

Ranking amongst the top three countries for permanent resettlement worldwide,¹ Australia plays a crucial role in international efforts to provide protection and opportunity to rebuild lives. A refugee is defined as an individual who is unable to return to their home country due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or social group. It is estimated there are 25.4 million people worldwide recognised as refugees with half being children.

What this might look like when it comes to employment:

- No personal or social networks to link to available positions
- Being passed over for available opportunities due to a range of factors including no previous employment in the country or ability to provide references
- Trade skills, professional and tertiary qualifications and/or experience not recognised
- Language barriers - some refugees may have excellent literacy skills but poor spoken grasp of the English language and vice versa
- Process of finding employment in Australia may be unfamiliar or inaccessible - online job boards, communication only via email, formal interviews and aptitude tests
- May not be able to present themselves as competitive in the job market even though they may be the most experienced or competent in a talent pool or shortlist

DEIB strategies to consider

- Consider recruitment strategies that actively source individuals from a pool of refugee candidates
- Be aware of the barriers refugees face and unconscious biases held
- Be aware of potential and transferable skills on resumes, not just direct experience
- Make sure any information provided is written and clear
- Once hired, provide a direct point of contact within your organisation who will mentor and meet the successful candidate regularly to provide support

Benefits of having refugees in the workplace

- Research shows colleagues from a refugee background are dependable, take initiative, and hold a strong work ethic²
- Increased organisational reputation with strong social responsibility credentials
- Cultural knowledge provides a competitive advantage in our multicultural society and a globalised market³

1 Refugee Council of Australia (2022). Global Resettlement Statistics

2 Australian Red Cross (2023). Hire refugees and asylum seekers

3 Tent Partnership for Refugees (2019). Australian Employers' Guide to Hiring Refugees