



Supporting refugees, asylum seekers & those with no recourse to public funds

Voices in Exile

Job Description: Immigration casework manager

Job Title:	Immigration casework manager
Responsible to:	Director
Status:	Full-time (35h pw)
Contract:	Permanent
Hours:	35 hours per week
Salary:	NJC pay scale range entry pt. SP25 (£33,945 FTE) – SP31 (£39,186 FTE)
Holiday entitlement:	Basic 25 days per annum pro rata, with 1 additional day p.a. for every completed year of service up to a maximum of 30 days

Background:

Voices in Exile is a registered charity that works with refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants with no recourse to public funds in Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex. We offer both practical and legal support including generalist advice and specialist immigration casework for those who would otherwise be unable to access justice. As part of our holistic approach we also advocate for, accompany and enable people to access services, build community, and develop their own potential through a programme of learning and creative activities. We are working towards becoming an organisation better informed by lived experience, but we are not there yet. Post holders will form a key part of a small, committed team working to develop Voices' services and activities at a critical point of growth for the organisation.

Job purpose:

We are looking for someone both to deliver our immigration casework and to manage and develop our immigration advice services, including recruitment, line management & supervision of relevant staff and volunteers. The post holder will provide one-to-one legal immigration advice, casework and practical support to migrant and refugee clients in Brighton & Hove and Sussex in the areas of out-of-scope immigration and occasionally asylum work (up to OISC L2). You will also provide supervision for L1 and trainee staff and volunteer advisors as required. You will share the management of our broader advice & casework team, including generalist and resettlement casework, with our current generalist and resettlement managers.

You will be accredited to provide immigration advice at minimum OISC Level 2 and expected to carry a caseload of cases largely out of the scope of legal aid. For cases within scope you will make active referrals or signpost to legal aid providers wherever possible and practical.

Along with other managers you will lead on the development of our casework management system, AdvicePro, to ensure that agreed advice and organisational outcomes are embedded from the outset, and that staff and volunteers are trained and equipped to understand and provide these. You will be required to monitor and report against projects as needed by both funders and internally for e.g. the director and trustees.

You will be expected to participate in local networks and to participate and lead on conversations to develop immigration advice capacity in the city and region and to influence change and find solutions to the critical lack of immigration advice on the south coast.

You will have an awareness of clients' holistic needs and be able to signpost and refer both internally and externally as appropriate to address needs including destitution; asylum support; children's, family and adult social care; welfare benefits; housing & homelessness; access to mainstream and voluntary sector services including ESOL and employability, health and mental health care; and referrals into activities and services that can respond to people's strengths and skills as well as their needs, including our own support groups and volunteering opportunities.

You will contribute to the senior management team of Voices, working closely with the Director, Head of Services, Generalist Advice Manager and Resettlement Manager to share oversight and reflections and planning of current operational needs and strategic planning.

You will be expected to contribute to broader learning and planning around developing our strategic plan and theory of change, including developing our work on the role of those with lived experience in our organisation.

We are currently the only free, L2-accredited, year-round provider of out-of-scope immigration advice on the South Coast, and increasing local immigration capacity is critical to address growing demand and changing demographics in the region. We are also seeing and will continue to see new arrivals and needs in the region over the next year and onwards including Hong Kong BNO nationals, Afghans resettled under the ARAP and ACRS schemes, EEA nationals who still have not registered for status, people required to transition to digital eVisas by 31st December 2024, and an increasing number of both newly arrived and established asylum seekers placed in emergency ('contingency') and dispersal Home Office accommodation.

Regular supervisions will be provided by the Director, as well as access to external training on specific issues where needed. However you will need to be ready to step immediately into a busy advice environment with the necessary confidence, skills and knowledge both to deliver a complex caseload and to manage a new team through an important moment in the growth of our advice and caseworker service.

Postholders will need to have the right to work in the UK.

Hybrid working and what we're like to work for:

In the wake of Covid we have developed a hybrid working model with most staff working part of the time from home and part from our offices in Kempton. Working from home and flexible working arrangements are negotiable and under regular review but we aim to be as flexible as possible within the limits of safety, team cohesion and operational need. Individual working arrangements can be discussed with your line manager and/or our director, but we imagine that this post will be largely office-based at least for the probationary period.

We provide the kit (IT and phone) where needed for staff to work from home safely and comfortably, but would expect you to have adequate working broadband and data allowance in place at no additional cost to Voices if you do wish to spend some of your time working from home. We are willing to discuss this if it is a barrier for you.

We have a work culture that is friendly, welcoming and inclusive, and we take staff wellbeing seriously. Clinical supervision is available for all frontline and client-facing staff and we make time for collective care and peer support within our working hours. We are a learning organisation and are open to hearing about how we can do better.

