



REFUGEE ADVOCACY LEAD

Job Title:	Refugee Advocacy Lead
Location:	Manchester - Office-based with some travel to our centres, including to partner meetings. This is a position which may include some evening and weekend work for meetings and events.
Hours:	Full time (37.5 hours/ week Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm)
Salary:	£28,000 - £30,000 per annum, depending on experience. (Subject to annual cost of living review).
Leave:	28 days annual leave including Bank Holidays
Contract:	1-year fixed term contract with possibility of extension depending on funding availability
Reporting to:	Chief Executive Officer
Closing date:	23:59hrs, Saturday, 27 May 2023
Interview date:	Week commencing 12 June 2023, in-person.

African Rainbow Family is looking for a dynamic Refugee Advocacy Lead passionately committed to upholding the rights of LGBTIQ people who have been granted asylum and those still seeking asylum in England and Wales 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 with a small African Rainbow Family's team 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 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 give them the 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. Make internal referrals to our Move-On and Integration services: housing, welfare benefits, legal rights, livelihoods and access to education; including 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 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 change locally and nationally. To that end, they will have experience of successfully developing and delivering creative and impactful 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.

Aims of the Post

- To enable LGBTIQ people seeking asylum to successfully seek refuge, integrate and access services by 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.

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 legal 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 ARF's services.
- Work with legal partners, other ARF'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
- 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 moving-on and related services: housing, welfare benefits, health, education, CV and interview techniques services 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 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 ARF's policy
- Attend and/or give oral evidence in court hearings in support of ARF's service users where practicable.
- Keep records and monitoring data in accordance with policies, data protection law, donor requirements and ARF's impact framework.
- Support service users to engage with ARF'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 with external parties at all times unless authorised otherwise by the CEO.
- Ensure you and all staff and volunteers use and record data as required 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 centres.
- Provide supervision to volunteers and Advocacy Assistants.
- Provide cover during periods of leave for other staff

Other

- Develop and deliver training / workshops / talks etc. 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 ARF's service users with the support of the CEO and Trustees.
- Provide input to ARF'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 ARF's strategies.
- Occasional media work and public speaking
- Comply with all ARF's policies
- Trained to OISC Level 1 or willing to undertake relevant immigration and asylum and protection advice 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 services 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.
- Monthly and annual reporting: collating beneficiary data, management and financial management reporting to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 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.

- Take initiative in organising donations, fundraising events and Media representation.

Core organisational activities

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

Refugee Advocacy Lead: Person specification

EXPERIENCE	ESSENTIAL/ DESIRABLE
Experience in providing professional support (minimum 2 years) for example support work, social work, counselling, casework (legal or non-legal).	E
Experience of managing staff	D
Experience of managing volunteers	D
Experience of providing emotional support to vulnerable people	E
Experience of working in, or familiar with, the LGBTIQ+ and non-LGBTIQ+ community	E
Experience of working with people who have claimed asylum	E
Experience of working in the voluntary and/or community sector	E
Understanding and awareness of intersections of oppression and an understanding of power and privilege in relation to people seeking asylum.	E
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	E
KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES	ESSENTIAL/ DESIRABLE
Ability to support development of services and systems.	E
Ability to conduct vulnerability or needs assessments, decide on appropriate services, prioritise people to receive ARF's services and inform people when a service can't be offered to them.	E
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.	E
Ability to facilitate support group meetings	E

Ability to support people on a one-to-one basis.	E
Ability to work with people from diverse religious, cultural, national, sexual and ethnic backgrounds.	E
Excellent listening skills and an ability to create good rapport	E
Ability to manage difficult conversations, complex and challenging behaviour	D
Knowledge of good practice in one-to-one casework with vulnerable members and of good safeguarding practice	D
Knowledge of coming out experiences across cultures and identities	D
Ability to use software programmes including MS Word, Excel (basic) and PowerPoint etc.	E
Knowledge of voluntary and statutory services available to people seeking asylum	D
Ability to design and deliver training/workshop	D
Knowledge of self-care techniques.	E
Knowledge of the asylum decision-making and support system	E

- **ESSENTIAL CORE COMPETENCIES**

Passionate about equality and human rights, particularly in regards to LGBTIQ+ and non-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