

Bristol Refugee Rights

Safety · **Solidarity** · **Action for Change**



BRR Trustee

Recruitment Pack





Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in joining BRR's Board of Trustees. BRR provides specialist services in Bristol working with people seeking asylum and refugees.. We have a staff team of 32 people working alongside volunteers, to deliver services and to challenge injustice.

Bristol Refugee Rights is a charity that has been running since 2006. Our vision is:

A society where refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are welcomed, feel safe, live free of poverty and are able to positively build their lives. A society where everyone's rights and entitlements are respected.

We work to fulfil this vision through the delivery of unique, direct services to people seeking asylum and refugees, such as a Social drop in, Advice, English Classes, Family activities etc. We provide a place for our members (service-users) to receive practical and emotional support and find ways to meet and engage with the wider community. We aim to offer a warm welcome and a sense of belonging. One of our members said:

"They have been so helpful to me and the staff here are so welcoming and friendly. Great place to be."

We are committed to ensuring our members guide, shape and drive BRR's work and priorities. We are particularly interested in trustees with lived experience of seeking asylum or the UK immigration system or who are committed to and demonstrate an understanding of shifting power to people with lived experience.

Being a Trustee, involves working closely with a team of trustees and with myself as CEO to oversee the work of the organisation and to ensure we achieve our 5 year Strategic Plan.

You can find out more about the work of BRR from our website and from our Impact Report or feel free to contact me if you want more information. You can learn more about being a trustee by watching a video made by a long standing Board member (and previous Chair) [video](#).

If you feel that you could positively contribute to our work we would very much like to receive an application from you.

Yours faithfully,

Danielle Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

danielle@bristolrefugeerights.org / 07704291171



Bristol Refugee Rights: Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Our Vision:

A society where refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are welcomed, feel safe, live free of poverty and are able to positively build their lives. A society where everyone's rights and entitlements are respected.

Our Goals – 2022-27

Our Goals set out the sort of organisation we want to be and our framework for designing and delivering services:

Goal 1: Ensure services are impactful, accessible and designed to meet our participants' needs

- By 2027 we will offer a manageable range of welcoming, empowering and trauma informed services, which are: unique and transformative; help us achieve our vision and purpose; and deliver sustainable impact.

Goal 2: Empower and work in solidarity with people with Lived Experience

- By 2027 we will have representation by people with lived experience at all levels of the organisation; empowering services will be designed and delivered together with people with Lived Experience.

Goal 3: Be sustainable and invest in the wellbeing and resilience of our people and organisation

- By 2027 we will have invested in skills and wellbeing to ensure our people are resilient; we will have fit for purpose premises and sufficient funding to achieve our purpose.

Goal 4: Use partnerships to increase impact and resilience

- By 2027 we will be at the centre of a sustainable, impactful and resilient local refugee sector partnership (BRASP) working together to meet the needs of the local asylum seeker and migrant population.

Goal 5: Raise our profile to influence others

- By 2027 we will be recognised as a local sector leader; have worked with others to positively influence the asylum and immigration system and to create a more equitable system.



Our Purpose:

Why we exist and what impact we want to have:

Safety – Solidarity – Action for Change:

- **More refugees, asylum seekers and people with insecure immigration status are able to positively build their lives in the UK;**
- *We are an independent, accountable, purpose and value led, sustainable organisation;*
- *We promote equality, diversity and inclusion; we promote the rights and entitlements of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants with insecure immigration status;*
- *We promote system change and the breaking down of societal barriers;*
- *We work in empowering ways and integrate lived experience throughout our organisation;*
- *We work in solidarity and partnership with others to combat poverty and destitution and to promote social and legal justice.*

Values:

Our values shape what we do and how we do it:

Respect: We are committed to equality and treating everyone fairly.

Shared humanity: We are all human beings; we are all global citizens.

Integrity: We have strong moral principles and act in the interests of people we work with.

Collaboration: We build, support and encourage partnerships between individuals, teams and organisations.

Empowerment: We encourage people to be stronger, more confident and to claim their rights.

Innovation: We are adaptable, respond to the changing world around us and strive to be the best we can.

BRR is committed to tackling inequality and discrimination and to being anti-racist.

Bristol Refugee Rights' Aims and Ways of Working

We work in partnership with others to combat poverty and destitution and to promote social and legal justice:

We will use an **EARLY ACTION** approach to working with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants; we will focus on preventing and de-escalating crises through the provision of good quality, early advice, support and information using methods which build resilience, support networks and well-being; as an organisation we will provide stability and strive for sustainability.

We empower people; promote inclusion and equality of opportunity through the breaking down of societal barriers:

We will **EMPOWER** asylum seekers, refugees and migrants by giving them information and confidence to access their rights and entitlements and to build their lives; asylum seekers, refugees and migrants will have opportunities to develop and share their talents; we will provide support for them to learn and develop personal and professional transferable skills through a range of opportunities both within and outside of the organisation.

We ensure the rights and entitlements of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are respected:

We use **ADVOCACY** to challenge injustice for individuals, and for all asylum seekers, refugees and migrants; members will receive high quality and timely advice aimed at achieving their rights and



entitlements and a fair outcome; we will lead and support campaigns for better treatment and for a fairer society; we will never accept the status quo.

