

Co-designing a new *Refugee Student Settlement Pathway (RSSP)* for Australia

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**Community Refugee
Sponsorship Australia**

What is an education pathway for refugees?

- “Any program that has **education as its end goal**, such as ‘private, community, or institution-based scholarships, apprenticeships and traineeships programs’, regardless of the means of entry (e.g., student visa, community sponsorship humanitarian visa).
- Such initiatives ‘normally provide refugees with **appropriate safeguards**, notably proper travel documentation and **legal entry and stay** arrangements for the duration of their studies/ traineeship, and **clear post-graduation options**, which may include permanent residency or postgraduate study or employment.”

(MPI 2021)



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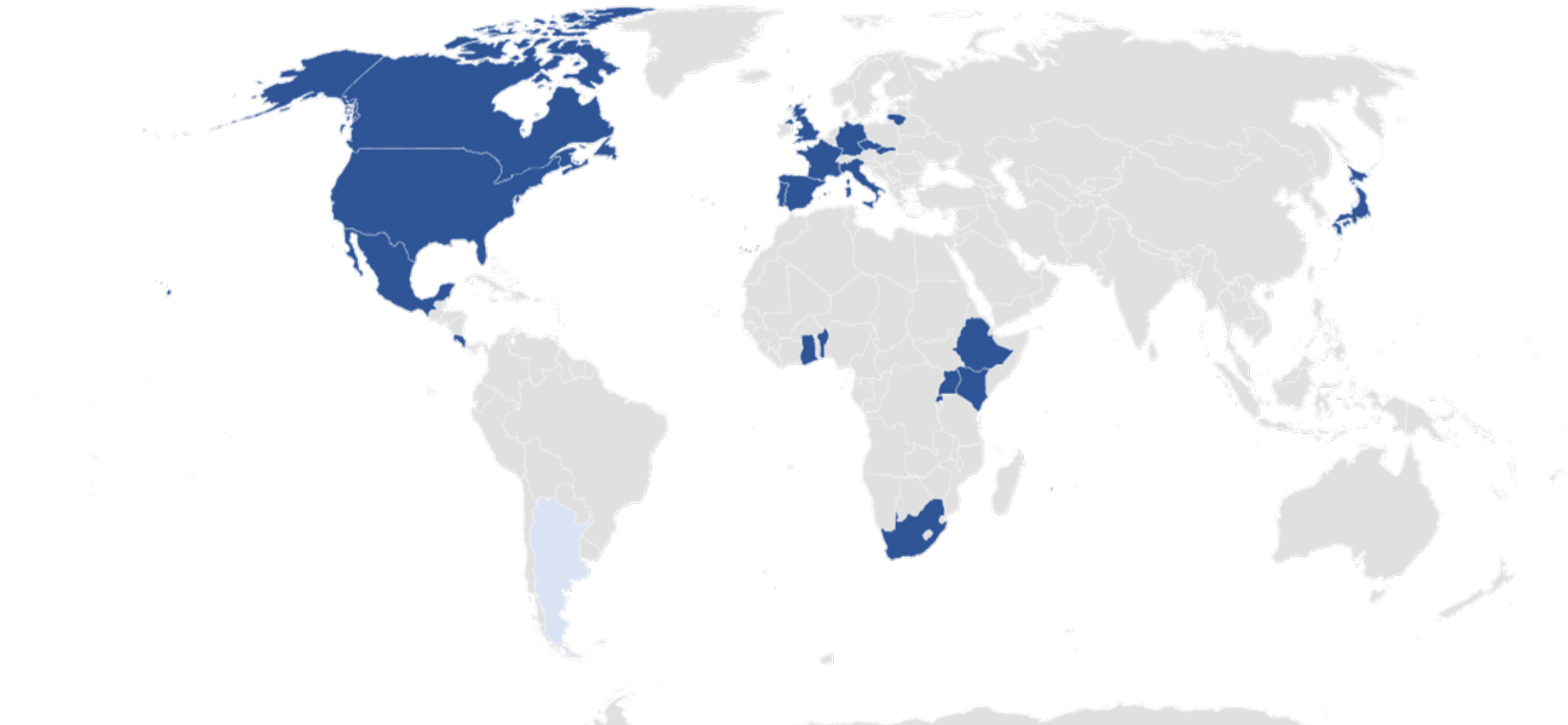


