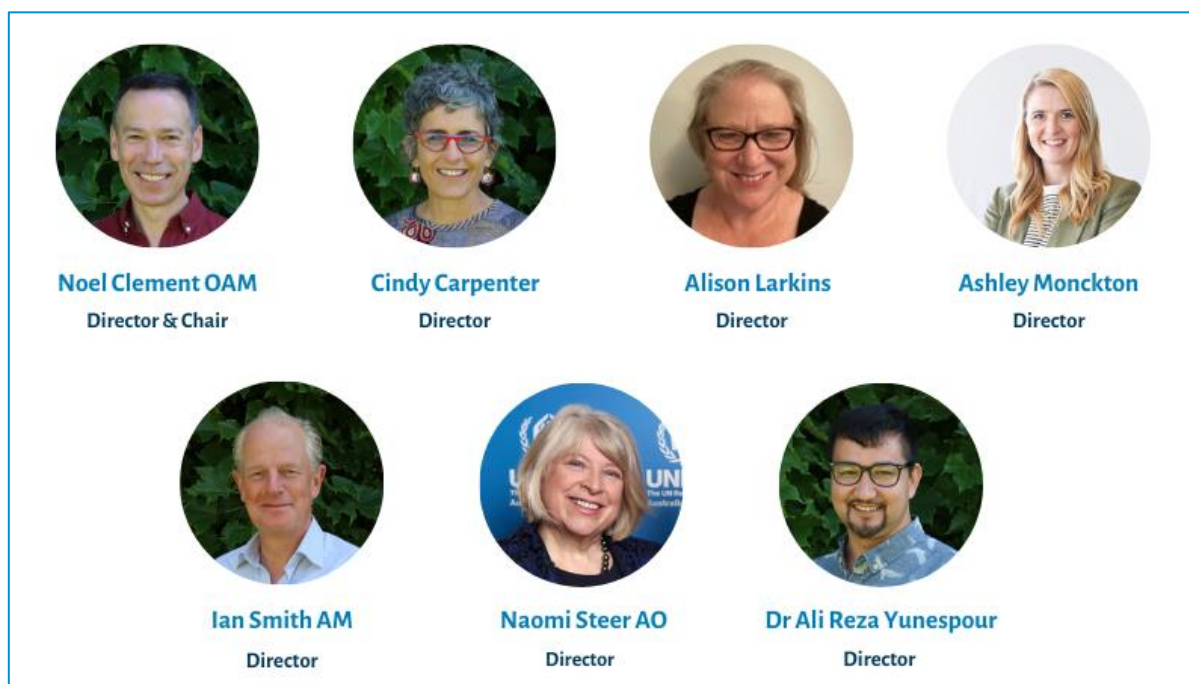
Our governance and people

Governance








CRSA is a company limited by guarantee and is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). CRSA's members are currently the directors of CRSA along with CEO Lisa Button, a number of former directors who continue to actively support CRSA's work and individuals nominated by the four organisations that founded CRSI, the predecessor of CRSA.

Board

CRSA's board of directors currently consists of seven independent, non-executive directors.



Key Personnel – CRSA team

			
Lisa Button CEO	Sophie Bosch General Manager	Romy Vitalien National Program Director - CRISP	Blaise Itabelo National Manager - Community Partnerships & Engagement
			
Vivienne Chew National Policy & Advocacy Advisor	Nicole Watkins National Manager - Community Learning & Development	Shabnam Safa National Training Lead	

Financials

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the Financial Year Ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue			
Revenue from contracts with customers	4	1,565,000	928,000
Other income	5	659,310	828,436
Total revenue		2,224,310	1,756,436
Expenses			
Administration and other operating costs		(206,284)	(172,989)
Advertising and promotion		(26,708)	(45,604)
Employee benefits		(1,216,948)	(918,681)
Finance costs		(116)	-
Grants paid/payable	6	(309,498)	(464,832)
Lease payments for short-term/low-value leases		(39,385)	(51,293)
Net foreign exchange currency losses		(142)	(56)
Other program and client costs		(128,776)	(106,314)
Total expenses		(1,927,857)	(1,759,769)
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year		296,453	(3,333)
Income tax expense		-	-
Surplus/(deficit) after income tax		296,453	(3,333)
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss)		296,453	(3,333)

See accompanying notes in Appendix

Our funders and donors

CRSA's role in delivering the CRISP is funded primarily by the Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs.

CRSA's broader work relies on significant donations from the following companies and philanthropic organisations in 2022-23, along with many smaller donations from other entities and individuals.

We recognise the contributions of the below organisations, along with several other generous donors that do not wish to be named.



BOWDEN
MARSTAN
FOUNDATION



The
Kimberley
Foundation



YULGILBAR

and

the Berg Family Foundation

ShineOn Foundation

Our Programs and Operations

Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP)

Strategic Goal: Maintaining and improving program quality and increasing scale of the program

The conclusion of the 2023-24 year marks the two-year anniversary of the CRISP program in action. As of 30 June 2024, 464 refugees across 117 households had arrived in Australia through this program, making it one of the largest ‘matched’ programs of its kind by global standards.¹ 110 community supporter groups (CSGs), comprising almost 1,000 individual community members, have welcomed a refugee household under the CRISP to date, with a number welcoming multiple newcomer households. In the 2023-24 program year, 283 people arrived in Australia under the CRISP, across 71 refugee households.

Key CRISP Achievements June 2022 – July 2024



More than 1000 individuals volunteering their time and drawing in their networks

CRISP is unlocking significant contributions of time and money from the Australian community. Our conservative estimates are that each CSG involved in the program raises on average \$15,000 in funds to support a refugee household and contributes an estimated 520 hours of free, holistic and tailored

¹ See footnotes 15 – 18.

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support for that household over a 12-month period. If you apply those figures to the 117 households supported by the CRISP to date, the government's investment in CRISP and CRSA has unlocked at least \$1.75 million in public donations along with 60,840 hours of free, holistic support, with a market value of at least \$2.43 million² but with priceless real-life benefits.

CRISP is demonstrating the ability of trained community members to provide high quality settlement and integration support. While we await the publication of the independent evaluation being conducted by the University of Queensland, CRSA's own monitoring conversations with CSGs and newcomer households has built our confidence that this Canadian-style model of community-led welcome can deliver optimal benefits for refugee newcomers and be a satisfying experience for CSGs.

Outcomes for refugee newcomers

Data from CRSA monitoring



100% of households were in long term housing by 6 months of arrival (vast majority in first 12 weeks)



69% of households had engaged in paid employment within 12 months of arrival



95% of households still engaged in English classes at 12 months of arrival (with balance self-assessed as proficient)



56% of households engaged in skills training and other vocational study within 12 months of arrival



96% of households made social connections with the group and community within 12 months of arrival

Community members consistently report
how meaningful and rewarding the experience is

² Based on \$40 per hour for time contributions.

CRISP is harnessing the power of local communities, with groups sharing their knowledge with refugees to help them set up a new life in Australia. Whether it's helping families enrol their children in school, finding a local doctor or searching for a job - communities are helping our newest residents settle into their new life and thrive.

