



COMMUNITY REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY SPONSORS



HOST INTERNATIONAL AOTEAROA



Frequently asked questions

Are all refugees eligible to be sponsored under the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme?

Refugees who apply to be sponsored under the Community Refugee Sponsorship pathway must be mandated as refugees and pass security, risk, settlement and health assessments.

- Applicants must be residing in a country which is a UNHCR priority area **and** one of the regions Immigration New Zealand's humanitarian programme resettles from.*
- Applicants must not be eligible to be sponsored for residence under another family category, including the Refugee Family Support category.
- Principal applicants must have a basic understanding of English, have a minimum of three years' work experience (or a qualification requiring at least two years' tertiary study), and be aged between 18 and 45.

*** Please note that refugees currently residing in Turkey are not eligible to be resettled to New Zealand under the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme. Turkey is included as part of the Europe region by UNHCR for the purposes of refugee resettlement.**

What is the difference between community organisation sponsored refugees and quota refugees?

The Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship (CORS) category is additional and complementary to the Refugee Quota programme. It is a category where approved New Zealand-based approved community organisations (Approved Sponsors) apply to partner with refugees through supporting their settlement in the community.

Sponsored refugees are resettled directly into their community with the support of Approved Sponsors and will not spend time at Te Āhuru Mōwai o Aotearoa, the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre. The Approved Sponsors provide the support needed for these refugees over a two-year period.

Where do sponsored refugees come from?

Refugees must be residing in a country which is a UNHCR priority area and one of the regions INZ's refugee quota programme resettles from: Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Middle East and North Africa.

Refugees currently residing in Turkey are not eligible to be resettled to Aotearoa under the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme. Turkey is included as part of the Europe region by UNHCR for the purposes of refugee resettlement.

Refer to UNHCR's Projected Global Resettlement Needs for further details:

[UNHCR - Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2023](#)

Frequently asked questions

How will Immigration New Zealand (INZ) guarantee that refugees who come in under this programme will be appropriately supported?

Approved community organisations must meet several requirements to become part of the programme. The criteria are in place to ensure organisations are prepared to support refugees with a range of core needs, from housing and accommodation to providing connections to healthcare, schooling, training and employment opportunities and community groups.

INZ will have a direct relationship and continue to work with Approved Sponsors as well as HOST International Aotearoa (HOST) as the umbrella organisation for the programme, to ensure these needs are met throughout the full two years of the programme.

What role will HOST International Aotearoa play?

HOST is partnering with Immigration New Zealand to deliver the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme, and will provide coaching and support to community organisations throughout their journey.

Further information can be found on the [Get Involved](#) page.

How long will it take for the refugees to arrive in New Zealand once we have been approved as a sponsoring organisation?

The timeframes for arrival will vary and will depend on how long it takes for the sponsored refugees to **be verified** and **complete the health, English language and immigration assessments**, and **travel to New Zealand** from wherever they currently reside.

There may be **travel delays** in some parts of the world. For less complicated cases, it may take between nine to twelve months for the sponsored refugees to arrive in New Zealand.

Once you are approved as a sponsor a few things will happen:

- HOST will work with you to identify areas where your group might want additional training.
- HOST will also help connect you with the sponsored refugees so that you can begin to get to know them and understand their settlement needs and desires.
- Immigration New Zealand (INZ) will organise the international travel and will coordinate this with you and HOST to ensure that you are ready to welcome the refugees when they land in New Zealand.

Frequently asked questions

Who can apply to sponsor refugees?

Approved Sponsors must meet a number of requirements, including:

- Be a registered entity*;
- Be able to demonstrate community outreach and connections within the broader community;
- Have demonstrated experience of working successfully with refugees or vulnerable people;
- Have the financial capacity to meet their settlement responsibilities;
- Be able to deliver settlement services for refugees – particularly arranging suitable accommodation and supporting sponsored refugees to secure meaningful and sustainable employment; and
- Be willing and able to enter into a Deed of Agreement for Services with Immigration New Zealand for the provision of settlement services to the agreed standard.

