



Voices in Exile

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

Job Description: Skills & employability caseworker

Job Title: Skills and employability caseworker
Responsible to: Project and development manager; Director
Status: Part time (0.8)
Contract: 12-month fixed-term contract, with possible extension subject to funding
Hours: 30 hours (4 days) per week - flexible hours considered inc. e.g. working 30 hours over 5 days if preferred
NJC incremental pay scale range entry pt. 18 (£25,419 FTE) – pt. 24 £29,174 FTE)
Holiday entitlement: 25 days per annum pro rata, with 1 additional day per annum for every completed year of service up to a maximum of 6 additional 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 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, connect with communities, 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 for a new and rewarding role at Voices in Exile as skills and employability caseworker. The postholder will be flexible and skilled, with an essential interest in and experience of working with vulnerable clients with complex needs, and particularly with migrant and refugee clients. The post might suit someone from an IAG (information, advice and guidance), teaching or careers background who is interested in broadening and deepening their practice within the migrant sector; or someone with experience in the migration or advice sectors who is interested in working with a caseload that includes needs around improving skills, English, personal development, employment and career planning, alongside navigating the local labour markets and conventions around interviews and job applications. We actively welcome applications from those with lived and relevant experience – please see the job description and person specification below and attached.

The post holder will provide one-to-one casework, advice and practical support to migrant and refugee clients in order to set goals, create and support action plans towards personal development and employment through supported access to wellbeing activities, digital inclusion, ESOL, training, volunteering, shadowing and employability skills. In addition to holding a caseload, the postholder will provide one-off advice and signposting to clients and colleagues, run up to four workshops a year, supervise volunteers and play an active role in relevant networks across Brighton and Hove.

Our service users are largely non-EEA nationals whose immigration cases are out of scope of legal aid. However 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, and an increasing number of both newly arrived and established asylum seekers placed in emergency ('contingency') and dispersal Home Office accommodation. There is now a large number of Ukrainian nationals and others displaced by the war in the Ukraine who are urgently seeking work and support to progress towards employment. It is possible that post holders may also be asked to work with resettled refugee clients from Afghanistan and elsewhere as they move into their second year of support under the new ARAP (Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy), ACRS (Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme) and UKRS (UK Resettlement Scheme) schemes.

You will work closely with our generalist and resettlement caseworkers, group facilitator, volunteer co-ordinator and volunteers to situate skills and personal development within a holistic response to the needs of Voices in Exile clients. Managing external referrals and liaising with partner organisations and networks will also play an important part in maximising the impact for asylum seekers and refugees across the city. You will undertake record keeping and outcomes monitoring in order to support client progress and evaluate the impact of the work for Voices and for funders.

Regular supervision and support and in-house and on-the-job training will be provided, as well as 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 to begin to deliver advice, casework and workshops.

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

Covid-19, hybrid working and what we're like to work for:

We have taken a cautious approach to Covid over the past two years and in response to staff feedback are currently developing a long-term hybrid working model that would see most staff having the flexibility to work from home and from our office as and when suits as long as this fits with our operational needs. Individual working arrangements can be discussed with your line manager and/or our Director.

We can provide the kit (IT and phone) where needed to ensure that you can work from home safely and comfortably. We would expect you to have adequate working broadband and data allowance in place at no additional cost to Voices, but are willing to discuss this if it is a barrier for you. Working from home and flexible working arrangements are negotiable and subject to operational need, and are under regular review as Covid infection rates change.

We would expect and hope that applicants will be fully vaccinated against Covid but will make accommodations if and where practical if this is not possible. We have clear Covid risk assessments, policies and procedures in place and these are reviewed regularly.

We have a work culture that is friendly, welcoming and inclusive, and we take staff wellbeing seriously. Clinical supervision is available 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.

Staff reporting to this post:

Volunteers

Key responsibilities:

- Provide one-to-one initial assessment and action planning to migrant and refugee clients in and beyond Brighton & Hove who would like to improve their skills, personal development and employability, by phone, email, face-to-face and through a range of media like WhatsApp and Zoom in order to discuss qualification and skills strengths and gaps, opportunities, short and long-term goals, and to plan progression pathways;
- Provide thorough follow-up casework and support with monitoring of progress toward goals for 25 clients;
- Provide one-off advice and signposting for around 75 people;
- Co-ordinate access to external provision and provide clear and accurate signposting, referrals and active referrals where possible;
- Help clients to write up-to-date, well written CVs or supervise volunteers to do so where appropriate;
- Arrange for clients to have their existing qualifications translated;
- Support clients to enrol on and attend ESOL classes or supervise volunteers to do so where appropriate;
- Arrange for clients to attend vocational training;
- Provide interventions to address other barriers to progression (e.g. course fees, fees for extra tuition, childcare, travel costs, destitution support, advocacy for fee reduction);
- Run 4 workshops a year on topics according to the presenting needs of the client group at the time, eg CV writing; completing application forms; interview skills; searching for paid opportunities in Brighton and Hove;
- Help clients with applying for further and higher education or supervise volunteers to do so where appropriate;