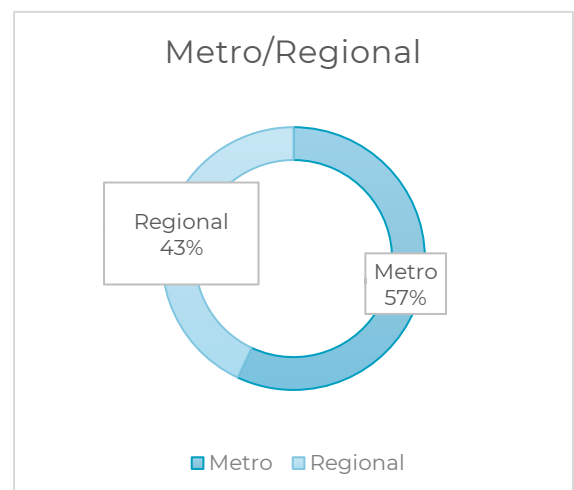
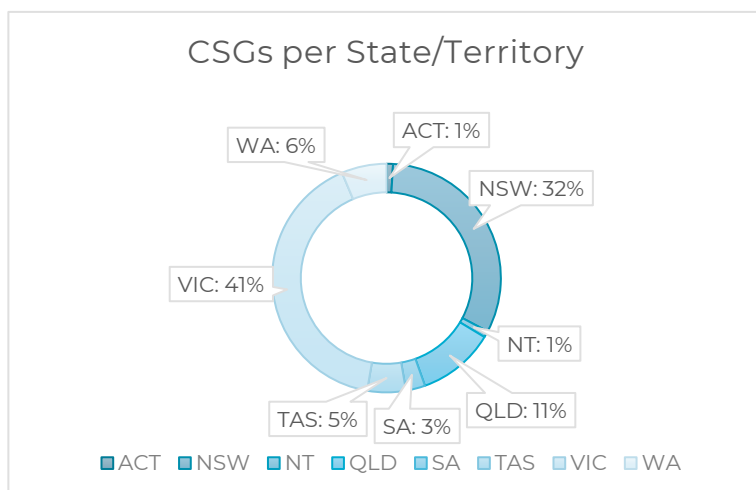
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A recent report into CRISP families - by the University of Queensland - found that all the refugees surveyed reported that refugees involved in the program were settling in, with 88% finding it easy to get help from their community, and 98% feeling that their culture is valued by others.

The experience of community members also found widespread support for the program, with 92% of community members saying that supporting a refugee household has provided them with a sense of purpose.

Andrew Giles MP, Minister for Immigration Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, Media Release, 19 September 2023

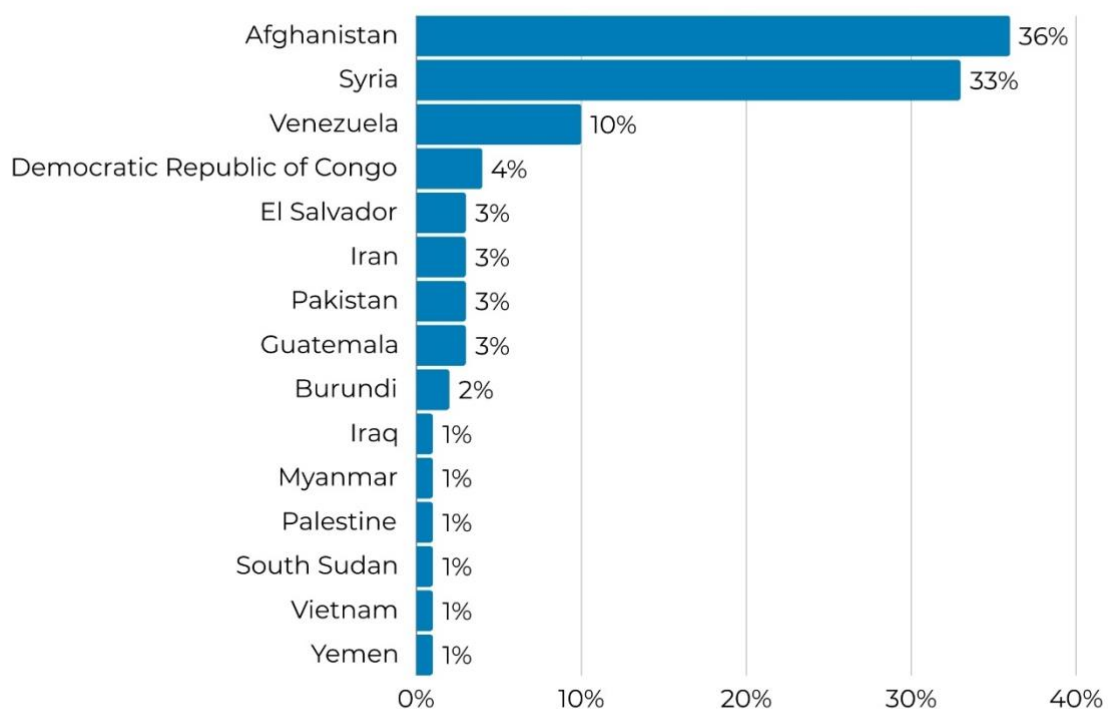
CRISP is now active in all states and territories in Australia and is expanding the geographic footprint of refugee settlement into new regional areas, never before designated as refugee resettlement areas by the Commonwealth government. 57% of active CSGs are in metropolitan areas and 43% are in regional areas³.



³ Based on the Department of Home Affairs' [list of regional postcodes](#), which classifies all postcodes in the ACT, NT, SA and TAS as regional.

So far, our data suggests that 12 months post arrival, more than 90% of CRIPS refugee households are choosing to stay in their primary settlement locations.

CRISP Newcomers by Country of Arrival



Since its launch, the CRISP has seen more than 50 refugee households successfully settle in regional parts of Australia - places that have not previously been designated by the federal government as primary settlement regions, and which have largely seen an outpouring of community support for the CRISP endeavour.

The CRISP is also providing a new domestic and international test case for how settlement in regional locations can be supported by flexible national policy settings that enable locally led, place-based initiatives to establish and thrive, with new settlement clusters emerging in several communities:

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Northern Rivers, New South Wales

Eight households (from Syria, Venezuela and Afghanistan) are settling across the Ballina, Byron, Lismore and Tweed LGAs, with two more households due to arrive in late 2024. arriving in July 2024. Northern Rivers Ballina Region for Refugees is an SCO that has been instrumental in mobilising and financially supporting groups in the region.

Bendigo, Victoria

Four Afghan households have been welcomed to Bendigo by one CSG, which has three Afghan members. The cultural and linguistic diversity within the CSG has enabled the newcomers to benefit from both 'bonding' (from connections within their own cultural community) and 'bridging' social capital (from connections with the broader Australian community).

Regional Tasmania

Four Congolese families (31 individuals) will settle in and around Hobart, Tasmania, with the support of four discrete CSGs. Three of these had arrived at the time of writing, with one settling an hour from Hobart, in an 'outer regional' area based on the ABS Remoteness Structure, which classifies regions based on their access to services.