* PLEASE NOTE: A registered entity is any legally registered organisation such as a charitable trust, incorporated society or business.

We are looking for a diverse range of organisations throughout New Zealand who can become Approved Sponsors to support refugee individuals/whānau to live fulfilling and meaningful lives.

Approved Sponsors will be open to new religions and cultures and have an understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and te ao Māori. They will also have connections and resources that will help refugees as they begin their new life in New Zealand.

Participating in sponsorship is a significant responsibility. Potential sponsors will be assessed by INZ to ensure they have the capability and resources to offer sponsored refugees the support needed to resettle for two years.



Frequently asked questions

What does sponsoring a refugee involve?

Approved Sponsors provide support to sponsored refugee individuals/whānau during their first two years in New Zealand, providing connections and practical advice to those adjusting to their new lives in the country.

Approved Sponsors will help sponsored refugees secure appropriate rental housing before they arrive in New Zealand, enrol in education and health services, access employment opportunities and connect with their new community.

Some of the main steps involved in sponsoring refugees include:

- Enter into a Deed of Agreement with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment | Immigration New Zealand (INZ)
- Work with INZ and HOST to coordinate travel logistics prior to arrival
- Ensure appropriate accommodation is arranged prior to arrival
- Welcome and reception of the family/individual
- Connect refugees to community, employment and services
- Connect refugees to te ao Māori and history of the whenua
- Provide settlement support to sponsored refugees for two years
- Participate in monitoring and programme evaluation

What does the application process involve?

Any community organisation interested in sponsoring a refugee or refugee family is encouraged to contact [HOST International Aotearoa](#) who will be able to coach you through the application process and ensure that your organisation is prepared to support a refugee individual/whānau with their resettlement.

As part of the application process your organisation will need to:

- Complete an **[Application Form](#)** and **[Settlement Plan](#)**
- Provide **evidence of financial viability** and an overview of how you intend to cover the costs associated with sponsorship
- Undertake **police clearance** and **child protection training**
- **Apply** to Immigration New Zealand to become an Approved Sponsor.

All relevant application documents and guidance notes for the application process are available on the [Get Involved](#) page.

A detailed process outline can be found on the same page.

Frequently asked questions

Can we nominate a refugee family who we would like to sponsor?

Approved Sponsors can either nominate a refugee individual or refugee family who they wish to support or be matched with a refugee or refugee whānau who is nominated by UNHCR.

HOST is able to advise interested community organisations on the differences between these two pathways.

How much does it cost to sponsor refugees?

Approved Sponsors must be able to financially support sponsored a refugee individual or whānau until the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is able to process their benefit claims. There is no strict timeframe for this, but Approved Sponsors should prepare to provide financial support for at least four to six weeks.

When refugees arrive, the Approved Sponsor need to provide sufficient cash per person (adults and children) for initial expenses including groceries, toiletries, clothes, while their claim for benefits is being processed. Initial payments should be at the same level as social welfare payment entitlements.

Who pays for the sponsored refugees to travel to New Zealand?

INZ will organise and fund all international travel for sponsored refugees to travel to New Zealand.

INZ will pay for the refugees' international travel as well as the costs associated with the health and English language assessments and visa processing.

The Approved Sponsor will be responsible for meeting the sponsored refugees at the airport when they arrive and for funding any additional domestic travel to the settlement location.

Will sponsored refugees receive an orientation at the Māngere Refugee Resettlement Centre?

Refugees who are being sponsored under this programme do not spend any time at Āhuru Mōwai o Aotearoa, the Māngere Refugee Resettlement Centre, and are instead resettled straight into the community.

The orientation to New Zealand will be the responsibility of the Approved Sponsor with the support from HOST, who will develop orientation materials to assist and coach Approved Sponsors through this process.

Frequently asked questions

When will information sessions and trainings be available?

Online Information Sessions are available. Check the [News and Events](#) page for further details. If no public information session is available, please contact HOST. The team can organise an information session for your group.

You can also watch the recordings from previous sessions on the [News and Events](#) page.

Where else can we find information?

