

Global Initiatives & Canada's Student Refugee Program

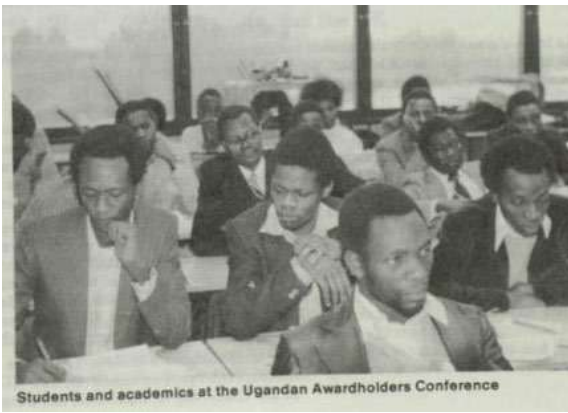
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Photo: NASC Ireland: <https://nascireland.org/our-projects/education-pathways-refugees/>

A History of Universities Helping Displaced Students

- Since the 1920s, universities and students from around the world have been providing assistance to displaced students and providing opportunities for them to continue their studies in safety.
- In the first half of the 20th century, there were 42 receiving countries across 4 continents. Over time, education pathways have provided security and education to displaced students fleeing crises from around the world*



Education Pathway Initiatives Globally

 Study visas

 Community Sponsorship

Australia	
Belgium	
Canada	 
Costa Rica	
Czechia	
France	
Germany	

Ireland	
Italy	
Japan	
Lithuania	
Mexico	
Portugal	
Philippines	

Rwanda	
Slovakia	
South Korea	
South Africa	
UK	 
USA (on pause)	 
Spain	

+ Additional global initiatives, like University World Colleges, Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, Jusoor, etc, and programs for scholars (e.g Scholars at Risk, CARA)

+ Additional countries who have issued study visas to nationals of conflict affected countries: Australia, Austria, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland (OECD-UNHCR 2018)

What is Canada's Student Refugee Program (SRP)?



Centrally coordinated by **WUSC**, the SRP is a **youth and post-secondary institution-led** initiative that provides tertiary education and a durable solution to refugees

- +/-160 refugee students enter Canada each year as **Permanent Residents**
- Since 1978, nearly 3000 students have been sponsored from 39 countries of asylum
- 100+ Sponsoring institutions (Universities, TVET)
- \$ 7 M + contributed each year by 1M Canadian students and post-secondary institutions



Photo: WUSC

How do SRP Students get to Canada?

Inland claims/
Asylum

Overseas Selection

Traditional
Resettlement

Private (i.e. Community)
Sponsorship

Sponsorship
Agreement Holding
Organizations
(WUSC)

WUSC Local
Committees (i.e.
Campus groups)

Refugee and Humanitarian Admissions in #s:

Government-Assisted Refugees	13,250
Asylum Seekers & Protected Persons	20,000
Privately Sponsored Refugees	16,000

WUSC Local Committees

A national campus-based network of committed volunteers, including students, faculty members, and staff