Macedon Ranges, Victoria

Four households (from Guatemala and Syria) will settle across the neighbouring Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander Shires. Cassinia Community, the social justice arm of Cassinia Environmental, a land management company, is an SCO that led the promotional activities that brought these CSGs together.

Surf Coast, Victoria

Five households have been welcomed along the Great Ocean Road, across the towns of Aireys Inlet, Torquay, Colac and Warrnambool. The households have come from Burundi, Syria and Venezuela.

While the CRISP cannot fully overcome some of the infrastructure gaps present in regional Australia, it empowers local community members to consider their unique contexts and 'opt in' to welcoming refugee newcomers and overcome local challenges through their own innovation and problem solving and driving the settlement process.

Other developments – partnerships and innovations

The CRISP ecosystem is becoming increasingly robust and multifaceted over time, as community confidence in the model grows. In addition to CRSA's central and national role, an increasing number of local and national supporting community organisations (SCOs) are investing time and resources to help embed community sponsorship across the Australian community, including in regional Australia, in faith communities and among LGBTIQ+ communities and allies.

The genuine partnership between CRSA and the Department of Home Affairs in the design and implementation of the CRISP has engendered a shared commitment to continuous improvement, with learnings being embedded into the program in real time, including in response to the formal program evaluation, and into broader sector thinking about refugee settlement in Australia.

The program has been improved and enhanced throughout the year in response to opportunities and challenges including through:

- A partnership with the Australian Neighbourhood and Houses Association (ANHCA), enabling local groups to generate tax deductible donations to their fundraising efforts through the ANZ-powered 'Shout for Good' platform
- A partnership with the Forcibly Displaced Peoples Network (FDPN), enabling targeted activities to mobilise CSGs from within Australia's queer communities, and CSGs who go on to support LGBTQIA+ individuals can access additional training on the specific considerations for members of this community
- Piloting the provision of free, daily pre-arrival online English classes to refugee participants in partnership with the Global Refugee Partnership
- The production of two new videos that help to explain the CRISP to refugee participants at key points pre-arrival

The production of a Newcomer Orientation Booklet, now translated into seven languages, covering a range of topics including information about the CRISP and the role of the CSG, how and when to contact emergency services and other national helplines, and information about child safeguarding and family violence.

CRSA has been pleased to see the 'whole of society' approach engendered by community sponsorship efforts overseas replicated in Australia, with a diverse cross-section of the Australian community getting involved with the CRISP. Community sponsorship tends to de-politicise refugees by expanding the broader community's exposure to, and understanding of, newcomers' challenges, resilience, contributions and shared humanity.

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Special interest and affinity groups to join the CRISP so far include:

- Faith groups
- LGBTQIA+ groups
- Regional Australian communities
- CSGs with a specific focus on supporting individuals with disability

An understanding of the impact of a program like the CRISP needs to take into account the myriad and varied contributions and resources that can be harnessed when the whole of Australia, in both a geographic and a special-interest sense, is brought into the task of refugee settlement.

Social cohesion

The depth of the relationships that are forming between new and established Australian communities through the CRISP can be difficult to quantify but are at the heart of the transformative impact the CRISP is having on participating newcomers and communities.

As the newcomers engage with local events including sports and social gatherings, welcoming communities are learning too, about the ways in which they differ from the newcomers, and the ways in which they're alike. Local schools are adding content to their curricula about the countries the newcomers have come from, and local restaurants are adding dishes to their menus from the newcomers' traditional cuisine. At the same time, newcomers are describing group members as aunts, uncles and grandparents to their children.

Each household to arrive in a new location is paving the way for the next and, in a growing number of cases, becoming involved in the welcoming community supporter group. Overall, the close relationships fostered between refugee newcomers and their welcoming groups and broader communities are strengthening community cohesion and acting as a catalyst for the creation of a growing national network of people willing to invest their time and resources into their local communities, for the betterment of all.

'As refugees arriving to a new country from our homelands, we are not familiar with the language, culture, traditions and cities of this country. Programs like community sponsorship can pave the path for us to get to learn about the culture and tradition and way of living in this new community'.

[Refugee newcomer]

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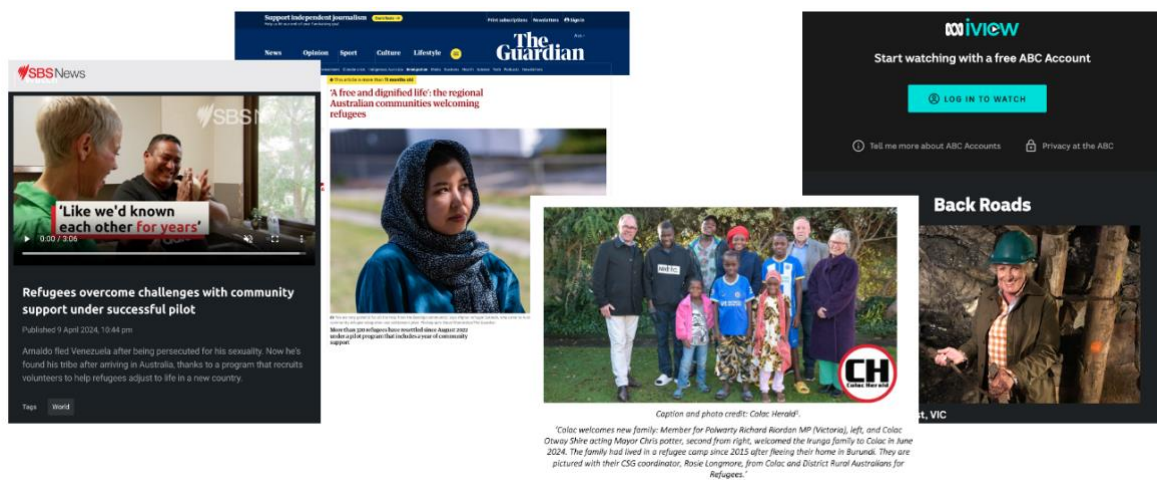
“We’re a church group, but we took them to the mosque on Friday. It was massive and full of people. Everyone was so welcoming that I stayed for prayers. I kept standing and bending at the wrong moments, but they kept helping me. It was a great experience, and we all enjoyed it.”

[CSG member]

The depth of the relationships forming between new and established Australian community members has been a highlight of the CRISP. Clockwise from top left: Yaritza and her children are settling in Aireys Inlet, population 802, in regional Victoria; Yaritza with members of the welcoming community; Yaritza and children sightseeing with CSG coordinator Mary Bremner; Yaritza’s children have formed a close relationship with CSG coordinator Mary Bremner.

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CRISP in the Media



The CRISP maintained a relatively steady media presence throughout the year, with some opportunities being led entirely by CSGs. In addition to many local newspaper stories, national coverage this year included:

- An SBS News television segment about Arnaldo, settling in Sydney with the support of an LGBTIQ+-identifying group. See [HERE](#).
- An ABC News article featuring a CSG in regional Victoria reflecting on their CRISP experience after the refugee household they welcomed decided to move to Melbourne. See [HERE](#).
- An article in The Guardian, focusing on regional settlement under the CRISP. See [HERE](#).
- An SBS Arabic television segment about the Alissa family, settling in the Blue Mountains, NSW. See [HERE](#), from the 9.40 mark.
- An ABC Radio segment featuring Ayat, settling in Melbourne, and a member of the CSG. See [HERE](#).

