



REFUGEE ADVOCACY LEAD

Job Title:	Refugee Advocacy Lead
Location:	Office-based; open to flexible working arrangements from anywhere in England, with a preference for Manchester, London, Birmingham or Leeds, with some travel including to partner meetings.
Hours:	Full time (37.5 hours/ week Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm)
Salary:	£22,000 per annum (subject to annual cost of living review)
Leave:	23 days annual leave including Bank Holidays rising after 24 months by 1 day after each year of service to maximum of 28 days per year
Contract:	1 year fixed term contract with possibility of extension depending on funding availability
Reporting to:	Chief Executive Officer
Closing date:	5pm, Saturday, 25 June 2022
Interview date:	Weeks commencing 4 & 11 July 2022. Interviews will be held in person, in 2 stages.

African Rainbow Family is looking for a dynamic **Refugee Advocacy Lead** passionately committed to upholding the rights of LGBTIQ refugees and people seeking asylum from African heritage and wider BAME at a critical time for the future of the asylum system and the rights of refugees. We are a small, specialist team of campaign professionals based around the UK, working with an extensive network of frontline partners to advocate for progressive change in the asylum and immigration system. In addition to the Chief Executive Officer, the team are based in Manchester (covering the North West), Birmingham (covering the West Midlands), Leeds (covering Yorkshire and Humber), London (covering the South of England) and Cardiff (covering Wales).

The successful candidate will work in partnership with local and national organisations and networks to develop and implement strategies for practical advocacy for LGBTIQ people seeking asylum. The ideal candidate will be responsible for providing excellent standards of advocacy support, as well as quality information advice and guidance, assist and enable people seeking asylum to have their views taken into account by the organisations who make decisions which affect them.

The successful candidate is not to make decisions for people, but to empower them with information and resources, they need to make decisions for themselves and then assisting them in following through those decisions. You will provide people seeking asylum with advice and support through their immigration journey including

signposting to immigration advice. You will make internal referrals to our Move-On and Integration services: (housing, welfare benefits, legal rights, livelihoods and access to education); and our Campaign and Communication service.

The team takes a client-centred approach. We are looking for a motivated and enthusiastic person to join our dedicated refugee campaign and support team. This role requires resilience, creativity and a willingness to work flexibly in order to meet the needs of both African Rainbow Family and our beneficiaries.

The ideal candidate will promote socio-political change locally and nationally. To that end, they will have experience of successfully developing and delivering creative and impactful advocacy resources that have achieved policy change. They will be an effective and passionate advocate, able to build strong partnerships and work collaboratively with partners to identify gaps, amplify existing work and facilitate connections. They will be a self-starter, able to spot influencing opportunities and swiftly mobilise support to seize them. They will have excellent knowledge of the asylum system and a commitment to providing a platform for the voices of those with direct experience of it.

We welcome applications from people of all abilities/disabilities and backgrounds as we believe that each person brings their own valuable experiences to what we do. We encourage people with lived experience of the UK asylum system to apply. The successful candidate must have the right to work in the UK.

Get to know us...

African Rainbow Family (ARF) is a small registered Charity (No. 1185902) which has been supporting LGBT+ refugees and those seeking asylum through the asylum and immigration process and campaigning for their rights since 2014. This includes people of African heritage, the wider Black Asian Minority Ethnic groups and anyone that identifies as an LGBT+ refugee and/or seeking asylum. We provide peer support, advocacy, advice, information and counselling.

ARF was established in 2014 by a lesbian in the wake of some Commonwealth countries in Africa's toxic and draconian anti-gay laws; persecutions and environment which seek to criminalise LGBTIQs for the preference of whom they choose to love. ARF provides:

- Support For LGBTIQ Refugees and People Seeking Asylum
- Support communities who face constant harassment, hate crimes and discrimination heaped on them by an ignorant society because of their sexuality or sexual preferences and or gender identity.
- Campaigning For Global LGBTIQ Equality.

Benefits include:

- 23 days annual leave including Bank Holidays
- Equipment to support remote working.

- Flexible working policy.
- Pension scheme.
- Development and growth opportunities.
- Free parking at our office.
- Paid staff day off on their birthday
- Paid 2 duvet days a year
- Salary review
- Employee reward scheme
- Employee wellbeing support
- Paid Sick leave after 6 months

Attachments

- Job description and person specifications
- Application and equal opportunity forms
- Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

HOW TO APPLY: Please read the job description and person specification. Email your completed application form and optional monitoring form to recruitment@africanrainbowfamily.org. For more information on this role or for an informal discussion please contact Aderonke Apata, Founder and CEO: 07711285567. If you know of someone who might be interested in this vacancy, please ask them to get in touch.