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Global picture



33 coordinated education pathway initiatives in 26 countries

▲ Study visas
● Private Sponsorship

Belgium ●
Benin ▲
Canada ● ▲
Costa Rica ▲
Czechia ▲
Ethiopia ▲
France ▲
Germany ▲

Ghana ▲
Ireland ●
Italy ▲
Japan ▲
Kenya ▲
Lithuania ▲
Mauritius ▲
Mexico ▲
Portugal ▲

Philippines ▲
Rwanda ▲
Slovakia ▲
Spain ▲
South Korea ▲
South Africa ▲
UK ▲
Uganda ▲
USA ● ▲

+ Additional global initiatives, like University World Colleges, Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, Jusoor, etc, and programs for scholars (e.g Scholars at Risk, CARA)

+ Additional countries who have issued study visas to nationals of conflict affected countries: Australia, Austria, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland (OECD-UNHCR 2018)

Global Leaders WUSC

(World University Service of Canada)

- WUSC is a Canadian international development NFP dedicated to improving education, employment & empowerment opportunities for youth, women and refugees in more than 25 countries around the world.
- The Student Refugee Program supports over 150 refugee students per year through active partnerships with over 100 Canadian university and vocational college campuses.
- Launched in 1978, WUSC has an agreement with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada that enables refugee students to study in Canada as permanent residents. WUSC identifies refugee students & grants permission to WUSC Local Committees to sponsor in WUSC's name.
- The program runs on a peer-to-peer sponsorship model where students in Canada play an active role in the sponsorship of refugee students. Campus-based Local Committees raise funds and awareness for the program - they also offer day-to-day social and academic support to newly-arrived students.

Building a WUSC-like model for Australia

The **Refugee Student Settlement Pathway (RSSP)** is being co-designed between Federal government, higher education sector, peak settlement and refugee advocacy orgs, and WUSC alumni/ students with lived experience of forced migration, and involving consultation with:

- AMES Australia
- Australian Council of TESOL Associations (ACTA)
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
- Department of Education
- Home Affairs – NGO Dialogue on Refugee and Humanitarian Issues
- Duolingo
- English Australia
- Global Taskforce on Third Country Education Pathways
- International Education Association of Australia (IEAA)
- International Institute of Education (IIE)
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
- Multicultural Australia
- Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia (MYAN)
- National Union of Students
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Refugee Education UK (REUK)
- Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA)
- Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB)
- The Refugee Hub
- The Welcome Corps on Campus
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Universities Australia
- Welcoming Australia
- World University Service of Canada (WUSC)

