**Project Manager - *Asylum Guides National Programme***

**Responsible to:** Good Practice and Partnerships Manager

**Location:** Birmingham, Bradford or Manchester

**Background**

Refugee Action believes that early action can increase the power of people within the asylum system, thereby preventing crisis later in their journey. For instance, providing good advice and information to people a) prior to their substantive interview clarifies their expectations and enables them to negotiate the system, or b) immediately after they have received a decision on their asylum claim, can prevent crisis. Frontline organisations play a vital role in supporting people seeking asylum, providing trusted information, support and advice. For this reason we aim to both to develop people’s power within the system and enable local services to develop early action approaches.

Since 2015 we have been testing two “early action” service delivery approaches for people going through the asylum system: Asylum Guides and Asylum Info Groups. Both approaches aim to reach people as early as possible in their asylum journey to enable them to avoid or de-escalate the crises that arise within this complex system, by ensuring that people have the understanding and resilience to cope.

Refugee Action’s Asylum Guides North West programme recruited and trained 21 Asylum Guides (many of whom had previously journeyed through the asylum process themselves), who helped almost 200 people through the asylum system. Through regular meetings, our Guides build trusting relationships with the person they have been ‘matched’ with and help them to understand the asylum system and their position within it.

As we believe that every asylum applicant should have the option of an Asylum Guide, we wanted to test this model of delivery to both measure its effectiveness and determine its scalability as part of our asylum justice strategy aims. In order to achieve this, we began the Asylum Guides Programme’s ‘national scaling’ activity led by our Good Practice & Partnerships Team in summer 2017. Since then we have designed a programme that is a volunteer-led, information-based and time-limited model which partner frontline organisations have easily adopted. We have worked with ‘tech for good’ partners, CAST ([www.wearecast.org.uk](http://www.wearecast.org.uk)), to develop our knowledge and experience of utilising Agile methodology in service design and delivery. Our aim is to incorporate a user led approach in the roll out and delivery of all our programmes. Ultimately our goal is to ensure that every person seeking asylum in the UK has support from someone with the experience and skills to give them the best possible chance of navigating the asylum system successfully.

During the last eight months, we have conducted a pilot to test the scaling of our programme. The pilot has concentrated on testing the approach that would enable us to scale up this project to reach as many people claiming asylum who may need support during the process. During this time we have worked with two organisations (Brushstrokes and Refugee Women Connect) to test the way in which we would ensure uptake, assess their circumstances and resources and the support needed in order to guarantee the roll out of the project, its delivery and the recording of the data and impact.

Given the success of our pilot we are therefore continuing to support other asylum-seeker support groups and organisations from across the country to adopt this way of working; we will be providing training and support to allow many people to become Asylum Guides.

The Asylum Guides National Programme Project Manager will be tasked to move the project on from the successful pilot towards further scaling and promotion to ensure the uptake from a variety of organisations in different locations and the creation of the Asylum Guides Network. This role is the next step in the development of the national network of Guides that will ensure that we work towards the realisation of our aim to be able to offer all of those entering the asylum system the possibility of being supported by someone with the right training to support them to navigate the complexities of the process.

Our partners at CAST will continue to run a digital development programme alongside the roll out of the project to support the work of the Project Manager.

**Purpose of post**

* To lead on the second phase of the national roll-out of Asylum Guides: strategic identification of the next 15 partner organisations to adopt the delivery of the model and support for each organisation towards delivering Asylum Guides independently.
* To make recommendations for stage two of the national roll-out including organisations to target, support to be provided, long term role of digital technologies and potential speed of roll-out process.

**Defined deliverables for the role**

* Expand the Asylum Guides National Programme to 15 partner organisations by the end of the year using an iterative approach and having reflected on the learning from the work on the pilot phase.
* Promote and communicate the benefits of the ongoing roll out of the programme and the development of the ‘National Guides Network’.
* Develop and maintain an “Agile” approach to the development and roll out of the programme in partnership with our digital partners.
* Continue to develop the operational model to roll out the programme to a national scale that would aim to work with up to 50 organisations across all areas of the UK by 2021.
* Maintain the online resources for volunteer coordinators and Guides with the support of Refugee Action’s operational services and the ongoing learning and input from all partner agencies involved in the delivery of the Asylum Guides model.
* Lead on the monitoring and impact measurement for the project and the delivery of the Asylum Guides Programme nationally.

**Main duties and responsibilities**

* To deliver support to organisations to help them adopt ‘early enabling’ approaches to service delivery in the form of promoting the principles of Refugee Action’s Asylum Guides project.
* To support organisations to assess their needs, the suitability and sustainability of developing and delivering Asylum Guides within their own services.
* To train, online and face to face depending on need, organisational staff and volunteers to deliver the Asylum Guides model.
* To work closely with Refugee Action’s teams delivering Asylum Info Groups and Asylum Guides to integrate our delivery learning into the development of the Asylum Guides National Network;
* To support our digital partners to develop sustainable, user led and focused digital solutions throughout the initial and ongoing scaling of the project following an Agile approach and embedding that within the design of the project;
* To develop relevant training which meets the needs of the organisations that will develop the service, online and offline;
* To maintain a monitoring framework to measure the rolling out process, its sustainability and its impact;
* To provide a level of mentoring support which will enable organisations to successfully run the programme independently;
* To continuously assess the needs and make up of the Asylum Guides national network and what resources it entails to ensure its sustainability and growth;
* To contribute to developing Refugee Action’s longer term strategy for good practice support for asylum and migrant support organisations;
* To play an active role in the wider work of the Good Practice & Partnerships team;
* To produce case studies, blogs, newsletters etc. to capture the activities and impact of these activities.