“Giving to others actually gives back to you ten times more than what you think you’re expending. Basically, community sponsorship makes the world a better place, in the most beautiful way.”

[Community supporter group member]

Helping hands to start anew



July 2024

“I did not know this much joy would be unlocked,” beamed Maggie Patterson, a group coordinator and Goulburn local involved in the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP), a scheme that matches refugee households with a local volunteer groups for 12 months.

After meeting the new arrivals at the airport, the group provide support for everything from housing to job hunting, from enrolling children in school and to organising health and transport needs. The program is a joint initiative of the Federal Government and Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia (CRSA). It is modelled on the successful Canadian community sponsorship scheme, which has been active since the 1970s and has now been adopted by about a dozen other countries. In Australia, the aim is to support 1,500 refugees over four years via help from the community.

Maggie’s own joy came from forming a group of friends and neighbours to welcome and support a Syrian refugee household, the Alkhushi family, who were among the first refugees to arrive in Australia through the CRISP. The family came with few possessions, no English, and a lot of hope.

For Maggie, the legacy of Mazin’s previous life was all too evident. Once a successful businessman, he had later become a target for ISIS. “Mazin has been through so much. I can’t believe he survived what he’s been through, at the hands of ISIS,” she said. Mazin was kidnapped twice – held and tortured – the first time for 10 days and the second for 10 months, after which he fled to Iraq.

Maggie, who has a background in nursing, said she and her group saw themselves as “providing a soft landing” for the family. She had a small, one-bedroom house which the Alkhusi’s stayed in temporarily until they found a more permanent living arrangement.

When word began to get around town about the support group’s involvement in the CRISP, a bunch of Goulburn locals started reaching out, asking what they could do to help. “There were other people in the community coming out of the woodwork in a whole community effort,” said Maggie. Local schools donated tuition, uniforms and even brought in extra resources to support George and Elyas. The local Men’s Shed provided bicycles. Churches in the area offered support of conversational language practice. Rotary members volunteered to give driving lessons, while one community member even donated a car.

The Alkhusi’s move into their own rental, one with three bedrooms, came approximately six months in. Maggie’s group, through their fundraising efforts, paid the bond and rent for the first two weeks. The family were quickly rebuilding their lives in Goulburn with the help of the group.

Mazin’s first job in Australia was on a chicken farm, and Rouba had found work at a Vietnamese restaurant. The couple’s dream was to again open their own business, something they began working on with the support of a local benefactor who, motivated by his own refugee background, has offered housing, capital and mentoring to help Mazin and Rouba build on their existing skills and knowledge. Rouba is now running her own business, offering aged care and cleaning services, and Mazin is working as an Uber driver while working on his plans for a future business of his own.

“Mazin didn’t expect to feel joy ever again after what he went through. To see him and Rouba and the boys experience happiness, having a safe and supportive space, it’s been so life giving,” Maggie said. She commented on how George and Elyas had really flourished in Goulburn, throwing themselves into various extracurricular activities – be it sport, music or chess. “People call them the local chess champions,” said Maggie.

Maggie herself sees being part of the CRISP as a real privilege, an initiative that offers ordinary Australians an opportunity to “access a sense of dignity in being part of a solution that can make a difference in refugee settlement.”

“It’s been one of the great highlights of my life,” she said. “And for us, by serving one family, we feel we’re addressing the ache that we all carry when we see what’s happening in the world.”



From Myanmar to Melbourne

July 2024

It started with a snake at the door and dumpling making sessions, an indication that a local group's decision to welcome a refugee family into their community would be nothing short of adventurous.

The group of six volunteers, many of whom met through their local primary school, formed the Warrandyte Refugee Support Group. They are all residents of Warrandyte, City of Manningham, 24 kilometres north-west of Melbourne's CBD.

"The Warrandyte community is known for their love of the environment as we live on the Yarra River. We're surrounded by state parks, and people are very open and friendly," said support group co-ordinator Hanh Truong.

Hahn, a former Vietnamese refugee who now owns a thriving sauce making business, said right from the start that she thought "the whole community would wrap around a refugee household with love and support."

She was right. Before the arrival of the refugee family, the group held a fundraising trivia night which was a sell-out, raising about \$4000. It was just a sample of their successful efforts to raise funds and donated goods for the refugee family they'd been matched with, Nang Seng Maw and her husband, Maung Soe Thu, and three children, aged four to nine years old. The couple and their children had been living as refugees in Malaysia, after fleeing persecution in Myanmar.

Their support in Australia from the Warrandyte Refugee Support Group was made possible through a pilot program, known as the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot, or CRISP. The program is a joint effort between the Australian Government and Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia (CRSA) that matches refugees with local volunteer groups.

For Nang, who had just two years of schooling, the chance to live in Australia offered the promise of a better education for her own children.

"Neither of us finished primary school but we can both speak Malay and Chinese," she said about herself and her husband before arriving to Australia.

"We were staying temporarily in Malaysia, so the children could not go to mainstream schools to have an education," she said. "We will work hard when we arrive in Australia. We want to make sure our children get a good education."

In just a few weeks, the group had organised a whole lot for the household and their new life. A house was let. Kindergarten and school enrolments were completed. Healthcare and Medicare were sorted, along with the temporary rental assistance and Nang and her husband were enrolled in adult education to learn English.

“Nang and Maung were incredibly independent with transport, and catching the bus everywhere, including to their English classes,” said Hahn.

Nang, who had a few part-time jobs, and attended English language classes, also used YouTube to learn online. “I’m so grateful. When I was young, I couldn’t have these opportunities to learn, and now I do.”

Hahn felt the family understood their role as a community supporter group. “I believe they did. They didn’t expect free handouts. They are very independent.”

“They are a young couple, have phones and can access information in their language online, so they can source a lot of things themselves.”

A long-term rental, secured with the help of the group for 12 months, had a large garden that also became home to four chickens, three ducks and a bunch of vegetable seedlings. Nang’s children couldn’t get enough of their new backyard, a place they shared with their neighbours and playmates, who coincidentally also attended the same primary school.

Nang said her eldest daughter attended a school camp, which was the first time one of the children had been away from the family, and it went incredibly well.

But they encountered some interesting hiccups during their sponsorship journey. A snake lazing in the sun at the family’s front door prompted panic, but the volunteer group quickly called a snake catcher who provided education on dangerous Aussie animals.

By the end of the year’s sponsorship, Nang and her family were living a life they were excited about, one they could now manage on their own. She felt that this was made possible through the support of the volunteer group.

“Australia is such a good country,” she said. “In the old country, we didn’t have money and couldn’t go to school. I think if I try hard to improve my English, and earn money, I’m going to send money back to my country for the kids there to go to school. We’re really lucky in coming to Australia. I grew up in hardship. Some people they are taken by the army to fight a war. We’re lucky here.”