What it is and what it is not

It will

LIKELY offer permanent protection w/ humanitarian visa

Be financially self-sustaining

Be beneficial for all parties

It will not

(likely) use a temporary/ 500 student visa

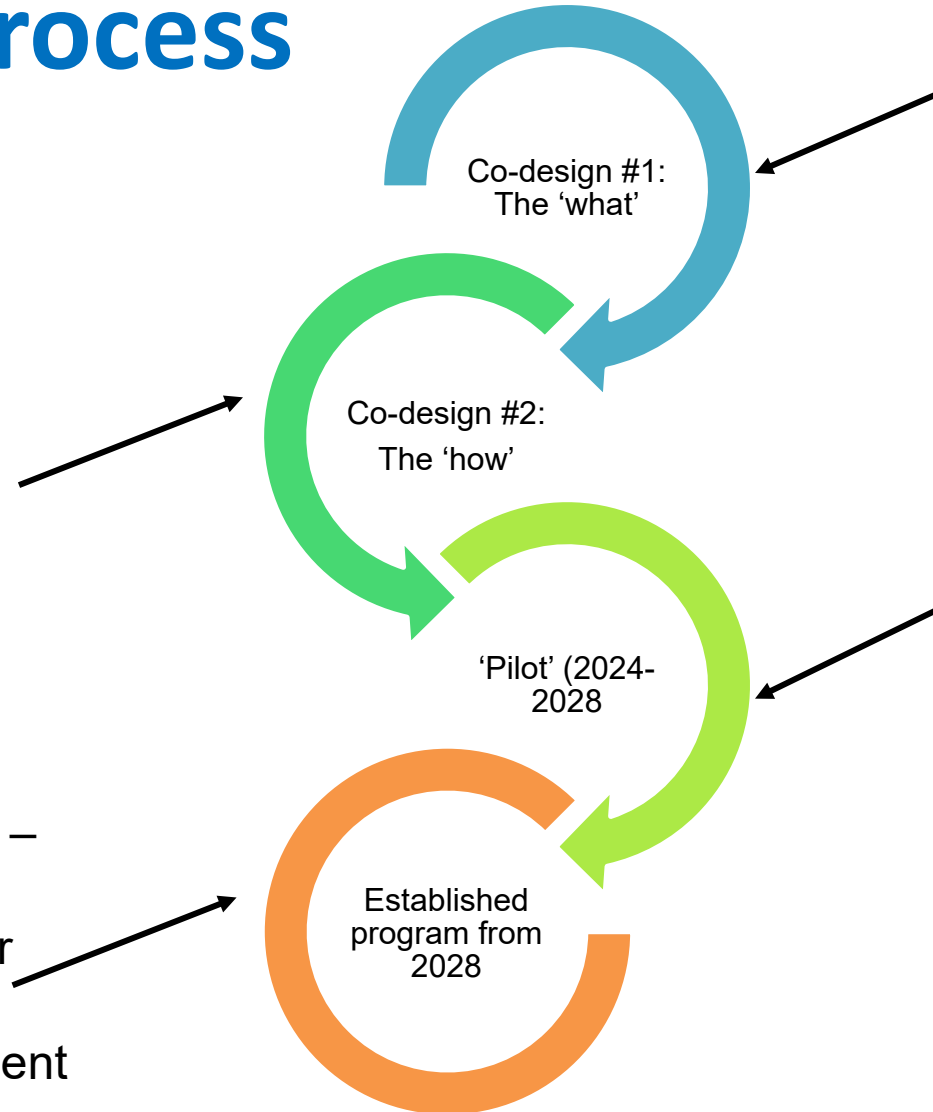
Adopt a fee-waiver scholarship model

Be resource/administration-heavy for universities

Co-design process

Consultation on the how:
how to operationalise –
admissions, selection,
matching, language
requirements, support,
campus groups

Roll out beyond the 'pilot' –
recruit new universities;
expand to TAFE; consider
industry-scholarships,
perhaps Aus-run recruitment
in Asia-Pacific