The successful applicant will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check and to disclose all non-protected criminal records at the point of conditional job offer.

The closing date for applications is **5pm, Saturday, 25 June 2022**

Interviews will be held in person, in 2 stages from **weeks commencing 4 & 11 July 2022**.

We are sorry that we are unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

Aims of the Post

- To enable LGBTIQ people seeking asylum to successfully seek refuge, integrate and access services through advocacy, providing support, information, representation and volunteer opportunities.
- To enable LGBTIQ people seeking asylum to communicate their views and exercise choices about the services they receive.
- To provide a service which reflects and responds to the needs and aspirations of people of different cultures, ages and backgrounds.

Job Description

RESPONSIBILITIES

Advocacy

- Lead and manage the advocacy service and manage cases of LGBTIQ people seeking asylum especially those of a complex nature.
- Ensure service users have access to quality, pro bono or legal aid representation
- Work with the CEO, Move-On and Integration Officer, Campaign and Communication Officer and Advocacy Assistants and consult with service users to develop African Rainbow Family's advocacy support services in line with the changing needs and demands of LGBTIQ refugees and people seeking asylum.
- Take strategic oversight of African Rainbow Family advocacy service together with the Senior Management Team.
- Lead on developing a strategy to maintain and develop new partnerships with LGBT and non-LGBT campaigners and organisations, to ensure that we meet our charitable objective to reach further and deeper into communities.
- Oversee empowerment events and support delivery of other teams' events, ensuring all events achieve a professional standard and high quality.
- Conduct vulnerability assessments and prioritise people to receive African Rainbow Family's services.
- Work with legal partners, other African Rainbow Family's centres' staff and volunteers to organise monthly asylum meetings.
- Provide one-to-one advocacy, emotional or practical support in person or over the phone to beneficiaries.
- Facilitate other support group meetings such as 1-2-1 and group mental health/therapy/counselling sessions for service users.
- Leading the advocacy service on issues of legal rights, refer beneficiaries to our Move-On and Integration service for health services, housing, welfare benefits etc. and to advocate on behalf of service users to enable them to exercise their rights in these areas.
- Make referrals to services or signpost to other specialist organisations and agencies, including mental and physical health NGOs, pro bono and/or legal aid lawyers
- Visit LGBTIQ+ people held in immigration detention centres to provide them with emotional support.
- Negotiate with service providers on behalf of service users, if requested.
- Support service users in accessing legal representation.
- Assist service users in accessing appropriate services not covered by African Rainbow Family.
- Follow the wishes of service users and support their rights to make informed decisions.

- Encourage service users to self-advocate where possible and support them in doing so.
- Write letters of support for service users in line with African Rainbow Family 's policy
- Attend and/or give oral evidence in court hearings in support of African Rainbow Family's service users where practicable.
- Keep records and monitoring data in accordance with policies, data protection law, donor requirements and African Rainbow Family's impact framework.
- Support service users to engage with African Rainbow Family's Campaign and Communication service around media work or to attend meetings with stakeholders.
- Oversee and maintain accurate records of contacts with service users in accordance with data protection policies.
- Participate in the collection of data for monitoring and evaluation of African Rainbow Family's advocacy services.
- Maintain the confidentiality of clients internally and with external parties at all times unless authorised otherwise by the CEO.
- Ensure you and all staff and volunteers use and record data within an online space provided by African Rainbow Family's Microsoft Business account.

People management and supervision

- Recruit, train and manage a team of volunteer advocates to assist with delivery of social events and other services and respond to queries to the office.
- Oversee and organise training for staff and volunteers within the advocacy team
- Manage a team of Advocacy Assistants across our other centres.
- Provide supervision to volunteers and Advocacy Assistants.
- Provide cover during periods of leave for other staff

Other

- Develop and deliver training to other organisations working with LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ refugees and people seeking asylum.
- Draft reports for trustees, donors and other stakeholders
- Keep up-to-date with changes in law and policy that affect African Rainbow Family's service users with the support of the CEO and Trustees.
- Provide input to African Rainbow Family's policy, advocacy, move-on/integration, campaign and communications work.
- With support from the CEO, identify funding opportunities for ARF's work.
- Assist in the development of funding bids and proposals, utilising appropriate research and evidence to support applications
- Assist the CEO with delivery of African Rainbow Family's strategies.
- Occasional media work and public speaking
- Comply with all African Rainbow Family's policies
- Trained to OISC Level One or willing to undertake relevant immigration training.
- Undertake other reasonable tasks as requested.

