



Seek LGBTQ+ resources.
Reach safety.
Find belonging.

InReach Media Kit

Media Contacts

InReach Press Team

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About InReach (formerly AsylumConnect)

Co-founded by a gay asylum seeker and trans American at the University of Pennsylvania, InReach is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing **the world's first tech platform matching LGBTQ+ people with safe, verified resources**. The organization's mission is to ensure safe help is InReach for all members of the LGBTQ+ community.

InReach is for the entire diverse LGBTQ+ community – including asylum seekers and refugees, undocumented and other immigrants, young people experiencing homelessness, those facing family or community rejection due to their identity, and other transgender and non-binary people in need of safe resources.

The free InReach App is available on web, mobile web, and native iOS and Android. The App is available in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories, Canada, and Mexico.

Why InReach Is Needed

- **80+** – In over 80 countries around the world it remains illegal or fundamentally unsafe to live openly as a LGBTQ+ person.
 - Same-sex activity between consenting adults is subject to criminalization in approximately 70 countries
 - Of these 70 countries, 31 carry a sentence of 10+ years in prison, and **12 countries still impose the death penalty**
 - 12 countries target gender identity through 'cross-dressing' or 'impersonation' laws

"I know that I either leave this place or die. Any information [on the LGBTQ+ asylum process] will be very valuable to me as I am all by myself here. I have no



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*friends knowing about me nor any family member. **My only source is the internet.*** —Trans asylum seeker from the Middle East to InReach

*“I am planning to move to the U.S. to live like a normal human being without fear of persecution. **Show me the way.**”* — Gay asylum seeker from the Middle East to InReach

- **1,700,000+** – There are over 1.7M cases backlogged in the U.S. immigration court system.
- **289,700** – There are an estimated 289,700 LGBTQ+-identified individuals among the adult undocumented immigrant population in the U.S.
- **300+** – So far in 2022, more than 300 bills have been introduced across the U.S. targeting the trans community.
- **21.6%** – LGBTQ+ people in the U.S. have a collective poverty rate of 21.6%, as compared to 15.7% for their straight cisgender peers.
- **40%** – An estimated 40% of homeless youth in the U.S. identify as gay or transgender: 4x higher than the average population.

Before InReach, there was no holistic, technologically advanced platform for LGBTQ+ people in need of safe, verified resources. In response, InReach has created **the first and only scalable tech platform** designed to fill this critical information gap.



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How InReach Started

Co-founders Sy and Jamie met as college students at the University of Pennsylvania. Sy told Jamie about how he could not live authentically in his home country where it is still illegal to be gay. And Sy shared his experience struggling to find safe resources as an LGBTQ+ asylum seeker in the United States. As a trans man from a conservative background, Jamie deeply connected with Sy's story.

So, during their senior year, Sy and Jamie co-founded AsylumConnect, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that built the world's first technology platform for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and other LGBTQ+ people fleeing persecution. The organization is founded on the belief that *every* LGBTQ+ person deserves the safety and freedom to live authentically.

In May 2022, AsylumConnect became InReach. Since launching its free App in 2016, the organization has seen the platform be used by a wide variety of LGBTQ+ people, not just those seeking asylum. The organization rebranded to better communicate and reflect the value of its App to a broader user base. InReach is committed to ensuring all members of the diverse LGBTQ+ community—including asylum seekers and refugees, undocumented and other immigrants, young people experiencing homelessness, those facing family or community rejection due to their identity, and other transgender and non-binary people in need—always have access to trusted information on where it is safe to go for help.

Impact Data & Testimonials

Since launching in 2016, the free InReach App has matched thousands of LGBTQ+ people fleeing persecution and other LGBTQ+ in need with independently verified direct service providers. (*94% of matches to-date are from the United States.)

Highlights:

- United States: 172,000+ matches
- Canada: 4,800+ matches
- Mexico: 1,200+ matches

Verified Service Area Coverage:

The free InReach App is currently available in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories, Canada, and Mexico. The App also includes a translated international resource page for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees who are outside of North America or who are still in transit.



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As of April 30th, 2022, the InReach App lists **1,600+** independently verified organizations and **6,500+** independently verified services.¹

The most common verified service categories listed on the InReach App include: Mental Health, Legal, Medical, Community Support, and Education & Employment.