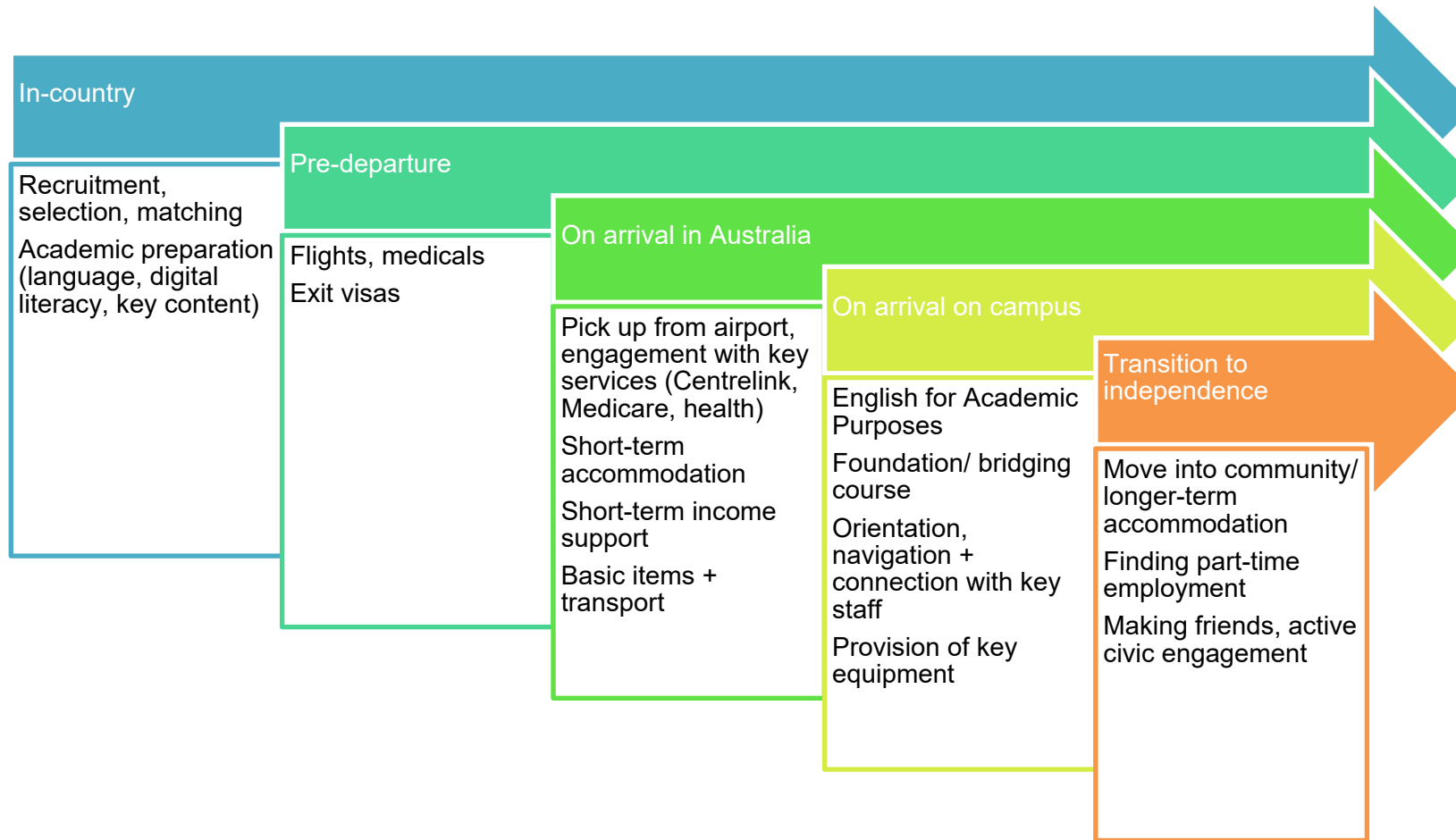


Consultation on the **what**: the
shape and size of the pathway;
sharing model; advice to Minister
Giles due 31 October 2023

Testing and evaluation of the
pathway. Two waves of intake:

- First intake - end of 2025, start
UG in 2026
- Second intake – end of 2026,
start UG in 2027

End-to-end student journey



Program design

Cohort

- 18-25 years old
- Single, no dependents
- Undergraduate only

Minimum thresholds

- Min 2, max 5 (?)
- EAP
- IAP
- Accommodation

Timeline

- 4-year 'pilot'
- First wave of students arriving in Australia in late 2025 to start undergraduate studies in S1 2026
- Second wave of students arriving in Australia in late 2026 to start undergraduate studies in S1 2027

The RSSP: A sharing model (indicative)

Government

- Visa/ immigration
- Offshore recruitment, selection, matching
- On-shore costs (Medicare, Centrelink – NOT AMEP, HSP)
- Shared cost for coordinating body/ delivery hub