A sweet start in Ballina

July 2024



Ballina local, Sue Milne, had created a life around community and connection, but she'd never experienced it like this before. With a bunch of friends and neighbours, Sue formed a support group to welcome refugee newcomers to Ballina. It turned out to be one of the best experiences of her life. "It's just such a pleasure for everyone," said Sue – referring to her fellow volunteers, eleven in total and all members of BR4R, the Ballina Region for Refugees.

The group had been matched with the Haddad family. Mary Haddad and her children, Bashar and Nagham Farhat, were among the first refugees to arrive under the Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP). They landed in Australia in late 2022, after three years of living in Erbil in northern Iraq, having fled war-torn Syria.

"I was worried about going to a new country with a new culture, thinking it would be hard to settle on our own and not being able to get around," said Bashar, "when they spoke to us about the group, all my worries went away. There would be someone to support us morally more than anything else... I felt much less stressed."

Stress had been a factor for the family. Bashar was concerned for his mother's health, with her high blood pressure and heart palpitations. But fast forward a few months and Mary was living a completely different life. Her health had improved and she began to feel creative again. Mary had been an artist in Syria and had also loved to cook. These passions began to resurface once she'd settled into her new home. She had the idea to set up her own business, one where she could use her skills of cooking and craft. With the help of the group, she set up Sweet Mary's Sweets, selling Syrian desserts and delicacies to local cafes in the region.

Mary continued to go from one strength to the next. She was invited as a key speaker at an event held at the Lennox Heads Cultural Center for World Refugee Day. Here, Mary spoke about the immense relief she felt for her children, for their well-being. "There will be a future for them, for the younger generation. After losing many years due to the war, they can now live in harmony in Australia," she said.

Mary reflected on how much her life had changed in the five-months since she'd arrived in Australia. She had rediscovered the joy of friendship, her creative pursuits and her work. "I'm happy and proud of what we have achieved in this time," she said. "But in a practical sense, we couldn't have done this without the group. Sometimes I feel hopeless but just for one day. I'm able to get focused back on what I'm working, almost like it was not there. I don't know what the future holds but for now we are happy here. These friendships and relationships didn't come easily, we won't give them up easily. We have made a lot of friends here."

Building the Movement

Strategic Goal: Harnessing new allies and networks through engagement with Supporting Community Organisations, Community Champions, Members of Parliament, Local Government and Businesses.

CRSA aspires to building a national community sponsorship movement that is diverse, robust and exists beyond the constraints of any single program or organisation.

While in the short term, the success of our movement building activities support efforts to mobilise Community Supporter Groups for the CRISP, the strategies that we are engaging have a clear eye to the future. By welcoming in all parts of the Australian community and seeking to find a productive role for anyone who has something to offer, we hope to build 'whole of society' involvement in the movement. By working with an ever-increasing range of formal and informal partners in our public mobilisation efforts, we seek to socialise our vision and ways of working with organisations that may

in the future take on more significant roles beyond mobilisation.

Key movement building initiatives and strategies in 2023-24 include:

- Bringing a wide cross section of grass roots, civil society and government stakeholders together in person for Australia's inaugural community sponsorship gathering
- Expanding the number and diversity of Supporting Community Organisations with whom we work
- Working with local 'Community Champions' to leverage their reach into grass roots networks
- Story telling through new case studies and media opportunities
- Experimenting with time-bound mobilisation campaigns such as the 100 groups/100 days campaign, launched in the lead up to World Refugee Day in June 2024
- Raising 'seed funding' to strategically incentivise the formation of CSGs
- Undertaking 'roadshows' in under-represented parts of Australia
- Further development of resources that support the national Community of Practice
- Continuing tried and tested community engagement methods including events with local MPs, regional 'roadshows'

Supporting Community Organisations

CRSA is now partnering with more than 20 'supporting community organisations' to promote the CRISP and mobilise groups in diverse communities across Australia. These organisations do this work in a voluntary capacity and some of them are using their own funds to employ staff, develop websites and communicate with their members and constituents to encourage them to

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become involved in the CRISP. Those who we know are making material out-of-pocket investments include:

- NAYBA, a national Christian faith initiative, connected to the Australian Christian Lobby, which has assisted in the formation of eight CSGs from within church-based communities.
- Cassinia Environmental, a land management company, which has assisted in the formation of four CSGs in its local area.
- The Forcibly Displaced People's Network a queer refugee-led advocacy and training body, which has assisted in the formation of seven CSGs from within the LGBTIQ+ community.



See full list of SCOs in Appendix 2

Inaugural Australian community refugee sponsorship gathering

In March 2024, CRSA hosted the inaugural gathering to celebrate and grow community sponsorship and complementary pathways in Australia. Attended by over 100 people, representing community groups, the settlement and related sectors, civil society, government and academia, the event was an opportunity to connect and learn from one another through shared experiences.

Feedback on the event was overwhelmingly positive, with several CSGs and sector professionals now discussing how they can host something similar in their

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own region. CRSA is supporting these initiatives as a way of building local community knowledge, capacity and engagement, noting that building a maintaining a sense of a national and global movement requires opportunities for people to be brought together, to maintain momentum, excitement and continuous learning.



The Re: Settlement Gathering, Australia's inaugural event to celebrate and grow community refugee sponsorship in Australia. Melbourne, 8 March 2024.

National Community of Practice

The engine behind everything that we do is the growing number of everyday Australians and civil society organisations who are committed to building community sponsorship in Australia. Right now, we are working with them to do this through the lens of the CRISP, but our collective vision is much bigger than any single program. We consider it essential to not only the success of CRISP, but also future community sponsorship programs, to ensuring that people involved in this work can connect with and learn from one another, as well as access useful resources from CRSA and other expert organisations.

In addition to continuing to train all CSGs before they welcome refugee households, we invested in several supporting initiatives to further develop the capacity of the Australian community to play an empowered, informed and supportive role with respect to refugee newcomers.

In August 2023, CRSA launched its Community Hub, an online 'one-stop shop' for CSG members around Australia to connect, share questions, resources and advice and access relevant resources. The Hub continues to welcome new members each month, as the community sponsorship movement continues to grow. At the end of June 2024, there were 507 active members, with an ongoing growth of approximately 10% per quarter.

Approximately five new resources are published on the Hub per month, including both CRSA-developed resources and resources developed by organisations with relevant expertise.

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In addition to the digital Community Hub, CRSA's Peer Forums bring group members from across the country together each month, in an online workshop setting, for knowledge exchange and 'top-up' training. Topics are drawn from requests from CSGs on topics of interest, insights from CRSA staff through their monitoring 'check-in' activities with CSGs and refugee households, and through CRSA's ongoing review of the content and conversations posted by CSG members in the Community Hub. CRSA aspires to create a flexible and adaptable schedule that responds to issues and needs as they arise for groups throughout the year alongside standing items that are required information, such as Child Safety.

