

**From Displacement to Belonging:  
The Refugee Council USA Task Force on the Future of Refugee Resettlement**

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE  
September 2025**

Refugee Council USA (RCUSA) is establishing a multi-stakeholder task force to inform the design of a future system for refugee resettlement. The Task Force is intended to contribute to an overall approach to humanitarian protection that is embedded within a coordinated nationwide system of welcoming and integrating newcomers and an international system for facilitating resettlement.

***Aims.*** The Task Force will generate informed guidance for redesigning the U.S. architecture for refugee resettlement in both its overseas and domestic components. *The project aims to ensure that the experience and institutional knowledge of refugees and resettlement practitioners are meaningfully represented in collective efforts to shape immigration and refugee policy plans.*

***A multi-stakeholder, multi-perspectival effort.*** The Task Force will bring together representatives from among local and national resettlement agencies, state refugee coordinators, elected and appointed officials from the state and local level, former federal officials, refugee-led organizations, academia, and the private sector. The task force will set an open-ended, inclusive table for organizing, promoting meaningful dialogue, and strengthening connections among the multiple, differentially situated stakeholders in the refugee welcoming arena. While firmly grounded in RCUSA's commitments to humanitarian values and human rights, the Task Force will acknowledge a multiplicity of perspectives and normative frameworks.

***Organization.*** The Task Force will have twelve core members, the majority of them from outside RCUSA's member organizations. The leadership of the Task Force will include the Executive Director of RCUSA, a Rapporteur, two Co-Chairs, and a Steering Committee drawn from RCUSA's membership.

***Inputs.*** The Task Force will be consciously informed by earlier research, critiques of resettlement, reform proposals, and past and current program innovations. The findings and recommendations of RCUSA's recently concluded Institutional Knowledge Project will feed directly into the Task Force's deliberations. Each Task Force member will gather insights through discussions with the broader constituencies in which they are grounded, and the Task Force will maintain ongoing dialogue with other immigration and refugee policy planning efforts.

***Outputs.*** The work products of the Task Force will include interim publications and a public-facing final report (with analysis and recommendations) to be issued following the 2026 midterm elections and disseminated through a broad range of media platforms and events.

***Impacts.*** From the outset, the Task Force will strengthen a sense of common purpose and shared goals among diverse sets of stakeholders. In the lead-up to the 2028 election, it will inform policy planning for the next administration. In the long term, it will help lay the foundation for a reimagined resettlement system that better serves refugees and welcoming communities.

***For more information, contact John Slocum, Executive Director, RCUSA ([jslocum@rcusa.org](mailto:jslocum@rcusa.org))***

**From Displacement to Belonging:  
The Refugee Council USA Task Force on the Future of Refugee Resettlement**

**LAUNCH EVENT AT THE CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK  
September 22, 2025, 3:00 - 4:30 pm**

**AGENDA**

**3:00 - 3:45 pm – Panelist presentations**

**3:45 - 4:30 pm – Q&A**

**PANELIST BIOS**

**Geri Mannion**, Managing Director for Strengthening U.S. Democracy Program, Carnegie Corporation

She brings a wealth of experience about the role of philanthropy in challenging, improving and deepening the civic dialogue. She has directed the division since 1998, after staffing the Corporation's program of Special Projects for the previous ten years. The Corporation supports efforts to protect voting rights and increase nonpartisan voter engagement among those least likely to vote. It also focuses on immigrant civic integration. Active in professional organizations that work to advance and strengthen the philanthropic and nonprofit world, Mannion is a long-time member of the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation and the Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees. In 2019, Inside Philanthropy named Mannion "Program Director of the Year" for her work in rallying philanthropy to support democracy and immigration. In 2009, Mannion, together with her colleague Taryn Higashi, received the Robert W. Scrivner Award for Creative Grantmaking, one of philanthropy's highest honors, for founding the Four Freedoms Fund, a funder collaborative that focuses on immigrant rights at the state level. Mannion holds a B.A. in English and an M.A. in political science, both from Fordham University.

**John Slocum**, Executive Director, Refugee Council USA (RCUSA)

John has served since 2021 as Executive Director of RCUSA, the umbrella association of more than forty national nonprofits, including the national resettlement agencies, that advocate for and provide services to refugees and other forcibly displaced people. RCUSA provides its members with a platform for coordinating advocacy, communications, and resettlement operations—and for engagement with the international refugee policy arena—and carries out special projects on refugee leadership and integration. John previously worked at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, where he was program director for grantmaking initiatives on global migration, the Central America-Mexico-US migration corridor, and US immigration policy. John has a PhD in political science from the University of Chicago and has published articles and commentary on migration, philanthropy, and Russia.

**Faith Avoki Cooper**, Regional Director, Southern Border, International Rescue Committee, and Chair of the US Refugee Advisory Board

Faith is a humanitarian leader and global advocate for refugees, with extensive expertise in humanitarian assistance and international development across Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. She was recently elected Chair of the U.S. Refugee Advisory Board (USRAB), where she champions inclusive policies that support forcibly displaced communities. Faith currently serves as Regional Director for the U.S. Southern Border at the International Rescue Committee (IRC), overseeing refugee resettlement and support services across nine offices. Her leadership has also extended internationally—she previously served as IRC's Country Director in Liberia and as Regional Advisor for the West Africa Disaster Preparedness Initiative at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center in Ghana.

**Elizabeth Ferris**, Senior Fellow at Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of International Migration

Ferris served as Director of the Institute for the Study of International Migration until July 2025. In 2016, she served as Senior Advisor to the UN General Assembly's Summit for Refugees and Migrants in New York, where she drafted many of the documents which led to the Global Compact on Refugees. Prior to joining Georgetown, she was a Senior Fellow and co-director of the Brookings Project on Internal Displacement. And before that spent 20 years working in the field of humanitarian assistance, most recently in Geneva, Switzerland, at the World Council of Churches. She also served as Director of Church World Service's refugee program and has been a board member of several refugee-serving NGOs. She has written extensively on refugee and humanitarian issues.