
R-SEAT Organizational Brief

Refugees Seeking Equal Access at the Table (R-SEAT) is a refugee-led non-profit organization with a global presence, working to improve global refugee governance through strategically mainstreaming the meaningful participation of refugees, specifically in state-led processes. Through three key streams of programming, R-SEAT works to strengthen the global refugee leadership ecosystem and bring it into productive conversation with states as the ultimate authorities within the regime.

We **Engage** states and stakeholders to build **Refugee Advisory Mechanisms** for sustained refugee participation entrenched at the national level, formed of vetted thematic experts who hold lived experience of forced displacement. These Mechanisms elect members to serve in formal state delegations to meetings of the global refugee regime, including policy forums such as UNHCR's Executive Committee (**ExCom**), and the Global Refugee Forum (**GRF**) among others. To date, R-SEAT has finalized this model in **Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Australia, and Germany**, and further piloted it in **Brazil, Switzerland, Portugal, and Norway**.

To facilitate this work, R-SEAT endeavors to both **Amplify** and **Connect** refugee leaders and refugee-led organizations (**RLOs**). Under our **Amplify** stream, R-SEAT provides training, platforms opportunities and good practices, and supports RLOs in achieving their own organizational goals. R-SEAT also **Connects** these groups strategically through our own expansive network to foundations, state officials, United Nations bodies, and civil society actors.

R-SEAT Mechanisms

Canada was the first country to establish a participatory mechanism, the **Refugee Advisory Network of Canada (RAN)**, after successfully including a refugee advisor to their GRF 2019 delegation. Following this success, work began to create similar structures in the **United States** and **New Zealand**. R-SEAT, in partnership with Refugee Council USA and Refugee Congress, formed the **United States Refugee Advisory Board (USRAB)** in 2022. In **New Zealand**, R-SEAT worked closely with refugee leaders, the Centre for Asia Pacific Refugee Studies (CAPRS), and government officials in throughout 2021 towards the establishment of the **New Zealand Refugee Advisory Panel (NZRAP)** which launched in mid-2022.

In 2023, R-SEAT finalized the **Australia Refugee Advisory Panel (ARAP)**, which was launched in advance of GRF 2023 after co-designing the concept with refugee leaders in Australia. Including a member of the **ARAP** as the official refugee advisor to the Australian delegation at GRF 2023 was specifically noteworthy as an instance of meaningful refugee participation, as it was the first time Australia piloted this model. Most recently, **Germany** launched the **German Refugee Advisory Board (GRAB)** after including a refugee advisor to numerous international delegations since the High-Level Officials Meeting (**HLOM**) in 2021.

Our work is ongoing in our further target countries, including **Brazil** and **Switzerland**, which both publicly announced their intent to co-design a mechanism at GRF 2023. Other target states are at varying stages of development, including **Portugal, the Netherlands, Malaysia, Uganda, Kenya, Mexico, and Colombia**.

For further information on our work and on **Refugee Advisory Mechanisms**, please see [here](#), or reach out to us at info@refugeesseat.org.