Additional App Features:

- **Verification (safety):** all direct service providers listed on InReach are vetted (and re-verified at least once every 6 months) by trained volunteers to be welcoming to LGBTQ+ people fleeing persecution and other LGBTQ+ people in need ([learn more about our vetting process](#))
- **Accessible:** The free InReach App is available on web, mobile web, and native iOS and Android.
- **Translation:** available in native English and over 100 additional languages on-demand via Google Translate (the InReach team is in the process of adding native Spanish translations to the platform for the US and Mexico in 2022)
- **Anonymity:** the App is designed to protect users' confidentiality and privacy online
- **Search filters:** users can easily filter out services that require specific documentation (such as medical insurance, proof of age/income/residence, or a referral) to access
- **Public ratings and reviews:** once logged-in, users can share public ratings (one to five stars) and written reviews on all resources
- **Save and share resources:** once logged-in, users can also save and share their personalized resource list(s) via print, email or another InReach user account
- **Public resource submissions:** once logged-in, users can "suggest" new direct service providers in the US, Canada and Mexico that they think might be a fit for our platform via country-specific "Suggest New Resource" forms
- **Ownership over their own listing (service providers):** direct service providers who register for a free user account can also "claim" their organization's live profile page on InReach to help keep their organization's information up-to-date, 24/7.

Sample User Testimonials for InReach (formerly AsylumConnect)

*"Thank you so much. I was trying to gather information such as yours, but **this is the most comprehensive I have ever read.**" — LGBTQ+ asylum seeker*

¹*Prior to inclusion on InReach, trained volunteers verify that each direct service provider is: (1) active and legitimate, (2) LGBTQ+ affirming, and (3) accessible to asylum seekers and the undocumented community. Our trained volunteers also re-verify each service provider listed on platform at least once every 6 months for maximum user safety and quality control. ([Learn more.](#))



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*"It's wonderful to see AsylumConnect continue to thrive. I will be **needing it now more than ever**. A huge thanks to [AsylumConnect] for all the work and advocacy you are doing for us; especially a time like this." — LGBTQ+ asylum seeker*

*"If AsylumConnect had existed when I was applying for asylum it would have made my life much easier. AsylumConnect's **work truly saves lives**. I was homeless for about three years because I could not find services for undocumented lesbians, work, or anyone who could explain to me how the immigration process work[ed] and what my options were." — LGBTQ+ asylee*

*"My office is glad to learn that AsylumConnect exists. **So many asylum-seekers don't know where to turn & worry that 'help' will discriminate.**" — Asylum attorney focused on LGBT/SOGI claims*

*"I'm so excited about AsylumConnect's work. **It's exactly what's needed**. We have people getting on trains to reach us when we can't help more people or people who need help in other parts of the country, we can use AsylumConnect Catalog to tell them where it is safe to go." — Nonprofit user*

*"The AsylumConnect Catalog is **easy to use, and has a lot of helpful information** for asylum seekers in one place." — Nonprofit user*

*"A few years ago, through one of my tasks at Immigration Equality, I worked on improving our hotline and referral process, and I came across the AsylumConnect website. I started using the website as a way to find resources for individuals so **I recognize the importance of the existence of this type of database and centralized information, and I can attest to its efficacy by the many individuals who benefitted from the information obtained.**" — Asylum paralegal at legal nonprofit*

*"I am an international student here in the US. My family have cut me off completely because I got engaged to my now Fiancé. My VISA only allows me to work on campus. My campus is now closed due to COVID-19 and because of that my only source of income is non-existent. I have no money and no family support here to help me financially. **So I am stuck.**" — LGBTQ+ international college student impacted by COVID-19*

*"I'm a black gay asylum seeker that is about to be homeless and without any resources. **I don't have a work permit to work so with these COVID-19 crisis hard times I can't survive with no job.**" — LGBTQ+ asylum seeker in need of safe resources during COVID-19*

*"I'm in [the] process of asylum. I have court in less than two weeks. I'm afraid to get back to my country and I need to find here a job to exist. **Any advice or help will be [a] blessing.**" — LGBTQ+ asylum seeker in New York in need of safe resources*

*"I am looking for support [with the] asylum [process]. I am colombian and I have been in the States for almost two months ... however I don't know how the process is, **where can I find some help, a lawyer specialized in LGBTQ and so on... Could you give me some orientation?**" — LGBTQ+ asylum seeker in Miami in need of safe resources*



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Jamie Sgarro, InReach Co-Founder & Executive Director

Jamie Sgarro (he/him or they/them) is the co-founder and executive director of InReach. As a trans man who grew up in a conservative environment and as someone who used the free InReach App to find verified trans affirming legal, medical and mental health services during his own transition, Jamie remains personally motivated to ensure other trans and queer people in need have access to InReach’s free technology.