Role of BRR Board Member (Trustee)

Overall Purpose

The Board of BRR is made up of individual elected members who are all also Trustees of the charity. Trustees are volunteers and should not be paid for their work, but can claim any 'out of pocket' expenses (e.g. travel, childcare) Trustees have particular legal responsibilities for the organisation:

- **They have ultimate responsibility for the way the organisation is run (its governance).**
- **They must make sure that it sticks to what is said in its rules (Constitution or Memorandum and Articles of Association).**
- **They must make sure it works in the best interest of its beneficiaries (members/service users)**
- **They must make sure it is run efficiently and in a way that does not break the law.**
- **They must make sure that any funding is spent sensibly and that good financial plans are in place.**
- **They must make sure it has a sound strategic plan that everyone works to and that meets the aims and objectives of the organisation.**
- **They have overall responsibility for ensuring recruitment and employment of staff and volunteers is undertaken according to fair, equitable and legal processes.**

Role Description: In practice, this means all Trustees should:

- a) Attend all the Board meetings and any meetings of any Sub Committees they agree to attend, and give apologies if they are unable to attend any (currently 6 board meetings per year).
- b) Read the papers in advance of meetings.
- c) Read the minutes of meetings and undertake any actions that are agreed as theirs.
- d) Act in a way that is inline with BRR values including being fair and equitable for all people, and embodying our commitment to being anti-racist organisation.
- e) Actively demonstrate a commitment to shifting power from those with privilege to those with lived experience.
- f) Always acts in the best interest of the charity and of its members.
- g) Agree policies, rules and procedures (in line with the constitution) to outline how the organisation should be run.
- h) Review and approve the annual budget and make sure it is monitored and that BRR has a sound financial plan and spends its funding sensibly and in line with its objectives.
- i) Make sure the accounts are kept in the way required by Companies Act and Charities Act.
- j) Make sure that BRR complies with the law and any requirements of the Charity Commission or Companies House, and has the required policies and procedures in place.
- k) Elect the key officers such as the Chair and Treasurer, and appoint the Company Secretary.
- l) Promote and develop BRR in order for it to grow based on the needs of the members.
- m) Ensure good practice in the employment of all staff and volunteers.
- n) Maintain absolute confidentiality about all sensitive/confidential information received.



You cannot be a Trustee of BRR if you are:

- a. Under 18 years
- b. Undischarged bankrupt or have a voluntary agreement to pay off debts with a creditor
- c. Have an unspent conviction for dishonesty or deception
- d. Declared incapable of managing your own affairs
- e. Not a Legal Member/Friend of the organisation
- f. Someone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity
- g. Someone who is disqualified by the Company Directors Disqualification Act

Person Specification: What we want from all Trustee/Board Members

- a) Someone who is reliable and will attend every meeting, unless there are good reasons why not.
- b) Someone who understands and agrees with the aims of BRR.
- c) Someone who is committed to trying to improve the situation for refugees and asylum seekers.
- d) Someone who has experience of meetings and is willing and able to read and study the Board papers and to make comments as appropriate at meetings.
- e) Someone who is willing to work as part of a team and to listen to other people's views.
- f) Someone who is able to understand accounts and to make sure the organisation has good financial plans.
- g) Someone willing to take additional responsibilities where appropriate such as joining a sub committee and/or chairing of sub committee meetings, mentoring other trustees.



Further Information and How to apply:

BRR's Board of Trustees:

BRR can have up to 12 Trustees on its Board. We aim that at least 50% of the Trustees should have lived experience of migration preferably as a refugee or asylum seeker. BRR's constitution provides that there should be one Trustee representing BRR's beneficiaries (members) and one Trustee representing BRR's volunteers.

Current Board Structure:

We currently have 9 Trustees and are recruiting to fill 2 spaces.

Skills and competencies we are looking for:

We are looking to recruit trustees with the following knowledge/skills where possible:

- Lived Experience of seeking asylum / forced migration
- Charity Governance
- Financial Management
- Health and safety and/or safeguarding
- HR / Personnel / Employment Law

If you don't have these specific skills but would like to talk about how your skills are transferable, please still get in touch with us to discuss further.

It is necessary that you have an adequate level of English to be able to read the Board papers and contribute during meetings.

Bristol Refugee Rights (BRR) is committed to safeguarding all the children, young people and vulnerable adults that we come into contact with. Trustees are required to undergo an enhanced DBS check. You can read more about our approach to safeguarding on our website.

Support we can offer:

- We are happy to provide support where needed including with the application process and with completion of forms e.g. legal members, nomination form
- We will ensure you receive induction support (involving other trustees as well as CEO), mentoring, access to clinical supervision if needed, pro-actively ensuring access to expenses, well-being check ins.
- Training and development

Expenses policy:

Trustees are entitled to claim costs incurred necessarily in the course of their role within BRR.

Suggested resources for people to find out more about what trustees do:

If you are interested in finding out more about the role of a Trustee, we would suggest looking at the following resources:



- [Good Trustee Guide](#)
- [The Essential Trustee](#)

Application Process:

We want to be flexible in the application process so we are happy to receive an application from you in the form of a CV, letter, video or whatever works for you. Please submit by email to applications@bristolrefugeerights.org

As long as we can see from your initial application that you meet our general trustee criteria, you will be invited to an informal interview which we will use to gather more information. Interviews will be friendly and informal with questions tailored to you.

We will also give you the opportunity to observe a Trustee meeting before deciding whether to proceed.

If successful, you can either be co-opted by Trustees at a Trustees meeting or nominated for election at an AGM which takes place in October. Successful Trustees will be expected to provide references and undergo a DBS check. You will receive an induction to your new role.

For further information on the application process, please contact: sally@bristolrefugeerights.org