



ASYLUM AID

Executive Director Recruitment Pack



JOB TITLE:	Executive Director of Asylum Aid
LOCATION:	Asylum Aid Office (Old Street)
RESPONSIBLE TO:	CEO of Helen Bamber Foundation Group
CONTRACT:	Permanent
WORK PATTERN:	Full time (37.5 hours per week). Our normal working hours are 9am-5.30pm.
SALARY:	£65,000 -70,000 per year depending on experience
START DATE:	As soon as possible
BENEFITS:	<p>Annual Leave: 27 days plus bank holidays (increasing to 29 days after three years of service, and to 30 days after five years of service) plus up to 4 discretionary days for the winter closure period</p> <p>Winter closure period: two week winter closure period where the charity is closed</p> <p>Pension: 4% matched contribution by the Helen Bamber Foundation Group</p> <p>Enhanced pay: Enhanced maternity, paternity, adoption and Family Reunion pay</p> <p>Flexible working practices: we care about your wellbeing and encourage flexible working arrangements to promote a healthy work-life balance</p> <p>Monthly group Clinical supervision for all staff</p> <p>Hybrid working: 40% office presence</p> <p>Three days of wellbeing leave to be taken at short notice in each calendar year (pro rata for part-time staff)</p> <p>Occupational health assessments as necessary to understand how we can support and make reasonable adjustments</p> <p>Training and learning opportunities</p> <p>Employee assistance programme which includes counselling service, wellness advice, legal and money advice</p>



ABOUT US



Vision: All those who come to the UK in need of protection obtain it and are treated fairly and with dignity.

Mission: We provide expert legal representation to enable those in need of protection in the UK to obtain legal status and live a dignified life. We use evidence and expertise from our legal work to influence change and share best practice.

Values:

- **Pursuing Excellence:** We strive to be the best we can be in our work.
- **Courageous:** We advocate bravely for human rights and are not afraid to speak out against injustice.
- **Collaborative:** We proactively seek opportunities for partnerships, for sharing knowledge, and for joint work.
- **Acting with Integrity:** We are honest, open, respectful, and professional in all our dealings with our clients, partners, other stakeholders and each other.
- **Promoting Equity:** We are committed to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion within our organisation and in our dealings with our clients, volunteers and partners.

ABOUT ASYLUM AID

For almost thirty-five years, Asylum Aid has been providing legal representation to some of the most vulnerable people seeking asylum. We have built an expert service, delivering vital and life-saving services in some of the most complex legal cases, with a particular speciality working with Survivors of trafficking, torture or other forms of human cruelty, unaccompanied minors and stateless people.

We work towards our vision through three main strands of work:

- the provision of specialist legal representation through the asylum, trafficking and statelessness determination procedures, alongside a generalist advice service working with people with refugee and migrant backgrounds in Westminster;
- the establishment of partnerships to build capacity and increase expertise in the immigration advice sector, such as our innovative remote training and supervision partnership with the Justice Together initiative;
- drawing on our experience and expertise built up through our casework to engage in policy advocacy and strategic legal work to make the asylum system fair and dignified, and to improve access to effective and quality legal advice for those seeking protection.

Asylum Aid is regulated by the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA) at Level 3 in asylum and protection and immigration. Our casework service is provided by IAA registered advisers and solicitors regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. All caseworkers are accredited under the Law Society's Immigration and Asylum Accreditation Scheme and we hold the Lexcel quality mark and Legal Aid Agency contracts in immigration & asylum and public law.

Since August 2020, Asylum Aid has been part of the Helen Bamber Foundation Group. The Helen Bamber Foundation is a pioneering Human Rights charity supporting refugees and asylum seekers who are the survivors of trafficking and torture, including gender-based and 'honour-based' violence.

Asylum Aid is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Helen Bamber Foundation which operates as an independent charity, led by the Executive Director who is line managed and supported by the Group CEO as part of the group structure, and is ambitious about growing its impact and reach in the future to ensure protection from persecution for those who need it. We work closely with Helen Bamber Foundation Group colleagues on policy, training, capacity building, research and survivor engagement, share an office

at the Helen Bamber Foundation and Asylum Aid Trauma Centre, and share finance, fundraising, human resources and operations functions.

Asylum Aid was joined in July 2023 by the Migrants' Law Project (MLP), previously hosted at Islington Law Centre. As a legal and public legal educational project, it works to enforce, advance and defend the legal rights of people seeking asylum and others with insecure legal status through securing substantive changes in policy and practice.

Asylum Aid is governed by a highly skilled and dedicated Board of Trustees which provides strategic oversight.

The charity operates with robust committee structures (shared with Helen Bamber Foundation):

- Finance and Fundraising Committee, meeting quarterly
- People & Governance Committee, meeting quarterly

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Our commitment to principles of equity, diversity and inclusion is an integral part of our approach to our clients, our volunteers and our staff, and we are an equal opportunities and Living Wage employer.

We are committed to attracting and recruiting diverse candidates because we are keen to make sure that our staff, trustees, volunteers and ambassadors reflect the communities we serve and the wider community we work in.