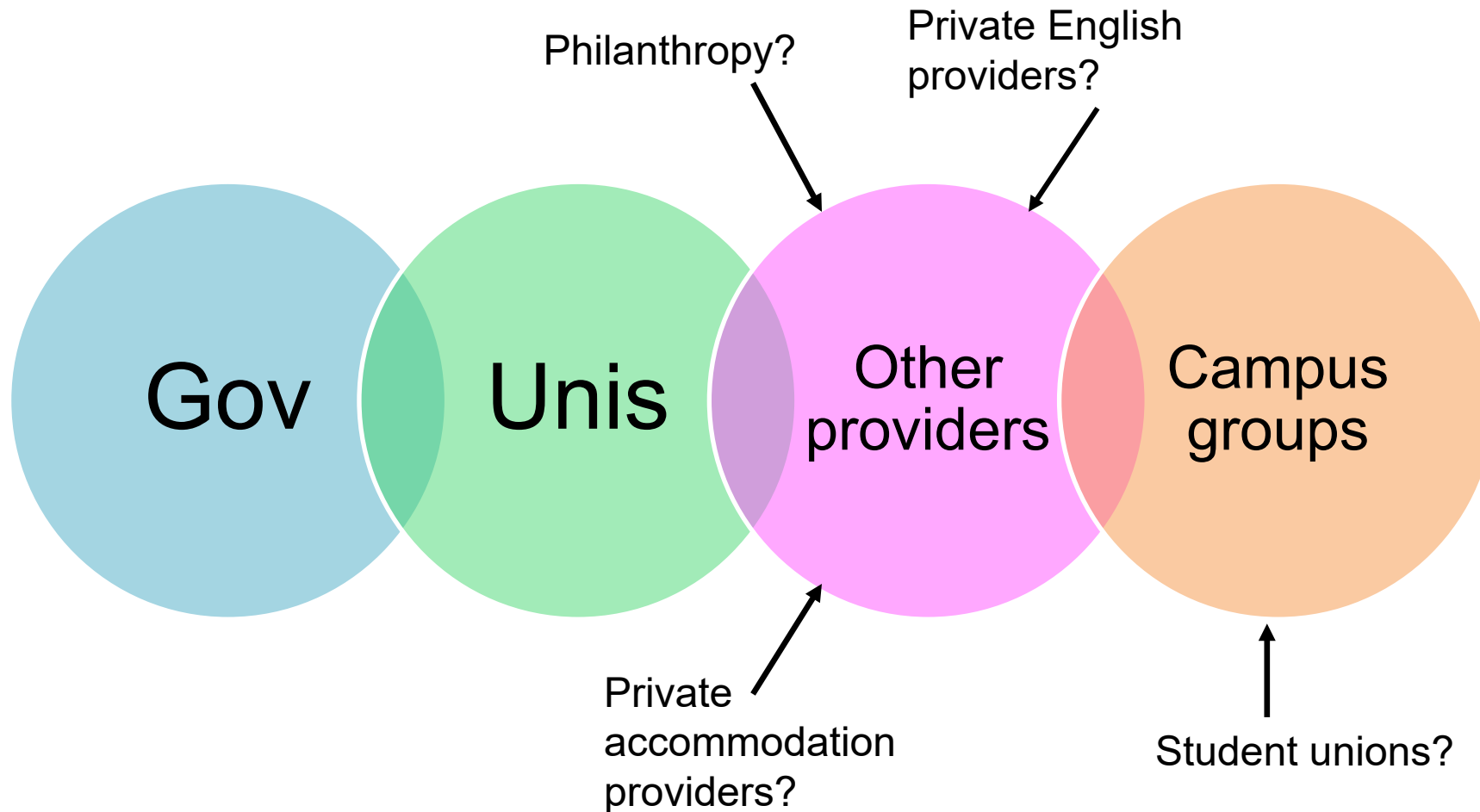
Universities (later VET)

- Shared cost for coordinating body
- Staff member (fractional) to link with UCSG
- Foundation/ preparation (in-country + on-share)
- Accommodation for a period
- Stipend + equipment support (laptop, textbooks, lab coat etc.)