On average 45 people attend each of our monthly Peer Forums. The 11 Peer Forums hosted by CRSA this year have covered the following topics:

- Education, training, skills recognition
- Domestic and family violence
- Fundraising
- Working with interpreters
- Agency, empowerment, goal setting
- Asset Based Community Development
- Refugee Health
- UNHCR and the CRISP
- Financial literacy and budgeting
- Mitigating/managing group conflict
- Group reflection and sharing
- Connecting w First Nations communities
- Home fire safety
- Child safety

CRSA also shares monthly newsletters with CSGs, which contain program data and updates and relevant information and resources. At the end of June 2024, the subscriber list involved 1443 recipients and had an impressive 'open rate' of approximately 60%.

In developing new resources and training opportunities, CRSA continues to consult its Steering Committee, which comprises six CSG members from around Australia with an interest or relevant expertise in our work. This year has seen a shift from regular CRSA-led meeting with the Committee to CRSA consultation with Committee members on an ad hoc, as-needs basis, as requested by the Committee members. CRSA will work towards expanding the Committee over the coming year.

Community Champions Initiative

The Community Champions Initiative works with key individuals involved in local CSGs to increase community awareness and engagement with the CRISP. This initiative has evolved to see the group of Champions, which has increased to include 26 individuals across Australia, mentoring newly formed groups and

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sharing their personal experiences and networks.

100 Groups in 100 Days Campaign

During the March 2024 gathering, the Minister for Immigration Andrew Giles MP helped us launch the '100 Groups in 100 Days' campaign, which sought to secure 100 new groups in the 100 days leading up to Refugee Week. The campaign was intended to further increase the visibility of the CRISP by providing a tangible, time-bound goal.

The campaign included '100 Reasons for Community Sponsorship', with CRSA sharing a quote, anecdote or testimony about community sponsorship across its social and digital channels each day in the 100 days leading up to World Refugee Day. The uplifting and inspiring posts were a chance to spotlight the incredible feedback CRSA receives on a daily basis from CSG members, refugee participants, and other stakeholders about the CRISP.



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By Refugee Week, CRSA received 79 new group commitments⁴, including 12 existing groups who commit to welcoming another refugee household, with the campaign extended by CRSA to August 2024.

Goulburn initiative

CRSA is partnering with Urban Monk, one of the first CSGs to welcome a CRISP household to Australia, and other members of the local community, to expand the CRISP footprint in Goulburn, regional NSW.

The initiative was born when the Alkhushi family, who arrived in Australia in August 2022, met local businessman Norman Yammine by chance at a community event at around the time of their exit from the program. Moved by the family's story, Norman offered them a tenancy on his acreage for two years and provided capital for them to establish a business.

Since then, CRSA and the Urban Monk CSG have collaborated Norman on 'the Goulburn initiative', which aims to settle ten more refugee households in the Goulburn region in the second half of 2024⁵.

The Urban Monk CSG has committed to mobilising ten new CSGs in the Goulburn community. While Norman initially offered to secure and fund 12 months' for all ten refugee households, CRSA has encouraged him to accept nominal rent from the newcomers, to assist them to establish a rental history and an understanding of the cost of living in Australia. Norman has offered employment for the newcomers in his business, though they will not be expected to take up these opportunities if they don't want to. Rental payments received will be used to fund material support for newcomers settling in Goulburn through the CRISP. This will be managed at the discretion of whoever controls the fund, but could include a second-hand car, rental bond, household items or the sponsorship of other households through the CRISP.

⁴ Defined as a new group getting involved, an existing group committing to a repeat sponsorship, or a group taking a tangible step towards welcoming, such as accepting a match or completing training and fundraising.

⁵ [Syrians take refuge in Goulburn after traumatic ordeal | About Regional](#)



Mazin Alkhusi, centre, with CSG members Jan Weatherstone and Maggie Patterson from the Goulburn community.

Events

Among a calendar of regular events, highlights of 2023-24 included:

- **Darwin Roadshow:** CRSA's visit to Darwin in October 2023 involved a series of community and sector meetings, a public information session attended by 80+ community members, and a news segment on Channel Nine's 6pm news. Three CSGs formed in the wake of these events, with the first refugee arrival due for September 2024.
- **Canberra Roadshow:** The Canberra Roadshow involved a segment on ABC Radio, a forum with 40+ stakeholders from the multicultural and settlement sector and settlement providers and a public forum attended by 20+ community members. Several groups in Canberra are currently preparing to be matched, including one LGBTIQ+ identifying group and one Jewish identifying group.
- **Refugee Week:** CRSA participated in ten events to showcase the CRISP over the course of Refugee Week 2024, including several local in-person events and several national online events. An approximate total of 680 people attended a CRSA event across the week.

Innovation and Advocacy

Focus areas: Additionality, permanence and new community sponsored pathways. Work with program participants, international peers and other stakeholders to develop and improve community sponsorship.

Thanks to the generous support of a number of philanthropic donors, CRSA has continued to lead Australian civil society work on the future of community sponsorship in Australia as well as other related complementary pathways such as labour mobility and educational pathways for forced migrants.

Our key advocacy goals for the year included:

- Securing the future of the CRISP as a permanent and additional program, noting that no government funding has been committed beyond FY2025-26
- Developing a shared vision for new community sponsored streams including 'named' sponsorship and educational pathways
- Working with program participants, international peers and other stakeholders to continue to develop and improve our understanding and implementation of community sponsorship models in Australia.

While all of these goals remain a work in progress, and the current political challenges of increasing refugee migration are obvious, the year was marked by a number of significant positive developments.

International inspiration: One central concept – many potential programs

Much of our research and innovation-oriented work is undertaken based on the idea that the core features of community sponsorship can find expression in and support a wide range of programs to benefit forced migrants.

Through our close working relationship with the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI) and global colleagues, we continue to be inspired by the many ways in which the kindness, resources and networks of groups of everyday citizens can provide solutions to those seeking safety in countries like Australia. Around the world, the community sponsorship model has been used this year to underpin many new responses to forced displacement including:

- **Responses to humanitarian crises**, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine. These have been established rapidly with strong public support and interest. In the United States, the 'Uniting for Ukraine' program was established in April 2022 and by February 2023, had seen more than 115,000 Ukrainians arrive in the country and more than 216,000 sponsorship applications filed by everyday citizens. Similarly, the 'Homes for Ukrainians' scheme was developed and implemented swiftly by the UK government; within a day of the scheme launching, over 100,000 Britons had registered

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their interest in sponsoring. As of February 2023, the schemes had enabled over 153,300 Ukrainians to arrive in the UK. These models have varied in relation to the obligations placed on sponsors, however a common feature has been broad eligibility and flexibility, enabling them to scale rapidly to increase capacity to welcome people fleeing humanitarian crises. A key learning from these programs has been the importance of providing a pathway to permanency for newcomers.

- **Programs facilitating safe and regular migration** – The Humanitarian Corridors in Italy, established in 2015 as a collaboration between Italian faith-based organisations, has helped facilitate safe and legal pathways for refugees to reach Italy through humanitarian visas. Sponsors provide settlement support for 1-2 years. In the United States, the CHNV program enables sponsors to sponsor nationals from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela and undertake to provide integration assistance while in the United States. Both programs have sought to reduce irregular migration by using community sponsorship models to expand opportunities for legal migration.
- **Socio-natural/climate displacement** – The Argentinian Environmental Humanitarian Visa Program was launched in May 2022, through which sponsors are matched with UNHCR or IOM referred nationals from 23 countries who have been forcibly displaced by socio-natural disasters. Sponsors provide accommodation and integration support for the first year to newcomers, who are granted a 3-year temporary humanitarian visa followed by permanent residence status.