We genuinely welcome and encourage applications from candidates from a range of backgrounds, especially people of colour, people with disabilities, people from low socio-economic backgrounds, refugees, stateless people and others with lived experience of forced migration or trauma and of the housing and welfare system, who are under-represented in our organisation.

We recognise and value the role of lived experience in meeting the needs of our clients and acknowledge the under-representation of people with lived experience of forced migration and statelessness in the advice sector. We value experience gained overseas as well as in the UK.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Executive Director of Asylum Aid

Reports to: Helen Bamber Foundation Group CEO

Role Overview:

This is an exciting opportunity to steer Asylum Aid at an important time in its 30-year existence. As Executive Director you will be responsible for delivering on our strategy for impact. You will oversee our work to increase access to expert, trauma-informed legal representation to those in the asylum, trafficking and statelessness systems and lead our policy and strategic legal work to achieve systemic change that contributes towards our vision.

You will line manage the Director of Legal Casework to oversee the provision of supportive and enabling leadership to Asylum Aid caseworkers so that they can continue to deliver high quality expert advice in complex cases, while being supported in their professional development and wellbeing. You will also manage and develop the work of our welfare advice team within the Westminster Advice Services Partnership and beyond, and work collaboratively with colleagues in the sector to build capacity and increase our impact.

The ideal candidate, who may be legally qualified, will have experience of leadership in the charity/NGO sector and a sound understanding of the asylum, human rights and trafficking processes in the UK and the legal frameworks which govern the protection of refugees, survivors of trafficking and stateless people, and of the role of law in achieving system change.

We are looking for someone who is strategically minded and passionate about providing supportive and inclusive leadership to our expert team. You will be committed to our objectives and to the role which expert legal representation plays in enabling people in need of protection in the UK to obtain it.

As is the nature of this sector, the role may be exposed to a high volume of traumatic and distressing material and, whilst they will be supported by the Helen Bamber Foundation Group CEO and surrounding team, the candidate should also be able to demonstrate knowledge of good self-care principles in an intense work environment and dissemination of those principles to junior members of the team.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership and strategy

- Be responsible, with the support of the Helen Bamber Foundation Group CEO, for the development, implementation and monitoring of Asylum Aid's organisational strategy
- Provide leadership and strategic direction at Asylum Aid in accordance with its aims and objectives, with the support of the Director of Legal Casework

- Act as external spokesperson for Asylum Aid, maintaining and strengthening Asylum Aid's position as a leader in the refugee rights, statelessness and legal aid sectors;
- Work collaboratively with others in the sector to promote and strengthen Asylum Aid's work, identify and establish potential partnerships, with the support of the Director of Legal Casework;
- Work collaboratively with the Helen Bamber Foundation Group CEO and Executive Leadership team to drive the implementation of the Group strategic framework;
- Ensure that all reporting and monitoring requirements are met to support fundraising, contract compliance and monitoring strategic impact;
- Support the cross collaboration of the Asylum Aid team with the Helen Bamber Foundation team and play an active part in the management of the Helen Bamber Foundation Group.

Governance

- Act as the Data Protection Supervisor with responsibility for data protection and cyber security within Asylum Aid
- Together with the Helen Bamber Foundation Group CEO and designated safeguarding leads, be responsible for child and adult safeguarding within Asylum Aid
- In collaboration with the Director of Legal Casework, ensure compliance by Asylum Aid with all legal and regulatory obligations, including the Legal Aid Agency contract, the Immigration Advice Authority and Solicitors Regulation Authority;
- Lead on the preparation and presentation of quarterly reports on Asylum Aid's activities, strategy and risks to the Asylum Aid Board, the Finance and Fundraising Committee and the People and Governance Committee;
- Lead on the preparation of the Trustees' annual report and ensure that monitoring and evaluation systems are adequate to enable reporting on Asylum Aid's activities and impact.

Management and Supervision

- Responsible for line management of the Director of Legal Casework and Welfare Advice service coordinator, and other team supervisors as required;
- Together with the Group Director of People, responsible for Human Resources and implementation of the People Strategy within Asylum Aid, including development and implementation of HR policies and procedures;
- Together with the Director of Legal Casework and team supervisors, drive the effective management and supervision of the Asylum Aid team and ensure that they comply with relevant professional standards and accreditation;
- Foster a supportive and inclusive team culture at Asylum Aid in which each member feels valued and supported to develop professionally and to perform to the best of their ability;
- Ensure the team's well-being and that self-care practices are established and work in tandem with the Director of Legal Casework and supervisors to ensure trauma-informed ways of working.

Policy & Strategic Legal Work

- Together with the Group Director of Policy, identify policy priorities and coordinate the preparation of evidence and briefings drawing on Asylum Aid's experience and expertise to influence system change;
- Build and maintain relationships and partnerships with sector colleagues to support joint strategic engagement including policy advocacy and strategic legal work;
- Work closely with the Director of Legal Casework and team supervisors to drive changes in the UK asylum, trafficking and statelessness systems through strategic legal work.