Equal opportunities

- Abide by and promote African Rainbow Family's Equal Opportunities policy.
- Take positive action to encourage the participation of service users who experience discrimination for reasons of gender, national or ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, or health status.

Policies

- Participate in the development and review of advocacy guidelines and protocols.
- Work in accordance with African Rainbow Family's policies and procedures, including the confidentiality policy, health and safety policy and advocacy guidelines.
- Keep abreast of new developments in advocacy, particularly those relating to the LGBTIQ refugee and migrant communities.
- Keep up-to-date with the relevant policy changes in areas which affect service users i.e. immigration
- Publicise African Rainbow Family's advocacy service to potential service users through visits to projects and community organisations.
- Regularly promote the work of the advocacy service by contributing to social media including through the Campaign and Communication Officer.

Administration

- Oversee and carry out administration duties associated with the provision of advocacy services, including correspondence, photocopying, maintaining accurate records and filing.
- Write reports, recommendations and reviews as required.
- Take minutes of meetings and events participated in.
- Sufficient knowledge of Microsoft Suit is required, especially Excel and Word.

General

- Attend and participate in regular supervision with line manager.
- Take part in training and professional development.
- Attend, and lead weekly advocacy team meetings.
- Be flexible in working hours – occasional evening and weekend work will be required for which time off in lieu will be given. The Advocacy Lead is encouraged to manage their own schedule to ensure they are not working excessive overtime.

Core organisational activities

- Actively participate in events, internal meetings and consultations
- Participating and maintaining a friendly office environment

Person Specification

ESSENTIAL

EXPERIENCE
Experience in providing professional advocacy support (minimum 2 years) for example support work, social work, counselling, casework (legal or non-legal).
Experience of providing emotional support to vulnerable people
Experience of working in, or familiar with, the LGBTIQ community
Experience of providing emotional support to vulnerable people
Experience of working in, or familiar with, the LGBTIQ community
Experience of working with LGBTIQ people seeking asylum
Experience of working in the voluntary and/or community sector
Experience of coming out
Understanding and awareness of intersections of oppression and an understanding of power and privilege in relation to people seeking asylum.
Experience of working in and/or creating a culture of team working, where people feel empowered, respected and valued, and accountable for the work they do
KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES
Ability to support development of advocacy services and systems.
Ability to conduct vulnerability or needs assessments, decide on appropriate services, prioritise people to receive African Rainbow Family's services and inform people when a service can't be offered to them.
Ability to work with and provide non-clinical/non-therapeutic support to vulnerable people. Including with poor mental health, a history of self-harm or attempted suicide, who have experienced violence, abuse, sexual exploitation, homelessness, or trauma, or are potential victims of trafficking.
Ability to facilitate support groups and group meetings
Ability to support people on a one-to-one basis.
Ability to work with people from diverse religious, cultural, national, sexual and ethnic backgrounds.
Excellent listening skills and an ability to create respective rapport whilst maintaining professional boundaries

Knowledge of good practice in one-to-one casework with vulnerable service users and of good safeguarding practice
Ability to use software programmes including MS Word, Excel (basic) and PowerPoint.
Ability to design and deliver training
Knowledge of the asylum decision-making and support system

ESSENTIAL CORE COMPETENCIES

Passionate about equality and human rights, particularly in relations to LGBTIQ refugees and people seeking asylum
Good verbal and written communication skills
Ability to work independently, understanding the importance of seeking guidance and support when required
Ability to plan and prioritise work and meet deadlines
Ability to remain calm and respond flexibly to a fast changing environment
Ability to work collaboratively within a small team and volunteers
Ability to work flexibly and occasionally outside regular office hours
Ability to identify flexible approach, knowing when to support and when to lead

DESIRABLE

Experience of managing staff – Advocacy Assistants, working one day a week in other centres
Experience of managing volunteers
Ability to manage difficult conversations and complex and challenging behaviour
Knowledge of coming out experiences across cultures and identities
Knowledge of voluntary and statutory advocacy services available to people seeking asylum