While Australia has been successfully resettling refugees for many decades, it feels as though we are only in the early stages of understanding the potential of involving everyday people in expanding Australia's reception capacity. Learning from global peers is vital, as well as contributing learnings from our own valuable experiences.

International forums in which we've been active participants this year include:

- Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative conference in Lisbon in November 2023
- Consultations on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways (CRCP) Working Group meeting in Sydney in February 2024
- Annual CRCP meeting in Geneva in June 2024

Being invited to showcase the CRISP in action as part of the February 2024 international CRCP Working Group meeting in Sydney was an incredible

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opportunity to showcase the CRISP as a program that we believe in many ways represents global best practice when it comes to 'matched' community sponsorship. Participating in the same event enabled our team to learn from others at the forefront of other established and emerging programs around the world.

We were also proud to lead an Australian civil society pledge to develop and scale community sponsorship and complementary pathways programs as part of the December 2023 Global Refugee forum. The pledge that we drafted secured endorsement from over 80 organisations and helped to secure support for a corresponding pledge from government (see 'Political wins') below.

The Pledge

We welcome the Australian government's ambition to progressively increase community sponsored and other complementary places to 10,000 places per year and to make this additional to Australia's humanitarian intake. In the context of the [Global Refugee Forum in December 2023](#), we pledge to support the realisation of this goal in one or more of the following ways:

- 1. Continuing to advocate for new programs and approaches that are:*
 - **Part of a strong, articulated and coherent national framework for community sponsorship and complementary pathways.***
 - **Additional to a reasonable core government-funded refugee and humanitarian intake or which otherwise support the growth of the overall intake.***
 - **Providing durable solutions to refugees, rather than temporary or precarious outcomes.***
 - **Accessible in practice to those requiring international protection.***
 - **Engaging more segments of Australian society, including refugee diaspora communities, in welcoming refugees and supporting refugee resettlement.***
 - **Informed by the lived experience of people who have experienced forced migration and resettlement.***

2. Providing technical support to the Australian government and other civil society organisations to develop, test and scale community sponsorship programs to achieve this goal.

3. Raising grass-roots community awareness of relevant programs.

4. Mobilising local 'sponsor groups' to welcome and support the settlement of refugees.

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- 5. Supporting the fundraising efforts that underpin community sponsorship and other complementary pathways.*
- 6. Supporting the work of those responsible for welcoming and supporting the settlement of refugee newcomers through such pathways.*
- 7. Offering study or employment opportunities to qualifying refugees who wish to settle in Australia.*
- 8. Supporting this goal in other ways (please specify when endorsing the pledge below)*

The pledge remains open until the next Global Refugee Forum in 2027. As of May 2024 was endorsed by more than 70 Australian organisations (see full list in Appendix 3)

Political wins

Thanks to the ongoing advocacy of CRSA and many other civil society partners over many years, and the growing success story of the CRISP, August 2023 saw the Australian Labor Party not only retain, but increase its aspiration with respect to complementary pathways, with the National Conference adopting a larger vision for community sponsorship and complementary pathways of 10,000 places per year (up from 5,000 previously), in addition to a goal of 27,000 government-funded places.

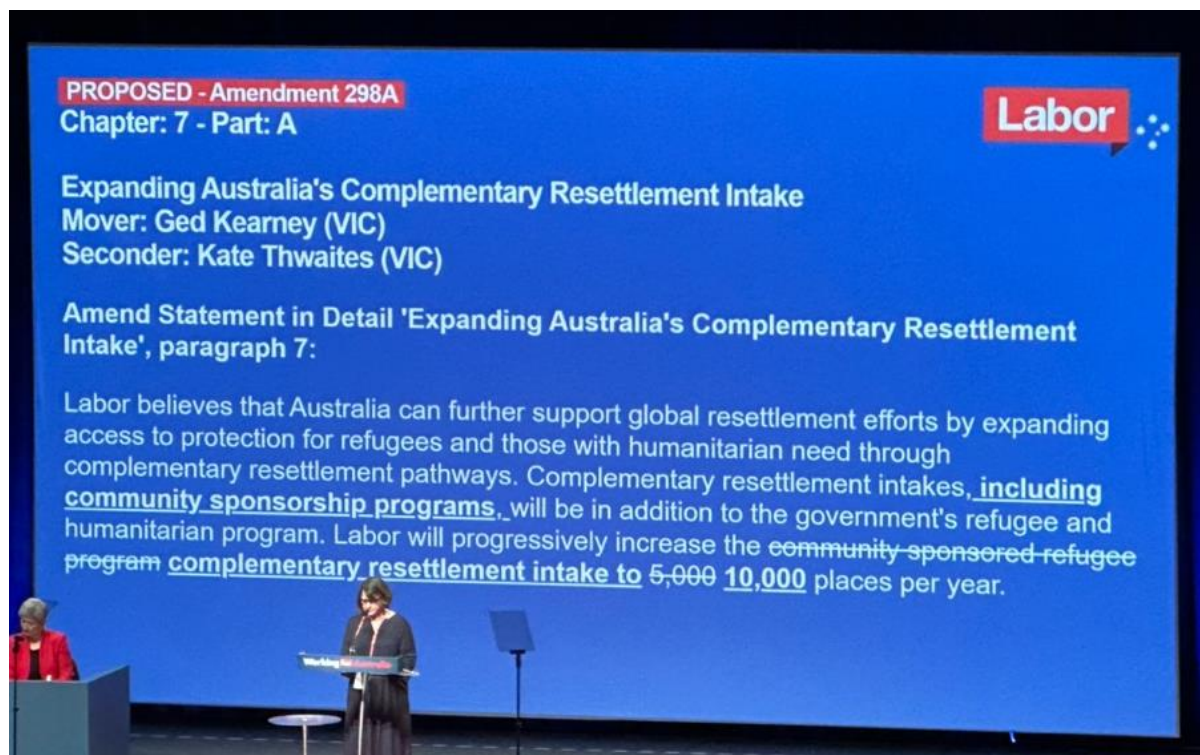


Photo supplied by Sarah Carter from Save the Children (a CRSA co-founding organisation). Sarah was a great supporter of community sponsorship and the CRSA team are grateful for her support and leadership. Tragically, Sarah passed away in 2024. She will be greatly missed.

Shortly thereafter, in September 2023, the Albanese Government made a significant step towards its goal of enlarging the overall refugee intake, increasing the quota from 13,750 per year to 20,000 places per year. While the CRISP program currently draws on visas from within Australia's overall humanitarian quota, the government's capacity to lift the overall quota to 20,000 is partly aided by the new cost-effective CRISP model. The team is proud that the CRISP is

contributing to an enlarged, government-backed Australian resettlement effort. However, CRSA continues to advocate for the CRISP and other community sponsorship programs to become structurally additional to the humanitarian intake quota.