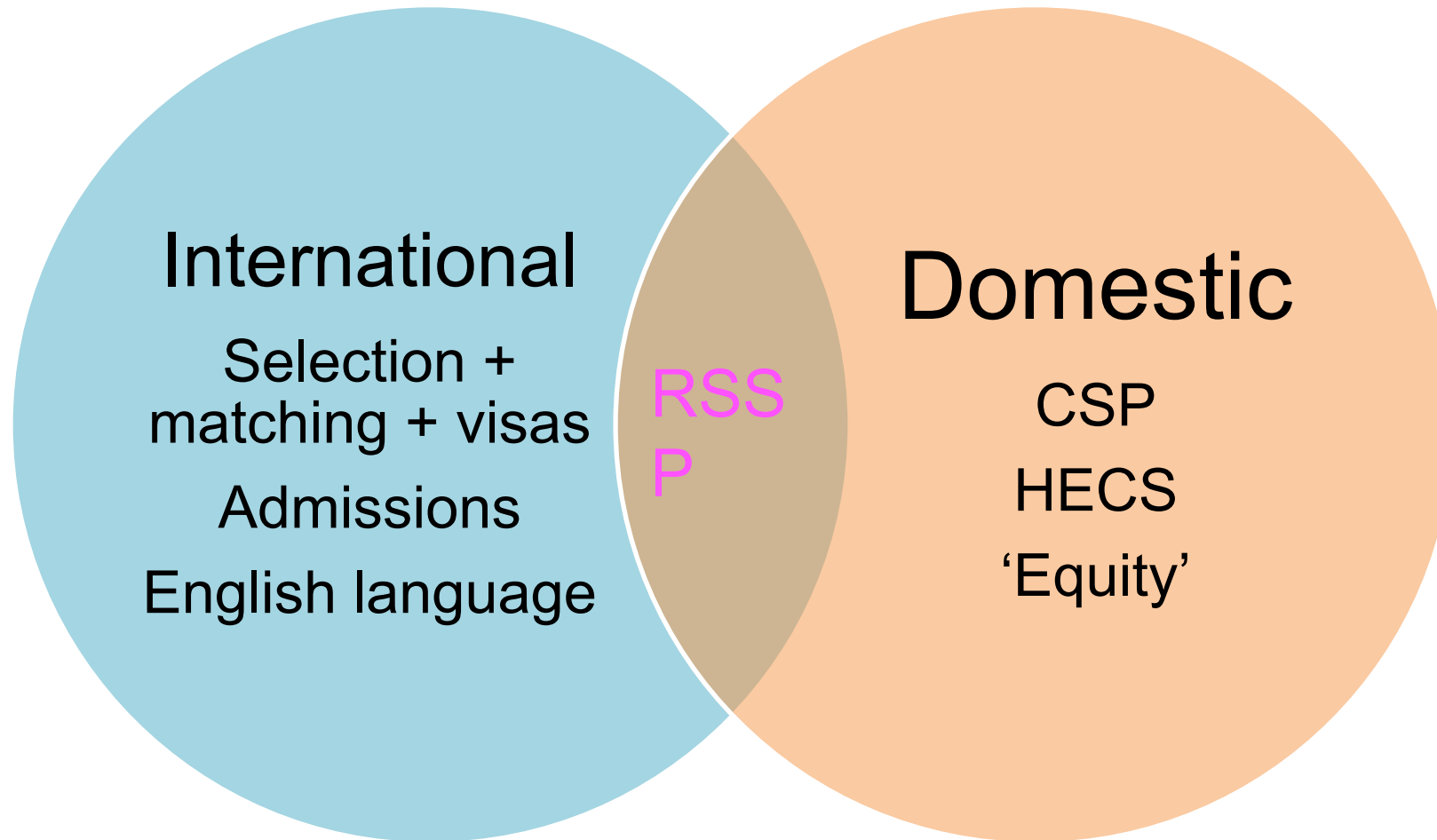
University Community Sponsor Groups

- HSP-like settlement support
- Help to orient on campus
- Help to navigate local area
- Help to build networks
- Fundraising for flights + medical checks + (some) income support