**Connections to other teams within Refugee Action**

* To work closely with the operations team to ensure that good practice and learning from our services and projects are shared within and beyond Refugee Action
* To feed in to the work of our business development and fundraising staff to develop compelling proposals for funders.
* To share relevant data and case studies with our Campaigns team, to inform Refugee Action’s advocacy and media work on related issues.

**For the charity**

* To participate in discussions on Refugee Action’s strategy as and when required.
* To carry out other duties consistent with the nature of the post.
* To carry out the above in accordance with the aims, values and policies of Refugee Action.

**Person Specification**

Experience may be paid or voluntary, full or part-time, in the UK or overseas. Candidates will be shortlisted on the following specifications:

**Experience, Knowledge, Abilities and Skills**

* Insight into the needs, hopes and experiences of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK, including experience of working with asylum seekers at the beginning of the asylum process and understanding of the challenges and barriers that people experience in navigating the asylum system.
* Understanding of the current and likely future challenges faced by organisations that provide services for asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants in the UK.
* Excellent networking and partnership-building skills, with the ability to build and maintain effective networks.
* Understanding of the use of digital solutions in the context of designing, developing and delivering projects.
* Experience of providing high quality development support to grassroots organisations, including identifying needs and working towards solutions.
* Excellent training and facilitation skills.
* Excellent project management skills, including the ability to analyse results, then propose and test new solutions to identified problems.

**Desirable**

* Those with lived experience as a refugee are encouraged to apply.

**In addition to the above, you will be asked about the following aspects of the person specification in your interview. You do not need to write about them in your application form.**

* Experience, commitment to and understanding of the importance of cultural diversity.
* Interest in the potential of digital technologies to provide effective support for organisations across the country
* Understanding of the benefits and challenges of involving volunteers on services and projects.
* Commitment to the principles of confidentiality, impartiality, non-directive advice, and Equal Opportunities.
* Ability to plan and manage own workload.
* Excellent communication skills including the ability to create accurate verbal and written content, presentations and reports in English.
* Open and reflective attitude to own work and experience.
* Ability to use Information Technology to the required standard.
* The post requires travel within the UK, including occasional overnight stays.

**Terms and conditions of employment**

This post is offered on a part time, permanent basis, initially funded for one year. The following conditions of service will apply:

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| Salary | Salary band 4a: £29,055 - £31,401 (NJC 32-35) per annum pro rata.All new employees will normally start at the bottom of the band.  |
| Location | Birmingham, Bradford or Manchester |
| Annual increments | Increments of one point per annum to the maximum of the band are paid on the 1 April. To qualify the post holder must be confirmed in post and employed since the first of the previous October. |
| Pension | Refugee Action will contribute 8% of gross basic salary plus £50 per month into a pension plan (pro rata for part-time posts) |
| Holidays | 24 days per year plus public holidays (pro rata for part-time posts). Holiday entitlement increases to a maximum of 31 days per year, reached within five years of employment (pro rata for part-time posts) |
| Hours of Work | 28 hours per week (excluding lunch breaks). Some evening and weekend work may be required for which time off in lieu should be claimed. |
| Probation | This post will have a probationary period of six months. |
| Notice | One month’s notice of termination of employment on either side. |
| Disability | We are committed to making every reasonable adjustment to the workplace or working arrangements to accommodate people with disabilities. |
| Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) | All Refugee Action staff are subscribed to use a 24-hour confidential support line. Face to face counselling can also be arranged with the EAP’s trained counsellors if appropriate. |
| DBS: | Employment in this post may be subject to a satisfactory police clearance being obtained. Because of the nature of the work for which you are applying, this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exception) Order 1975 and you are therefore not entitled to withhold information about convictions which for other purposes are ‘spent’ under the provision of the Act. |

**ANNEX 1:**

**Further background to the Good Practice & Partnerships Team at Refugee Action**

Refugee Action is working to increase access to justice and reduce poverty and homelessness for refugees and asylum-seekers through direct services and support for other organisations. Collectively, we will have the biggest impact on justice, poverty and homelessness by delivering services that are:

• grounded in expert knowledge, up-to-date policy, with staff and volunteers who are skilled advocates;

• planned, proactive and targeted, based around models of ‘early action’, prevention and empowerment rather than just emergency, reactive and crisis-driven support;

• linked up and well-connected both locally and beyond and grounded in strong partnerships.

These are the principles of our Good Practice & Partnerships function that exists to provide capacity–building support for other organisations that deliver important services to refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants. Our good practice activities include: identifying the needs of organisations, providing tailored support, delivering training to build specific skills and expertise, ensuring organisations have access to the right information at the time they need it, facilitating or creating connections across regions, supporting the development of new partnerships and encouraging new approaches to service design, including early action principles. Some of our activities are delivered locally, face-to-face; some are delivered via webinar; and some through online resources. We support 100+ organisations per year.

1. Expanding the quantity and quality of OISC-regulated immigration legal advice, including raising awareness more broadly about it, its risks and boundaries;
2. Increasing the amount of ‘early action’ assistance offered to new arrivals into the asylum system across England and Wales to help them to be prepared to navigate the asylum system by developing an Asylum Guides network
3. Enable those working with asylum seekers and refugees to adopt preventative approaches, share their experiences, and develop a sector-wide evidence base for early action with the delivery of the Early Action Charter Programme for those seeking asylum.