For his work on InReach, Jamie has earned national and international recognition for outstanding contribution in social impact including as the recipient the Millennium Campus Network’s 2015 Millennium Peace Prize at the United Nations, member of the Clinton Foundation’s 2017 CGI U Alumni Honor Roll of social innovators, [2019 Roddenberry Fellow](#), [2020 Forbes 30 under 30](#)

[honoree](#) in Law & Policy, finalist in [Fast Company’s 2020 World Changing Ideas Awards](#), and a Gold Winner in the [2021 Passion Fund](#) by Linktree x Square.

Jamie has been a featured speaker on LGBTQ+ rights and technology for social good, and his work has appeared in national outlets including The HuffPost, Forbes, Teen Vogue, The Clinton Foundation’s “Why Am I Telling You This?” Podcast, The Advocate, The Hill, NowThis, and NBC OUT.

Jamie holds a B.A. cum laude with distinction in Health & Societies from the University of Pennsylvania and a M.S. in Management from Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management.

More about Sgarro can be found at his personal website www.jamiesgarro.com and he can be followed on Twitter [@jamiesgarro](https://twitter.com/jamiesgarro).



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Hans How, InReach Governing Board Member & Former Volunteer Vice President



As a LGBTQ+ asylee, Hans How knows first-hand how difficult it is to find safe, affirming help in a new country. He is a frequent speaker on LGBTQ+ rights, and his work with InReach has been featured in *The Daily Beast*, *The Bay Area Reporter*, and others.

As a gay Asian immigrant community leader, Hans cofounded and campaigned for the historic passage of Proposition C: Commissions For All, a ballot measure that will give all San Franciscans, regardless of immigration status, a voice, representation, and equal rights to serve on city commissions and advisory bodies. After Prop C was successfully passed by voters, Hans was appointed by the Board of Supervisors to serve as the Housing Commissioner to provide oversight of city funds to develop permanently affordable housing in the City and County of San Francisco.

Born and raised in Malaysia, Hans is a proud first-generation college graduate from Wesleyan University, where he earned full scholarships from the Freeman Foundation and the American Malaysian Chamber of Commerce.

Before joining the InReach governing board of directors, Hans previously served as the volunteer Vice President of InReach from June 2017 – May 2021.

How is based in San Francisco, California and can be followed on Twitter at [@HansHow00](https://twitter.com/HansHow00).

Other Spokespersons

More about the other members of the organization is available at: <https://inreach.org/about-us>

InReach Supporters

In addition to a range of individual supporters across the nation, InReach has received financial and in-kind support from the Roddenberry Foundation (Roddenberry Fellowship), Clinton Foundation, Urban Justice Center (UJC) Social Justice Accelerator, Brooklyn Community Foundation, Calamus Foundation, Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, Clif Bar Family Foundation, J.M. Kaplan Fund, Stonewall Community Foundation, Borealis Philanthropy's Collective Fund for Trans Communities, and others.



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Featured Press for InReach (formerly AsylumConnect)

August 2021 Linktree Company Announcement

Linktree Announces Passion Fund Winners

www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/linktree-announces-passion-fund-winners-301354695.html

June 2021 Los Angeles Blade

It's time to prioritize the plight of trans and queer refugees (Op-ed)

www.losangelesblade.com/2021/06/18/its-time-to-prioritize-the-plight-of-trans-and-queer-refugees

April 2021 Greatist

Millennial Change Makers

<https://greatist.com/live/millennial-change-makers>

March 2021 Authority Magazine

Young Change Makers: Why and How Jamie Sgarro of AsylumConnect Is Helping To Change Our World

<https://medium.com/authority-magazine/young-change-makers-why-and-how-jamie-sgarro-of-asylumconnect-is-helping-to-change-our-world-6a6206c51b79>

December 2020 The Daily Beast

Biden Wants to Fix Trump's Trans Detention Policy. Advocates Say He Needs to End It.

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/biden-wants-to-fix-trumps-trans-detention-policy-advocates-say-he-needs-to-end-it>

August 2020 NBC OUT

Trump proposals threaten LGBTQ asylum-seekers' hopes of refuge in U.S.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/trump-proposals-threaten-lgbtq-asylum-seekers-hopes-refuge-u-s-n1236736>

July 2020 The American Prospect

The Public Comment Battle to Save American Asylum

<https://prospect.org/justice/the-public-comment-battle-to-save-american-asylum>

July 2020 Forbes.com

Trump's New Asylum Regulations Could Have Devastating Effects For LGBTQ People. The Leaders Of AsylumConnect Explain Why.