Job description

Staff reporting to this post:

Immigration caseworkers; volunteers

- Provide one-to-one specialist immigration advice (OISC L2) and support to migrant and refugee clients and 2nd-tier professionals in Sussex by phone, email, face-to-face and through a range of online media; and provide thorough follow-up casework, support and clear and accurate signposting and active referrals where appropriate;
- Carry an active immigration caseload;
- Be responsible for managing our OISC contract and ensuring that we comply with OISC and other internal and external regulatory frameworks and standards of best practice including OISC CPD requirements for accreditation;
- Provide OISC L1/2 supervision to trainee & volunteer advisers as required and in compliance with OISC guidance;
- Develop and deliver our advice and casework service in line with our agreed strategic aims and to meet specific funding targets as needed, establishing monitoring and evaluation frameworks where needed and reporting against these as required;
- Lead in recruiting and directly line-manage, supervise and support a small team of immigration caseworkers and volunteers, providing regular individual and group supervision, support and training and technical oversight and supervision of immigration advice and casework, including case allocations and regular file reviews;
- Together with other managers, develop and maintain AdvicePro in line with agreed advice and casework outcomes for clients, and ensure that staff and volunteers understand and use the case management system consistently and accurately to capture essential data;
- Develop clear internal policies, processes and guidance for our immigration advice service, and work closely with caseworkers/volunteers to ensure that these are followed;
- Work with an awareness of clients' holistic needs and signpost and refer internally and externally as appropriate to address clients' additional needs and strengths;
- Develop professional relationships and referral pathways with other advice agencies, law centres, solicitors and specialist services, both to improve the client journey through the system and to influence change where needed;
- Participate in and, as agreed, lead on elements of our influencing, advocacy and strategic work, including developing key strategic relationships, partnerships and networks within and beyond the migrant sector; challenging systemic failings in law, policy and practice; and identifying opportunities for strategic litigation where appropriate;
- Attend regular team meetings & participate in other advice and staff team commitments and meetings as necessary;
- Participate fully in individual supervision, clinical supervision, training, appraisal and collective care and wellbeing;
- Contribute to the management team of Voices to share oversight and reflections and planning of current operational needs and strategic planning, including developing our work on the role of those with lived experience in our organisation.

Person specification

A = Application form
(Please address the relevant points in order)
I = Interview

Please bear in mind that you can demonstrate how you meet these requirements using examples from paid employment, volunteering, lived experience or a combination of all these.

Person Specification	Essential/ Desirable	Assessment Method
Qualifications/level of experience		
1. A relevant qualification or lived or professional experience in one or more of the following areas: law, advice giving, social work, gender or migration studies or related field.	E	A
2. OISC L2 immigration & asylum accreditation	E	A
3. OISC L3 immigration & asylum accreditation	D	A
Experience		
4. Significant experience of providing L2 immigration advice to migrants or other vulnerable/at risk clients, including actively making and following up immigration applications on clients' behalf	E	A
5. Experience of OISC compliance and case management systems, policies and procedures	E	A+I
6. Experience of working in a frontline advice or casework environment and advocating effectively and clearly on a client's behalf with statutory and other agencies	E	A+I
7. Experience of interviewing clients sensitively, clearly and accurately to diagnose and prioritise client needs	E	A+I
8. Experience of working within safeguarding law and guidance and of identifying and responding appropriately to safeguarding concerns	E	A+I
9. Experience of maintaining client confidentiality and delivering a high-quality professional service	E	A+I
10. Experience of effectively recruiting, managing and working with teams of staff and volunteers	E	A+I
11. Experience of training and supervising volunteers and trainee advisers, including supervision of OISC L1/L2 casework	D	A+I
12. Experience of providing verbal and written reports and presentations to a range of audiences and stakeholders	D	A+I
13. Experience of working in the voluntary or community sector	D	A+I

14. Lived experience of migration and/or the UK immigration system	D	A+I
Knowledge		
15. Good general knowledge of issues faced by refugees and migrants in the UK	E	A
16. Good understanding of the immigration system and of barriers to access to justice for migrants in the UK	E	A+I
17. Good up-to-date working knowledge of access to services for migrants in the UK, and in Brighton and Hove in particular	D	A+I
18. Good up-to-date working knowledge of NRPF conditions and fee waiver applications	E	A+I
19. Good awareness of gender & LGBTQI issues and the intersection of these with other cultures and communities of identity	E	A+I
20. Good awareness of mental health and issues relating to trauma	E	A+I
21. Knowledge of and interest in developing service user involvement and migrant voice in co-production and in representation, both internally and externally	D	A+I
Skills		
22. Personal resilience and the ability to maintain clear professional boundaries and manage expectations	E	A+I
23. Ability to take initiative, work independently, plan and organise own work and meet deadlines	E	A+I
24. Strong and demonstrable project and people management skills, including the ability to manage multiple work priorities and to motivate and manage a diverse team	E	A+I
25. Strong communication and networking skills and the ability to relate well and communicate clearly and respectfully with a diverse range of people and organisations	E	A+I
26. Good judgment and decision-making skills, ability to negotiate, influence and solve problems effectively	E	A+I
27. High level of spoken and written English and the ability to analyse complex written information and communicate it effectively	E	A+I
28. Excellent online research and analytical skills in order to research case law and country of origin information	E	A+I
29. Ability to monitor and report against project targets & communicate effectively with funders & stakeholders	E	E
30. Ability to train, support and supervise staff and volunteer team members and work in partnership with interpreters	E	A+I
31. Ability to work competently with Microsoft Office ICT packages including case management systems and Excel; and to be administratively self-servicing	E	A

Other		
32. Commitment to working with migrant and refugee clients	E	A+I
33. Commitment to ViE aims, values and ethos, including working in an inter-cultural, multi-faith environment	E	A+I
34. Commitment to maintaining client confidentiality and delivering a high-quality professional service	E	A+I