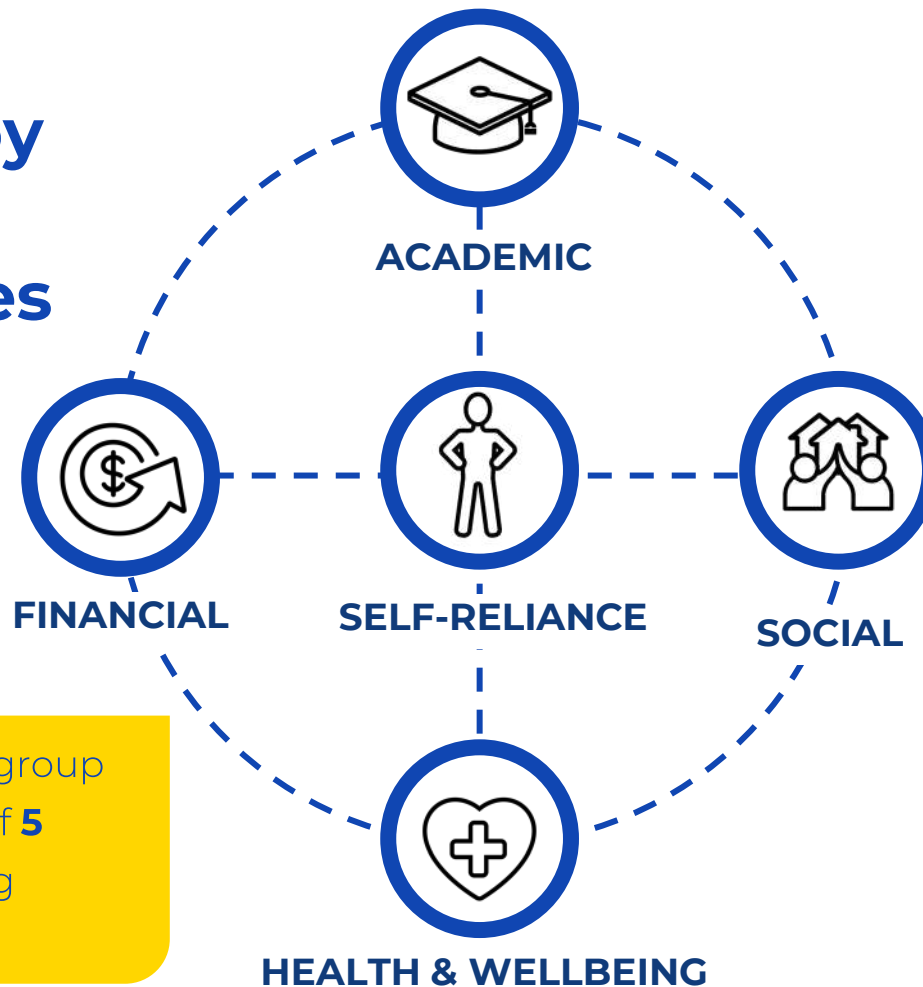
Raise awareness on their campus and build welcoming communities



Sponsor refugee students and support their integration



Support Provided by Local Committees



Each sponsoring group has a minimum of **5 persons** providing support.



Photos: WUSC

Sustainable Funding Model

\$ 7M raised by **1,000,000+** students each year

FUNDRAISING

Students host fundraising dinners, coffee houses, bake sales, and more to raise awareness and funds



LEVIES

Students: added to annual fees
Faculty members and staff: payroll deductions



COMMITMENTS FROM INSTITUTIONS

A variety of in-kind support: tuition waivers, textbook waivers, accommodation waivers, meals on campus



The Steps

Refugee candidates are selected by WUSC overseas and given pre-departure training

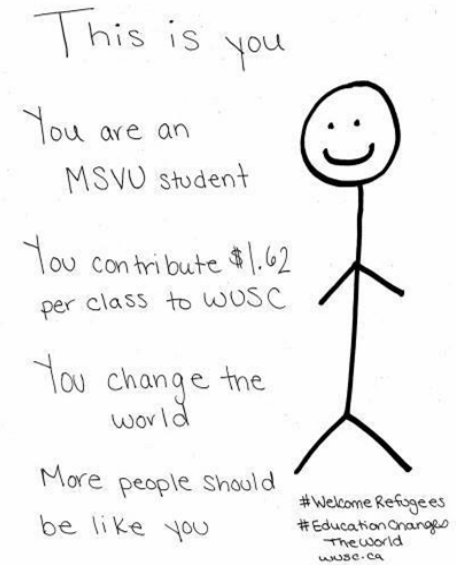
Refugees are matched with sponsoring institutions and immigrate to Canada, receiving Permanent Residence upon arrival

Student groups and institutions provide refugee students with financial, academic, and social support for a minimum of 12 months



Student, Staff, & Faculty Levies

- Levies operate like a student tax for campus-based initiatives and services. They can be allocated to unique services, such as a student health unit, or collected as a lump sum to support broader causes (e.g. Clubs and Societies, Student Project Fund etc.)
- To establish a student levy, the student body must typically vote on having a fee for a program or service added to their annual student fees.
- In Canada, student levies in support of the SRP vary from campus to campus and **range from CDN \$0.78 to \$20**, with the **average** amount collected being **\$5**.
- Staff/faculty “levies” often structured as regular payroll deductions that people can opt into.



