



ATCR 2019-2020 Refugee Participation: Focus groups

The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) is inviting organizations in Canada and around the world to lead focus groups with refugees and former refugees in order to increase refugee participation in the 2019-2020 ATCR process.

Background

The **Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement** (ATCR) brings together the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the governments and NGOs of resettlement countries, providing an opportunity for information-sharing and strategizing in support of resettlement.

Canada is chairing the ATCR process for the coming year, culminating in the 26th ATCR, to be held in Geneva June 15-17, 2020. The CCR is the ATCR NGO Focal Point.

A primary objective of the ATCR process for this year will be to support the implementation of the **Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways**.

The chairs are also committed to making meaningful refugee participation a permanent part of ATCR activities and process. The proposed focus groups are one way to achieve this.

Organize a focus group

Purpose: to gather input from people with refugee experience on the issues related to resettlement and complementary pathways discussed within ATCR. The input will contribute to a Refugee Statement that will be presented at the ATCR.

Role of organization:

- Recruit people with refugee experience to participate in the focus group.
- Lead a meeting of the focus group to share information about the ATCR and ask participants for their input. Guidelines will be provided about the information to share and the questions to ask (the questions will focus on the Three-Year Strategy - increasing resettlement, advancing complementary pathways and promoting welcoming and inclusive societies).
- Provide support for participants as appropriate (refreshments, reimbursement of travel costs, potentially a small honorarium).
- Write up the input from participants and send it to the CCR.
- Collect contact information from participants who want to receive follow up information and share with them (once it is ready) the compiled input and draft Refugee Statement that the CCR will send; and the report of the ATCR in summer 2020.
- Optionally hold a second meeting of the focus group to discuss the compiled input, a draft of the Refugee Statement and updates on the ATCR process.

Who to invite:

- Anyone who has had the experience of being a refugee and who wants to give input on improving solutions for refugees through resettlement or complementary pathways.
- Participants don't need to have been resettled themselves, but should understand that we will be discussing resettlement and complementary pathways (and not other issues, such as refugee determination processes).
- We also want to make it clear to potential participants that we will be discussing messages to help to improve things globally and it is an opportunity to send messages on broad issues. The focus groups will not be able to address specific cases.
- Focus groups could have diverse participants or bring together people with a common shared experience (e.g. students, privately sponsored refugees, recently arrived Government-Assisted Refugees, people from one region of the world), based on who the organization works with.
- It is recommended that focus groups be made up of maximum 12 participants. If more people want to participate, organizations are encouraged to host several focus groups.

Timeline:

- The first round of focus groups should be completed **by the end of December 2019**. The input from these groups will be presented at the Working Group meeting to be held in February 2020 in Ottawa.
- The second round of focus groups must take place **by the end of April 2020**. These can be groups that did not make the December 2019 deadline and are meeting for the first time, as well as focus groups that are meeting for the second time.
- Following the ATCR meeting in **June 2020**, there will be a report to share with focus group participants.

Budget:

- We encourage organizations that have the capacity to set aside a budget to cover the costs of the focus groups (including refreshments, participants' travel costs, ideally a small honorarium for participants).
- Larger organizations might also consider assisting smaller centres or community organizations by providing budgetary support.
- The CCR hopes to have a limited budget to provide financial support where necessary.

Why get involved:

- For refugees and former refugees, this is an opportunity to participate in international discussions about improving solutions for refugees – to raise concerns and make recommendations. A few participants in the focus groups will be supported to attend the ATCR meetings.
- For the organizations, this is a concrete way to support refugees in shaping the future of resettlement. Organizations' contributions towards refugee participation will be recognized at the ATCR.

To indicate that you plan to organize a focus group and receive the guidelines, or to ask questions, please contact us at atcr@ccrweb.ca.