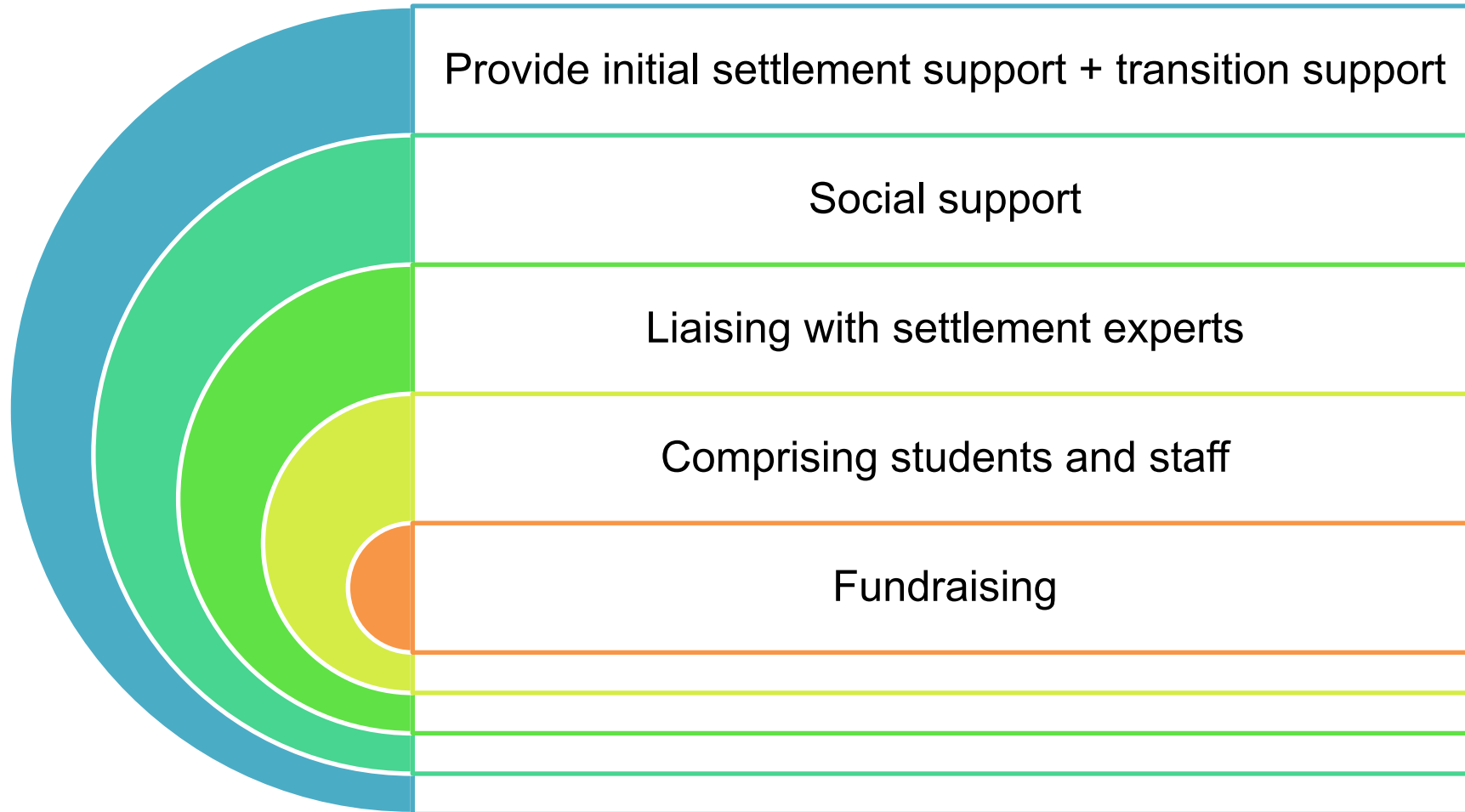
Who else is involved?



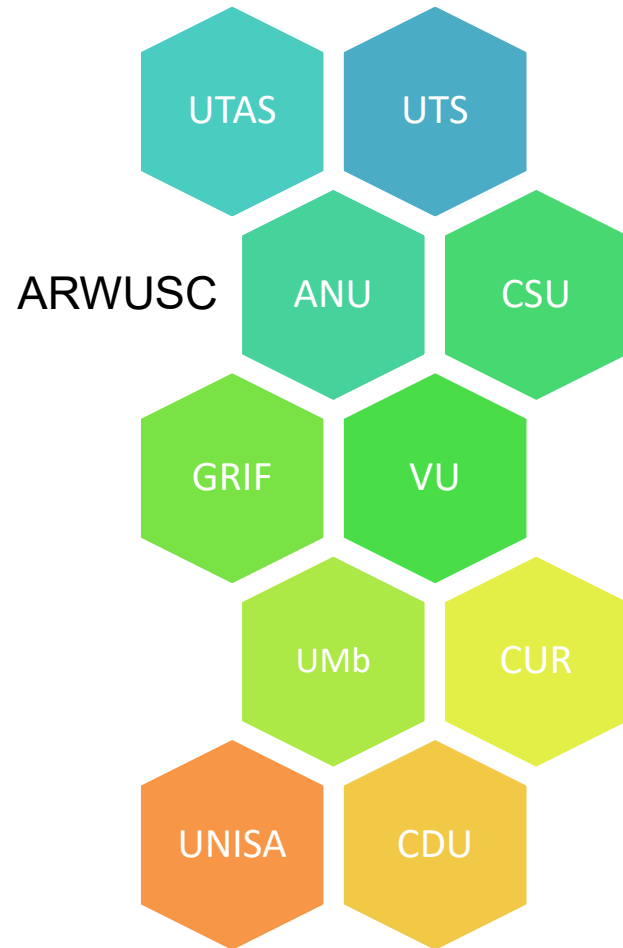
Shared responsibility within universities