WUSC's Role as the Coordinating Organization

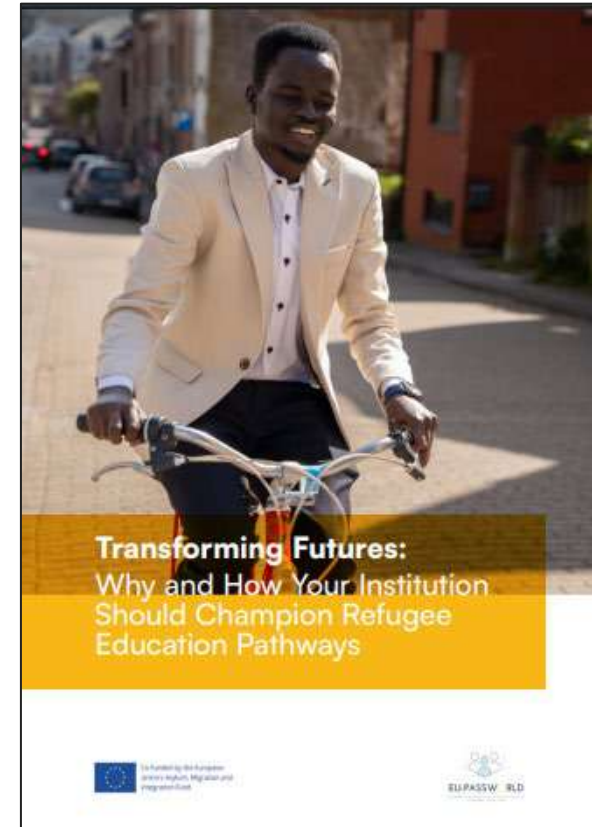
- Holds the **formal agreements with the Governments of Canada** and is ultimately responsible for oversight and quality assurance
- **Coordinates the pathway from selection to arrival**, including outreach, recruitment, selection, and preparation of refugee students who meet immigration and post-secondary admission requirements.
- **Mobilizes, trains, and supports campuses** to launch and sustainably implement the program, providing **guidance, tools,** and **ongoing support**.
- **Coordinates the matching of students with campuses** and sponsoring groups, based on academic criteria, institutional flexibility, and student needs.
- Maintains close **engagement with students and campus sponsors** throughout the 12 month sponsorship period

Key Steps for Getting Started

1.	Secure institutional commitment: Build leadership buy-in by demonstrating how Education Pathways advance institutional priorities, visibility, internationalization, and equity goals.
2.	Build a campus coalition: Engage faculty, staff, students, alumni, community organizations, employers, and establish a cross-campus working group with a designated focal point .
3.	Assess institutional readiness: Identify suitable academic programs, map existing student support services, and partner with local organizations to strengthen refugee support.
4.	Develop a sustainable implementation plan: Create a diversified funding strategy that combines institutional, public, philanthropic, and in-kind resources.
5.	Plan for student success: Design pathways that support students from admission through graduation and into employment, including mentoring, internships, language support, housing, and career development.

Additional Resources

- [Why and How your institution can champion education pathways \(A Guide\)](#)
- [Global Taskforce on Third Country Education Pathways \(Resource list\)](#)
- [Refugee Student Settlement Pathway - Australia](#)
- [Unicore - Italy](#)
- [Education Pathways for Refugees - Ireland](#)
- [Proyecto Habesha - Mexico](#)



Questions?

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