



Rainbow Railroad is a Canadian charitable organization that helps LGBTQIA2S+ individuals escape violence and persecution in their home countries. In the past, they have helped individuals from the Caribbean, Africa, and Western Asia relocate to safer countries in Europe and North America. The organization was formed in 2006 in Toronto, Canada. Its name and concept is inspired by the Underground Railroad that was used by African American slaves to escape into free states.

Since 2006, the Rainbow Railroad has helped over 800 LGBTQIA2S+ people from 38 countries around the world. Their mission is to save those who cannot be themselves openly in their country and bring them to a new country where they can be who they truly are. Rainbow Railroad believes that governments around the globe should enact and enforce laws and policies that protect LGBTQIA2S+ individuals and enable them to live in freedom and safety in their own country. Presently, the organization is focused on providing solutions for LGBTQIA2S+ people who need immediate assistance because they are facing a serious threat to their lives and safety.

Rainbow Railroad received the 2018 Bonham Centre Award from the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies at the University of Toronto for its work helping LGBTQIA2S+ refugees.

In 2019, *Time* magazine published a feature on Rainbow Railroad's work supporting those impacted by the anti-gay purge in Chechnya. Approximately 70 Chechen men were resettled by Rainbow Railroad during this period.

In 2020, their work was highlighted in an episode of *Canada's Drag Race*. During the eighth episode of the season that aired on August 20, five gay men who had moved to Canada through the organization were given drag makeovers as the main challenge for the week. The winner of this challenge, Priyanka, won a \$10,000 donation to Rainbow Railroad in her name.

In 2021, Rainbow Railroad was recognized by the GAY TIMES Honour for International Community Trailblazer at the fifth annual GAY TIMES Honours celebration in London.

The EDI Committee recognizes and celebrates the Rainbow Railroad this Pride month. If you would like to learn more about the Rainbow Railroad, or to donate please visit: <https://www.rainbowrailroad.org/>.

