

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### *Private Refugee Sponsorship: Concepts, Cases and Consequences*

*A seminar and publication project*

The recent Canadian refugee program to resettle more than 40,000 Syrians relied to a large extent upon a policy framework that is unique in the world: private sponsorship of refugees by voluntary groups of citizens. Annually, private refugee sponsorship accounts for about half of annual refugee resettlement in Canada, and moving forward it is projected to be the primary form of resettlement in Canada amounting to 2/3 of annual intake. If private sponsors were counted separately they would rank fourth among nations in refugee resettlement. This program is credited with sustaining high levels of public support for refugee resettlement, and promoting better long-term outcomes for refugees, compared to government-managed refugee resettlement. The positive effects of private sponsorship, in the context of rising xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment in the West, have led the Canadian government to launch a joint project with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other organizations to “export” its policy model to interested states.

With the support of the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation and the Global Migration Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs, we will be hosting a 2-day seminar in October 2018 at the University of Toronto. Some funding is available to support the travel of selected participants.

The purpose of this seminar is to invite a select number of researchers and policy experts to inquire into historical and conceptual basis of private sponsorship, examine a number of case studies, and evaluate the effects and the prospects for successful export. The papers produced for the seminar will contribute to an edited academic volume to be prospectively published by McGill-Queen’s University Press.

For the seminar, short papers (approximately 5,000 words) are invited that will respond to the following questions:

1. In what ways have religious and secular voluntary groups influenced the development of private sponsorship? What role do they play in its implementation?
2. How does the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees engage with private refugee sponsorship?
3. How do the different sponsorship categories (SAHs, Constituent Groups, Groups of Five, and Community Sponsors) operate within the system?
4. How does the Blended Visa Office-Referred program shift the private sponsorship model?
5. Is it just for citizens to claim the right to select refugees to resettle, or should governments reserve this responsibility? If the latter, what criteria should be applied?
6. What role do religious and other ethical systems play in motivating citizens to sponsor refugees? How does the government engage with these different systems of thought and language?
7. How have groups mobilized and engaged with private sponsorship in the context of different refugee movements?
8. What effects does private sponsorship have on refugee outcomes? What effects does it have on sponsors?

We are interested in case studies as well as historical, contextual and evaluative papers from a range of disciplines as well as those active in sponsorship initiatives.

Submission:

Please send a maximum 300 word abstract and CV to Shauna Labman ([shauna.labman@umanitoba.ca](mailto:shauna.labman@umanitoba.ca)) and Geoffrey Cameron ([geoffrey.cameron@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:geoffrey.cameron@mail.utoronto.ca)) by 16 March 2018. We will notify participants by 6 April 2018 if their paper has been accepted. The deadline for draft papers (minimum 5000 words) is September 14, 2018 to ensure all participants can read in advance of the conference.