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<https://www.forbes.com/sites/mollysprayregen/2020/07/12/trumps-new-asylum-regulations-could-have-devastating-effects-for-lgbtq-people-the-leaders-of-asylumconnect-explain-why/#367fef0b6858>

June 2020 Between The Lines

AsylumConnect Helps LGBTQ Refugees Find Support Across U.S., Co-Hosts June 20 Virtual Pride

<https://pridesource.com/article/asylum-connect-helps-lgbtq-refugees-find-support-across-u-s-co-hosts-june-20-virtual-pride/>

June 2020 The Hill

This World Refugee Day and Pride month we need to save LGBTQ asylum (Op-ed)

<https://thehill.com/opinion/immigration/503580-this-world-refugee-day-and-pride-month-we-need-to-save-lgbtq-asylum>

May 2020 Oprah Magazine

Here's How You Can Celebrate Pride Virtually

<https://www.oprahmag.com/life/a32700263/virtual-pride-events-2020>

April 2020 Fast Company

World Changing Ideas Awards 2020: Apps Finalists and Honorable Mentions

www.fastcompany.com/90492187/world-changing-ideas-awards-2020-apps-finalists-and-honorable-mentions

December 2019 Forbes

Forbes 30 Under 30, Class of 2020 (Law & Policy List)

www.forbes.com/30-under-30/2020/law-policy

November 2019 GO Magazine

This New App For LGBTQ Asylum Seekers Is A Game-Changer

<http://gomag.com/article/this-new-app-for-lgbtq-asylum-seekers-is-a-game-changer>

September 2019 Teen Vogue

LGBTQ Asylum Seekers Face Layered Marginalization, So These Four Organizations Are Here to Help

www.teenvogue.com/story/lgbtq-asylum-seekers-marginalization-four-organizations-help-resource-guide



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August 2019 Forbes.com

Jamie Sgarro's AsylumConnect Helps LGBTQ Asylum Seekers Access Safe Services
www.forbes.com/sites/mollysprayregen/2019/08/14/katie-sgarros-asylumconnect-helps-lgbtq-asylum-seekers-access-safe-services/#5db85d25ff84

June 2019 Clinton Foundation's "Why Am I Telling You This?" Podcast

Stonewall 50: Pride, Progress, and the Future Fight for LGBTQ+ Rights Episode (Podcast)
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/stonewall-50-pride-progress-future-fight-for-lgbtq/id1462232601?i=1000442930121>

June 2019 NowThis

AsylumConnect Helps LGBTQ+ Asylum Seekers Find Resources in the U.S. (Video)
<https://nowthisnews.com/videos/news/asylumconnect-helps-lgbtq-asylum-seekers-find-resources-in-the-us>

May 2019 The Bay Area Reporter

LGBTs Visit US-Mexico Border, Meet Asylum Seekers
www.ebar.com/news/news/275665/lgbts_visit_us-mexico_border_meet_asylum_seekers

March 2019 Urban Justice Center (UJC) Social Justice Accelerator Announcement

<https://accelerator.urbanjustice.org/project-announcements>

January 2019 The Advocate

LGBTQ Asylum Seekers Cannot Wait Safely in Mexico (Op-ed)
www.advocate.com/commentary/2019/1/04/lgbtq-asylum-seekers-cannot-wait-safely-mexico

January 2019 Roddenberry Foundation Fellows List

<https://roddenberryfoundation.org/our-work/roddenberry-fellowship/fellowship-in-action/2019-fellows>

August 2018 The Daily Beast

The Malaysian Gay Man Fighting for His Life, and Many Other LGBT Asylum Seekers
www.thedailybeast.com/the-malaysian-gay-man-fighting-for-his-life-and-many-other-lgbt-asylum-seekers

July 2018 The Advocate

Trump Policies Will Send LGBT Asylum Seekers to Their Deaths (Op-ed)
www.advocate.com/commentary/2018/7/09/trump-policies-will-send-lgbt-asylum-seekers-their-deaths



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December 2017 The Clinton Foundation

The Honor Roll: A young leader provides a lifeline for LGBTQ asylum seekers in the U.S.

<https://stories.clintonfoundation.org/the-honor-roll-a-young-leader-provides-a-lifeline-for-lgbtq-asylum-seekers-in-the-u-s-59b1de680539>

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