- Arrange for clients to undertake or participate in a shadowing / work experience opportunity, volunteering role, an internship or paid work in a working environment that supports progression in English;
- Help clients with job searches and applications or supervise volunteers to do so where appropriate;
- Support clients to access ongoing training and employment advice and support (e.g. advisors in the local college, the National Careers Service etc);
- Supervise volunteers to provide additional 1-1 mentoring, as needed;
- Accompany clients as necessary to e.g. college enrolments, job interviews etc., or supervise volunteers to do so where appropriate;
- Actively develop professional relationships and referral links with other migrant employability support services, employers and colleges; refer/signpost clients as appropriate and provide up-to-date information for colleagues;
- Manage own caseload, keeping clear, accurate and timely records of all work done using case management system AdvicePro and other internal recording systems;
- Assist in evidencing the impact of work done, including recording, monitoring and reporting against project targets, regular case studies and other information & reports as requested;
- Attend & contribute to relevant migrant employability and ESOL fora & networks (virtual and actual), including liaison with local refugee and migrant community groups and networks, as necessary;
- Attend regular team meetings & participate in other advice and staff team commitments and meetings as necessary;
- Participate fully in individual supervision, training, appraisal and collective care and wellbeing;
- Work with colleagues in Voices in Exile to maintain and develop our holistic approach and commitment to human rights, community development, diversity and best practice in working with vulnerable migrants;
- Carry out other duties as required.

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: advice giving, social work, teaching, gender or migration studies or related field.	E	A

Experience		
2. Minimum 1 year's experience of providing advice, casework or similar support to migrants or other vulnerable/at risk clients in a frontline service or casework environment	E	A
3. Experience of facilitating access to local services e.g. support groups, wellbeing services, ESOL, training and employability services	E	A+I
4. Experience of supporting individuals with complex needs and of working with people creatively to solve problems	E	A+I
5. Experience of working in the voluntary or community sector	D	A+I
6. Experience of supporting people to navigate the local labour market	D	A+I
7. Experience of interviewing clients sensitively, clearly and accurately to diagnose and prioritise client needs	E	A+I
Knowledge		
8. Good general knowledge of issues faced by refugees and migrants in the UK	E	A
9. 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
10. Good awareness of gender & LGBTQI issues and the intersection of these with other cultures and communities of identity	D	A+I
11. Good awareness of mental health and issues relating to trauma	D	A+I
12. Good awareness and understanding of current safeguarding law, policies and procedures	D	A+I
Skills		
13. Personal resilience and the ability to maintain clear professional boundaries and manage expectations	E	A+I
14. Ability to plan and organise own work and meet deadlines	E	A+I
15. Ability to work as an effective team member	E	A+I
16. Ability to relate well and communicate clearly and respectfully with a diverse group of people, including the ability to work sensitively around gender, sexuality and cultural roles	E	A+I
17. High level of spoken and functional written English, and the ability to analyse complex written information and communicate it effectively	E	A+I
	E	A+I

18. Ability to monitor and report against project targets & communicate effectively with funders & stakeholders	E	A+I
19. Ability to train, support and supervise volunteer team members	D	A
20. Work in partnership with interpreters	E	A+I
21. Ability to work competently with Microsoft Office ICT packages including case management systems and Excel; and to be administratively self-servicing	D	A
22. Ability to speak a language other than English common to our clients – e.g. Arabic, Dari, Pashto, Sorani, Tigrinya, Amharic, Swahili, Urdu, Polish, Ukrainian etc.		
Other		
23. Commitment to working with migrant and refugee clients	E	A+I
24. Commitment to ViE aims, values and ethos, including working in an inter-cultural, multi-faith environment	E	A+I
25. Commitment to maintaining client confidentiality and delivering a high-quality professional service	E	A+I
26. Willingness to work out of hours to respond to client emergencies and new arrivals as needed (TOIL policy in place to compensate for this).	E	A+I

Fitzherbert Centre, 36 Upper Bedford Street, Brighton, BN2 1JP
T: 01273 525907, E: administrator@voicesinexile.org
Company Limited by Guarantee and Registered Charity Number 1130363
OISC registration number: N201800021