Finance & Fundraising

- Work closely with the CEO and the Helen Bamber Foundation Group Finance Team to set and manage budget(s) and general financial matters for Asylum Aid
- Together with the Director of Legal Casework and the Group Finance Team, establish systems for monitoring legal aid Work In Progress and billing, and securing casework income including legal aid, and inter partes income from judicial review cases;
- Work closely with the Helen Bamber Foundation Group Fundraising and Communications Team to secure funding for Asylum Aid from a range of sources including trusts and foundations, corporate philanthropy and major donors;
- Ensure that Legal Aid and other income is maximised, and targets are achieved.

Other duties

- Manage the recruitment and supervision of volunteers where necessary in collaboration with the Helen Bamber Foundation Group Volunteers Coordinator;
- Support the Helen Bamber Foundation Group Facilities team to ensure the smooth running of the office and that the facilities meet the needs of Asylum Aid;
- Work outside normal office hours as required and travel in order to carry out the responsibilities of the post.
- To undertake any task that may be requested from time to time that may be consistent with the nature and scope of this post.

Essential Experience, Skills and Knowledge

- Experience of running a small to medium sized charity/legal NGO and/or legal department within the NGO sector (or other equivalent senior management role);
- Demonstrable experience of managing and leading a successful team and the ability to manage a growing team with mixed roles from team supervisors to administrative support staff, working co-operatively with colleagues to maintain transparency and effective working relationships within the team;
- Strong communication skills, with the ability to communicate effectively with people from a wide range of backgrounds

- Strong understanding of good governance including legal, regulatory and financial responsibilities;
- Ability to work with a range of stakeholders from trustees to external partners;
- Experience of leading and/or participating in organisational strategic planning;
- Experience of legal policy work within the human rights field and /or of strategic litigation, whether as an NGO claimant or legal representative;
- Experience of managing diverse funding sources and setting and implementing budgets;
- Experience of working in a service delivery partnership with other organisations;
- Experience of fundraising, especially grants from trusts and foundations;
- Sound working knowledge of the law and policy as it relates to immigration, asylum, human rights and modern slavery/trafficking;
- Demonstrable understanding of the asylum and human rights sector in the UK;
- An understanding of the barriers migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers face regarding access to legal advice, reasons why they may become destitute and why this makes it more difficult to access advice and support; and
- The passion for working empathetically and supportively with migrants, refugees, stateless people and asylum seekers.

Desirable Experience

- Experience of managing the delivery of frontline casework with people in the asylum or trafficking systems;
- Experience of tendering for and delivering publicly funded contracts e.g. LAA or local authority funding; and
- Working knowledge of Legal Aid Agency contracts, including the delivery of casework and billing under a legal aid contract in the immigration and asylum category and/or the public law category.

HOW TO APPLY

The first stage is to complete on our online application form on our website **by 10am on Monday 26th January 2026**.

The website form will ask you to:

1. Upload a short covering letter. Please tell us why the position appeals to you, and how your relevant skills and experience, including any voluntary experience and lived experience, matches the listed responsibilities and person specification. Please also state in your covering letter when you would be available to start the role.
2. Upload your current CV
3. Complete an online Equal Opportunities monitoring form – completion of this form will help us ensure that our recruitment procedures operate in such a way as to provide genuine equality of opportunity. The questions are entirely optional, and this information will not be available to members of the selection panel.

For an informal conversation about the post before applying, please contact Alison Pickup, the current Executive Director, at alison.pickup@asylumaid.org.uk

Selection Process

We will invite candidates to an initial online interview **on Tuesday 10th or Wednesday 11th February**, followed by shortlisted candidates attending in-person interviews at our office in Old Street **on Tuesday 24th or Wednesday 25th February**.

We offer a guaranteed initial interview for refugees, stateless people and others with lived experience of forced migration, provided that they provide some evidence of relevant experience or skills in relation to the essential criteria.

We regret that we can only respond to applicants who make it to the interview stage.

Timeline

Closing date: **10am on Monday 26th January**
Preliminary interviews (online): **10th or 11th February**
Final panel interviews (in person): **24th or 25th February**

Eligibility

Please note that the successful candidate must have the right to work in the UK (as a small charity we do not have the capacity to sponsor work visas).

Successful candidates will also be subject to an enhanced DBS check. If appointed, you will also be required to give your consent to the charity to receive regular updates on your criminal records

status throughout your employment and to disclose any relevant convictions incurred during your time with us.

Adjustments

We are committed to providing reasonable adjustments throughout our recruitment process and we'll always endeavour to be as accommodating as possible. If you require a different format of the application form, such as large print or Word format, or if you would like to discuss any specific requirements, please get in touch with us at jobs@helenbamber.org.

EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE

We are also proud to be a member of the [Experts by Experience Employment Network](#) which aims to increase representation of people with lived experience in the charitable sector.

If you are an expert by experience (a refugee or a migrant with direct, first-hand experience of issues and challenges of the UK asylum or immigration system), you can ask for an independent and confidential support for your job application from the Experts by Experience Employment Network and access other information and resources at <https://www.ebeemployment.org.uk/ebe> which may help in preparing your job application.

Please complete the form on their website to request support and they will confirm if they can match you with a mentor to support your application.