The Community Refugee Sponsorship [website](#) has been developed to provide your organisation with information to guide you through the application process for the Community Sponsorship programme. If your organisation's application is successful, further resources and information about the sponsorship process will be made available to Approved Sponsors.

We regularly update the website with new information and resources, and continue to add responses to your questions so check this space regularly.

The following page gives you an overview of the application process: [Get Involved](#).

Application documents as well as supporting documents such as the **Sponsorship Overview** and **Phase One toolkit** can all be found on the same page.

The Sponsorship Overview outlines each phase of the Community Refugee Sponsorship journey. The Phase One toolkit provides further information on the application process.

You can also discuss your organisation's questions with the [team](#) at [HOST International Aotearoa](#) who can guide you through the process, answer any questions and provide additional information, resources and advice. Get in touch via [phone](#) or [email](#).

When do applications close?

There is no closing date for applications, however applications are currently not considered as all 150 refugee places in the extended pilot of the CORS programme have been allocated.



Frequently asked questions

When can our organisation submit its applications to become an Approved Sponsor for the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme?

Applications to become an Approved Sponsor for the CORS visa category are currently not being considered as all 150 refugee places in the extended CORS pilot have been allocated.

When will decisions on applications from potential sponsors be made?

Applications have been assessed on a quarterly basis starting in January 2022. A panel consisting of Immigration New Zealand, HOST International Aotearoa, former refugees, and mana whenua was formed to approve sponsors and match refugees with Approved Sponsors. Currently, no further applications are assessed as all 150 refugee places in the extended pilot have been allocated to successful Approved Sponsor groups.

How do we complete the Settlement Plan before we know who we are sponsoring?

The Settlement Plan that you submit as part of your Approved Sponsor application does not need to be specific to a particular refugee individual or whānau. The purpose of the plan is for your group to show that you have thought carefully about the types of settlement support that you will be required to provide throughout the settlement process, and that you have members who are able to provide the support.

Once you have been connected to the refugee individual/whānau that your organisation will be sponsoring, you will be able to talk to them about their specific settlement needs and desires and start to make the relevant arrangements.

I am an individual who wants to help sponsor a refugee – what are my options?

Individuals and families are not able to sponsor a refugee by themselves. Approved Sponsors need to be a registered entity (i.e. a company, charity, incorporated society, or trust). However, we encourage individuals who are interested in sponsoring a refugee to join together with a registered entity and submit an application together.

When identifying organisations that you could approach and partner with, have a think about organisations that have experience working with refugees and vulnerable people, connections with the broader community, and relationships with mana whenua in your area.

We encourage people to be creative when bringing groups and individuals together to support refugees - the key point is to create an experience that helps refugees when they resettle in NZ.

HOST might know of other organisations in your area that are interested in sponsoring refugees – so get in touch to find out what networks already exist.

Frequently asked questions

How can we support the sponsorship programme if our community group doesn't fit the requirements to become an Approved Sponsor?

If your community organisation is not a registered legal entity or is too small to fulfil all the requirements for becoming an Approved Sponsor, we encourage you to contact HOST to discuss other ways that you might be able to support refugees and the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme.

Community groups come in many different shapes and sizes, from a group of family or friends to a sports club or book club – all of these groups offer skills and experiences that can help create welcoming environments for refugees when they resettle in New Zealand.

Do we have to live in a major city in order to sponsor a refugee?

Sponsored refugees are resettled anywhere in New Zealand – since Community Refugee Sponsorship is not limited to any specific parts of the country, sponsored refugees will have the opportunity to settle almost anywhere in Aotearoa New Zealand, including outside of established resettlement areas.

Sponsored refugees travel straight to their new communities when they arrive and are supported by their Approved Sponsors immediately.

Contact us

Contact

HOST International Aotearoa

Level 4, Solnet House, 70 The Terrace, Wellington

Phone: 04 390 0991 | Mobile: 022 600 2042

Email: sponsor@hostinternational.org.nz

Website: www.refugeesponsorship.org.nz



Disclaimer: This document has been produced by HOST International Aotearoa, the umbrella organisation for the Community Refugee Sponsorship programme.

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