To cap off the year, in December 2023, the Albanese government's intentions were reaffirmed when Immigration Minister Andrew Giles MP led the Australian government to making a commitment at the Global Refugee Forum in Geneva in the following terms.

The Australian Government supports the multi-stakeholder pledge on Community Sponsorship and pledges to work with civil society, community, non-government, and refugee-led organisations, to harness the power of all segments of Australian society to gradually increase community sponsored and other complementary places to 10,000 per year over time, additional to the core humanitarian intake.

While the Australian Labor Party and the Greens have clear commitments to expand durable solutions for refugees through community sponsorship, the Coalition does not take a clear position on the matter. However, it is important to recall that the CRISP was an initiative introduced by the Coalition government in late 2021/early 2022, with then government open-minded about the potential for the program to become additional in the future pending the outcomes of the pilot. Parliamentarians across the political spectrum continue to express their support for the model both privately and publicly, with many engaged by constituents involved in the CRISP in their electorates.

The May 2023 announcement by Opposition Leader Peter Dutton MP that a future Coalition Government would reduce the refugee intake back to 13,750 is a blow to CRSA's goal of increasing refugee resettlement opportunities. However, it is not clear how the Coalition would view community sponsored places in such an event.

Collaboration, research and innovation

The public wins in this arena are always the result of years of quiet work to build shared visions, useful frameworks and collaborations. We are proud that the CRSA team is at the forefront of a number of Australian initiatives that we feel confident will ultimately benefit tens of thousands of refugees each year.

- Following a successful roundtable with the Immigration Minister in June 2023, the CRSA team worked in close collaboration with colleagues at the Australian National University and the Refugee Education Special Interest Group (RESIG) to enliven a pilot pathway for refugee students seeking resettlement and education in Australia. While we were disappointed that this work did not secure government support this year, plans are afoot to see it enlivened in 2024-25.

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- In May 2024 CRSA convened a national roundtable on the future of 'named' community sponsorship in Australia. Inspired by the government's pledge at the Global Refugee Forum, more than 30 organisational representatives joined the CRSA team and government officials to attend a full day workshop to reimagine 'named' or 'linked' sponsorship, building on the learnings of both the CRISP and the Community Support Program (CSP). The CRSA team is developing a new vision and framework combining insights from that workshop with global learnings to see a better approach to named sponsorship adopted by government and civil society actors in the years ahead.
- This year saw the informal 'Complementary Pathways Coordination Group' that CRSA established to launch its Group Mentorship Program in 2021 become an ongoing forum for collaboration in our sector. This group of approximately 30 leaders in our sector now meet bi-monthly in an online forum to share expertise and learnings, and coordinate advocacy towards embedding, growing and improving complementary pathways in Australia.

The CRSA team has participated in consultations and contributed submissions to government-led inquiries including the composition of Australia's Humanitarian Program in 2024-25, along with presentation to state and federal government advisory bodies including the Settlement Advisory Council to the Minister for Immigration.

CRSA continues to be a key contributor in the ambitious 'Road to Belonging' initiative led by the Settlement Council of Australia – ensuring that the power of community sponsorship and related learnings are harnessed in future frameworks to improve the refugee settlement experience in Australia.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1 – Accompanying notes to financials

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
4. Revenue from contracts with customers		
<u>Revenue recognised over time</u>		
Grants and service contracts		
Australian Federal Government - Department of Home Affairs	1,565,000	928,000
	1,565,000	928,000

How the entity recognises revenue

Grants and service contracts

If conditions are attached to a grant or service contract, revenue is recognised when the entity satisfies those conditions.

5. Other income

Donations	637,223	823,170
Rental income	5,421	4,066
Interest income	16,666	-
Other income	-	1,200
	659,310	828,436

6. Grants paid/payable

CRSA supports the fundraising efforts of local community supporter groups in some circumstances by receiving and holding funds that those groups raise pursuant to an auspicing arrangement. The intention is that these funds will later be paid out to relevant local community supporter groups as grants and are therefore not intended to cover the general operating expenses of CRSA.

APPENDIX 2 – Current Supporting Community Organisations

Amnesty International Australia
Archdiocese of Brisbane
Australian Lutheran World Lutheran Services
Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association
Cassinia
Catholic Care Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains
Catholic Mission + End Child Detention Coalition Australia Ltd (ECDC)
Embrace Sanctuary Australia
End Child Detention Coalition
Forcibly Displaced People Network
MSF Australia
MTC Australia
NAYBA
National Council of Churches of Australia
Northern Rivers for Refugees
Pride Foundation Australia
Refugee Council of Australia
Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR)
Save the Children Australia
Shoshama Institute for Collective Well Being
SSI
Stand Up
The Salvation Army
Western Australian Catholic Migration & Refugee Office
YouBelong

APPENDIX 3 – Organisations who endorsed our civil society pledge as part of the Global Refugee Forum

As of May 2024

ACT AEU Relief Teachers Alfred Deakin Institute Allegra Spender MP AMES Australia Amnesty International Australia Amnesty Margaret River Angie Talleyrand ART + ENVIRONMENT Armidale Sanctuary Humanitarian Settlement Asylum Seekers Centre Association for Services to Torture and Trauma Survivors Australia Chin Community Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association Ballina Region for Refugees Bass Coast Refugee Sponsorship Group Bridge for Asylum Seekers Bublelent Australia Cassinia Community Castle of Kindness Refugee Sponsorship Group Cheltenham Highett Refugee Sponsorship Group Cisarua Learning Coastal CRISP Corrections Victoria Eastern Hills Sponsorship Group Embrace Sanctuary Australia End Child Detention Coalition Australia Eugene Dennis Everyday Church Friends of Refugees Byron Shire Fulbe Australia Grandmothers for Refugees Happy Home Refugee Support Group Hatchone Pty Ltd HOST International Huon Refugee Support Group Inc Lions Eye Institute Lismore Region Refugee Settlement Margaret River Welcome Montmorency Asylum Seeker Support Group	Mountain Mentors NAYBA Ocean Shores for Refugees Our Village PoppySmack Sauce Presentation Sisters Wagga Wagga Pride Foundation Australia Refugee Advice & Casework Service Refugee Council of Australia Roseville Uniting Church Refugee Support Group Rural Australians for Refugees – Bendigo Rural Australians for Refugees Inc SASS Group 6 SCALES Community Legal Centre Settlement Council of Australia Settelement Services International (SSI) Social Justice Group St Vincent's Parish Ashfield NSW Socio-Cultural Syriac Inc. Association South Gippsland Rural Australians for Refugees Sustainable Resource Use Symon Capital Tasmanian Quakers Peace & Justice Committee Tasmanian Refugee Rights Action Group Terrigal Uniting Church Refugee Support Group The Bread & Butter Project The Kimberley Foundation The Salvation Army True Support & Therapy Tweed Welcomes Refugees Uniting Church Action for Society and Environment Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania Welcoming Australia Whittlesea Community Connections Women's International Solidarity Australia Via Advisory You Belong Australia
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Moreton Bay Refugee Friends	
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