University campus sponsor groups



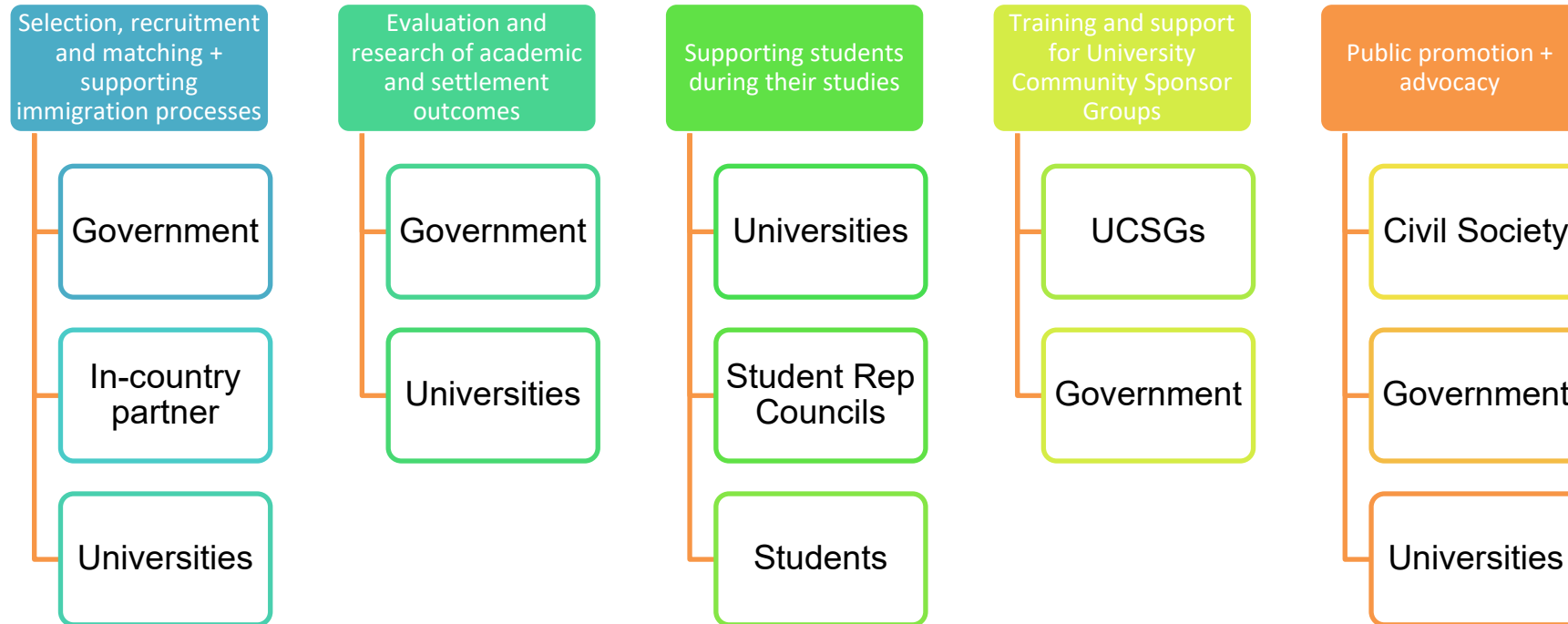
Australian Refugee Welcome University Sponsorship Consortium



Are the opportunities to participate closed?

- Absolutely not
- We started with 10 only for ease for coordinating with government
- Co-design #2 is imminent

Roles served by Coordinating Organisation (and to whom)



Need for national coordination?

- From the first co-design workshop (26-27 Sep, Canberra), there was clear consensus that national coordination was a useful measure (rather than each institution working it out individually)
- Funding of coordinating body/ delivery hub = shared between government and higher education sector
 - Facilitate consistency in pathway processes
 - Coordinate and promote good practice across the sector
 - Engage in high-level advocacy
 - Convene student conferences



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Over to you...

- As we head into co-design #2 (Feb-May 2024), we need to consider issues that sit within your expertise, such as:
 - Supports for settlement?
 - Supports for academic ‘success’?
 - English language proficiency – standards, flexibility, tools?
 - ‘Soft landing’ requirements?
 - Funding mechanisms that could be used?
 - Other?



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Next steps

If you want further information, contact:
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