



Overview of Refugee Support Group (RSG)

We are a small charity based in Reading, Berkshire that helps refugees and asylum seekers who have fled from persecution and the horrors of war to rebuild their lives. In most cases these are people who know very little about their host country, its culture, its welfare and education systems, its language, etc. The Refugee Support Group supports them as they negotiate their way through the many hurdles whilst frequently carrying a high degree of trauma.

More information on the important work we do can be found on our website:

<https://refugeesupportgroup.org.uk/about-us/>

Finance Trustee role specification (voluntary)

Summary of the role

RSG has a Board of Trustees that have overall responsibility for the governance and performance of the the charity. A new Chair has been nominated and will be appointed at the AGM on 20 November 2024. As a part of the continued development of the governance of the charity, a new Finance Trustee is being sought who will also Chair a newly created Finance & Risk Committee. The Finance Trustee will oversee the financial affairs of RSG working with the Chair, CEO and Finance Director and provide guidance to the Board on all financial and risk matters.

Note that this is not a Treasurer role and the charity has an in house Finance Director. The new Trustee will be expected to meet the responsibilities and qualities of all Trustees.

The role of Trustee is voluntary and there is no remuneration beyond the reimbursement of legitimate expenses and the reward of making a positive difference to the future of people whose lives have been decimated by the ravages of war and conflict.

Timing and commitment

1. A commitment to meeting the needs of refugees and asylum seekers and to providing a welcoming and supportive environment for them in those areas where the charity works
2. A willingness to commit the time required to be a reliable member of the Board:
 - a. Attendance at and participation in board meetings (6 board meetings and 1 annual general meeting. All are held in the evening and last approx. 2 hours.

- b. Participation in the Finance & Risk Committee meetings expected to be approximately 1 per quarter lasting 1 -2 hours although initially may need more time while it is being created.
- c. Attendance at meetings, which will be a mix of physical in Reading and virtual.
- d. Attendance at key RSG promotional events

Core skills and experience

3. Qualified accountant is sought with experience in the development and management of financial and management systems, not necessarily in the charity sector.
4. Recent and relevant financial experience and rigour is essential, including in-depth knowledge of accounting policies and principles, as well as financial reporting and disclosure processes.
5. Prior experience as a NED or Trustee is advantageous but not a pre-requisite and a person seeking their first such role will be positively considered.

General Qualities

6. Passion for the work that the charity undertakes and a real desire to be involved in a charity that undertakes life changing work.
7. The ability and confidence to work effectively in meetings with good listening skills. A willingness to learn and attend training where new skills and understanding are required.
8. A co-operative and friendly approach to collective decision making who understands that personal views will not always prevail.
9. A commitment to the development of an inclusive organisation which enables the participation of people from communities that typically experience discrimination or are under-represented.
10. The ability to think strategically about the development of the organisation.
11. Diversity is important and under represented at the Board. We are keen to hear from people from diverse backgrounds, especially people who have lived experiences aligning to the work of the charity or representing the diversity of the people we serve.

Responsibilities of the Role

1. Being an active and constructive participant in Board meetings, which requires reading and digesting the paperwork before attendance. Additionally, there is a requirement to engage in Trustee discussions that take place outside of board meetings.
2. To take the lead on the financial aspects of the charity at the Board:
 - a. Regularly reviewing the charity's financial health and reporting to the board. Assessing and overseeing risks and mitigations.

- b. Reviewing and monitoring major strategic, financial and business actions, the company's budget, and financial performance.
 - c. Ensuring that the charity's financial affairs are in line with legal requirements and governing documents
 - d. Mentoring the Finance Director and acting as a sounding board.
 - e. Providing the board with financial oversight and inputs to help them make strategic decisions
 - f. Ensuring that the charity has a robust and viable operational strategy including detailed financial plans and business models.
 - g. Ensuring that proper accounting systems, procedures and record keeping are in place.
 - h. Reviewing the charity's management accounts on a monthly basis
 - i. Overseeing the annual accounts process and audit where applicable
3. Chair the Finance & Risk Committee of the Board.
4. Working as part of the Board to:
- a. Agree a business and financial plan for the charity, which charts the way forward over the coming years to deliver the best possible support to asylum seekers and refugees in the charity's area.
 - b. Agree an annual budget and monitoring the income and expenditure of the charity to make sure it stays within budget.
 - c. Develop plans with the Chief Executive for income generation that will ensure the sustainability of the organisation beyond the current year of operation.
 - d. Be responsible for the staff, both employees and volunteers, making sure they have the skills, training & resources to carry out their roles.
 - e. Ensure that the charity develops as an inclusive organisation that is open to the involvement of people who are under represented in public life or who experience discrimination.
 - f. Develop and review policies that ensure compliance with the law and best practice. Key areas are employment, health and safety, data protection and confidentiality, equal opportunities and the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
 - g. Ensure that the organisation is informed by and responds to the needs and experiences of asylum seekers and refugees.

- h. Act as ambassador for the charity when in contact with stake holders, partner organisations and the public by raising awareness of its work and the challenges being faced by refugees and asylum seekers.

Further guidance on the role of trustee is available in the Charity Commission's publication "The Essential Trustee":

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1171397/CC3_feb20.pdf

Interested?

Please send a cover letter and CV to info@rrsg.org.uk

Nick Harborne the CEO will be available for an informal discussion from Jan 6th 2025 onwards.
