

SEMINAR SERIES ON FORCED MIGRATION

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP: WILL CIVIL SOCIETY KEEP STEPPING UP?

Jennifer Hyndman
Centre for Refugee Studies
York University, Toronto



For more than 40 years, groups of Canadians have raised funds and offered their time to support over 325,000 refugee newcomers through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP). In 2020, planned numbers for private refugee sponsorship (20,000) in Canada were double the number of government-assisted refugees to be resettled. Based on an original qualitative study, this paper probes how

voluntary sponsorship – as a kind of civil society mobilisation – has been sustained over decades. Refugee newcomers who land in Canada as permanent residents become part of the communities and society in which they stay. Many have left family members behind in refugee camps and sanctuary cities without permanent status, and so become sponsors themselves with a view to reuniting in Canada. This phenomenon of ‘family-linked’ sponsorship is a unique, defining and sustaining feature of the program by motivating family members in Canada to team up with experienced sponsors to ‘do more’. Our data show that sponsorship is a community practice that occurs across scales – linking local sites in Canada to countries where human atrocities are common and neighbouring states that host those who flee. Sponsorship connects people in various communities across the world, and these transnational links are important to understanding the sustainability of sponsorship over time in Canada.

Wednesday
Dec. 16, 2020
5:30pm CET
Online event
[Register here](#)

