

Reimagining Welcome Framework

In an era of unprecedented global displacement, with over 110 million people forcibly displaced worldwide, the business events industry has both a responsibility and a powerful opportunity to respond. Events bring together people, ideas, and investments. When harnessed intentionally, these platforms can extend beyond their economic impact to create a meaningful social legacy.

Refugees face complex barriers: interrupted careers, limited access to education, and systemic exclusion from professional networks. Yet they also bring skills, resilience, and insight that can enrich industries and communities. Business events can serve as bridges, offering access, amplifying voices, and creating inclusive pathways into work, education, and belonging.

This framework examines how all sectors, from destinations and suppliers to corporations and associations, can collaborate with third parties and refugee-led initiatives to effect real, lasting change. Because inclusion doesn't happen by accident; it happens by design.

1. Strategic Alignment and Policy Integration

- ✓ Embed refugee inclusion into ESG and DEI strategies across organisations and destinations.
- ✓ Encourage industry bodies (e.g., ICCA, PCMA, SITE, MPI) to incorporate refugee support into their sustainability and legacy frameworks.
- ✓ Work with NGOs, refugee-led organisations, and social enterprises to shape inclusive policies.

2. Employment & Skills Development

Destinations & Suppliers:

- ✓ Partner with local refugee organisations to recruit and train refugees in hospitality, AV, logistics, catering, and security roles.
- ✓ Create internship and job shadowing pathways for refugees through partnerships with groups like Tent Partnership for Refugees or UNHCR.

Corporates & Incentives:

- ✓ Source products and services (gifts, F&B, décor) from refugee-run or refugee-supporting enterprises.
- ✓ Offer incentive trip experiences that include social impact visits to refugee inclusion projects.

3. Education & Professional Development

Associations & Conferences:

- ✓ Offer scholarships or free access to conferences and networking events for displaced professionals.
- ✓ Include educational sessions on forced migration, refugee rights, and inclusive practices in annual meetings.
- ✓ Partner with platforms like NaTakallam to feature refugee speakers, interpreters, or storytellers.

Destinations & CVBs:

- ✓ Co-create certification or skills-recognition programmes to support refugee entry into event professions.

4. Content & Representation

- ✓ Ensure refugees are **represented as speakers, artists, vendors, or facilitators** within event programming.
- ✓ Showcase refugee-led success stories to challenge stereotypes and highlight potential.
- ✓ Feature cultural contributions (e.g. music, food, art) from refugee communities at events.

5. Procurement & Supply Chain Inclusion

- ✓ Encourage venues, DMCs, caterers, and other suppliers to implement inclusive procurement policies.
- ✓ Work with certification bodies or NGOs to vet and highlight refugee-inclusive suppliers.

6. Legacy Planning & Local Impact

- ✓ Align with Refugee Week, World Refugee Day, or local awareness campaigns to amplify messaging.
- ✓ Include refugee-supporting initiatives in host destination legacy strategies (e.g. funding local programmes, volunteering).
- ✓ Leave behind infrastructure (e.g. event materials, technology) to support refugee education or community centres.
- ✓ Create volunteer and Skill-Sharing Programmes
- ✓ Embed refugee-focused KPIs into your Measurement and Reporting

7. Cross-Sector Collaboration

- ✓ Create coalitions or alliances (public-private-NGO) focused on refugee inclusion through business events.
- ✓ Partner with international organisations (e.g. UNHCR, IOM, Red Cross) for guidance, training, and credibility.
- ✓ Support research, data collection, and impact reporting to measure and share results.



The business events industry has the global reach, networks, and influence to be more than a passive observer of the refugee crisis—it can be a catalyst for lasting inclusion and impact.

This framework invites destinations, suppliers, corporates, associations, and incentive planners to rethink how events are designed: not just for connection but for belonging. Refugees bring resilience, skills, and insight yet face systemic barriers to employment, education, and representation. By embedding refugee inclusion into content, employment pathways, procurement, and legacy planning, our industry can help close those gaps.

This isn't charity; it's an innovative, human-centred strategy. When we collaborate with refugee-led organisations, NGOs, and social enterprises, we don't just enrich events—we strengthen communities.

Business events are where the world comes together to address global challenges. It's time we applied that same mindset to our practices. Inclusion doesn't happen by default. It happens by design, and we can lead that design together.

