

ASRC

Feast For Freedom

CONVERSATION CARDS

Have insightful conversations with your guests about the experiences of people seeking asylum.

During your feast, take turns to read the discussion point on the front of each card and listen to each other's response. Once everyone has answered, turn the card over to see...

FOOD for THOUGHT

You have to leave town tonight urgently and you can only take five items with you. What would they be and why?

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FOOD for THOUGHT

Imagine that you don't have access to a hot meal, or the money to buy one. Where would you go for help?

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FOOD for THOUGHT

Name three significant milestones that have occurred in your personal, professional or student life over the past five years.

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FOOD for THOUGHT

Describe your favourite family meal from when you were a child.

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Can you give the details of each residential address where you have lived in the last 20 years and the exact dates you lived there?

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To apply for a protection visa in Australia, you need to provide information and evidence of your identity, travel history and education. This is easier with a passport, school records, birth certificate and, if married, a marriage certificate.

Did anyone mention one of those?

If you are facing persecution it may not be safe to apply for documentation from your government or you may not be recognised as a citizen. In times of conflict, you may not have time to apply for a passport and the institution that issues documentation may not be operational.



...how your answers are connected to the lives of people seeking asylum.



The Feast for Freedom cooks hand selected recipes for you to use. They include dishes that remind them of their childhood and of their homeland which they may not be able to return to.

Separation from family is extremely hard. The ASRC tries to keep families together while they await a decision on their protection visa application. Sadly, this is not always possible, particularly if one family member is granted a protection visa and another is not.



At the ASRC, the Community Food Team serves a hot, nutritional lunch Monday - Friday. Annually we provide around 10,000 community meals.



This question is on the application form for a protection visa and is closely matched to the person's statement for why they need protection.

Did you remember to include any periods of travel when you were away from home for more than a week or two? Neglecting to include periods of displacement, such as when a person goes into hiding for their safety, can lead a decision maker to doubt the accuracy of a person's entire claim for protection and may contribute to a refusal of a protection visa.



The refugee status determination process is complex and some families find themselves in limbo for many years. For example, the ASRC is currently supporting someone in a detention centre who has been there for the past 5 years with no indication of when they can leave. One can only imagine how many of life's milestones and opportunities they have missed in that time.





FOOD for THOUGHT

When was the last time you completed a lengthy survey or had to read a legal document in a language not native to you?

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FOOD for THOUGHT

What is one issue you deeply care about that you would like to see changed through government policy, and which politician would you like to see champion this change?

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FOOD for THOUGHT

You see something in the media about the continued poor treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum by the government. Perhaps it's a story about a detention centre, a refugee family experiencing homelessness or a powerful speech by a refugee advocate on the news. What do you do afterwards?

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FOOD for THOUGHT

What are your top five ingredients or food dishes that you regularly have in your kitchen?

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FOOD for THOUGHT

You have to start a new job, but it can't be the one you are trained for. What would you do for work? What obstacles would you face in getting that job?

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FOOD for THOUGHT

When the government doesn't allow you the right to work or access to Medicare, how would you buy lifesaving full cost, non government subsidised medications?

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The ASRC Foodbank provides culturally appropriate groceries and essentials for people seeking asylum. Some of the most sought after items include:

Basmati rice, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, dried/tinned legumes, milk and honey or sweet spreads.

Funds raised through Feast for Freedom will help fund our foodbank, which supports approx. 4,000 people annually



Most adults who seek asylum in Australia have already worked for many years in their home countries. If they are given the right to work in Australia, the ASRC supports them to understand and enter the Australian labour market.

In some cases, highly educated pharmacists, engineers and teachers work in hospitality or administration while navigating a return to their chosen profession.



People seeking asylum are often have not given work rights or access to Medicare. Not only does this make accessing medical care difficult, it makes being able to pay for essential medications unaffordable. Without Medicare, people seeking asylum are not eligible for PBS (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) funded medications. Non PBS medication can cost hundreds of dollars, and for people seeking asylum with a chronic illness, this only elevates the trauma already being experienced.



The Protection Visa application form has 110 questions, is 41 pages long and is only available in the English language. It requests details of every area of your life, from where you have lived, to everywhere you have worked - including the addresses - and also your family history. If English is not your first language, how would you complete the application, prepare a detailed statement and submit evidence to support your application without the help of an interpreter and lawyer?



Our movement will only be powerful and successful when people from refugee backgrounds and people seeking asylum are leading it. They know from first hand experience and through community connection what their communities need and that makes them the best spokespeople and change makers for the refugee justice movement. This is why the ASRC provides the Community, Advocacy & Power Program (CAPP) to upskill refugees and people seeking asylum in community organising and advocacy.



You too can join the movement. Stand up and take action as effectively as possible by joining the ASRC advocacy workshops, calling MPs and helping facilitate debate around election times.

See asrc.org.au for more details.

