**NORTH OF ENGLAND REFUGEE SERVICE**

**BOARD RECRUITMENT PACK**

**September 2023**

**ABOUT NERS**

The North of England Refugee Service (NERS) is the leading charity working for and supporting refugees and asylum seekers in the North East of England. Established in 1989, we offer unique, independent, and impartial services from our offices in Newcastle, Sunderland and Middlesbrough, under the following thematic areas:

* **Asylum advice**, from help with applications to guidance on legal matters.
* **Asylum and immigration advice**, to provide specialist asylum Immigration legal advice
* **Integration support,** helping refugees to settle in their new communities.
* **Supported housing** for vulnerable individuals/families.
* **Interpreting and translation services** for internal and external clients.
* **English language classes** from our office in Newcastle**.**

**Our mission is** to work tirelessly to enable asylum seekers and refugees to reach their full potential. We achieve this through:

* Accompanying, supporting and empowering asylum seekers and refugees on their journey from arrival to establishment in their new community.
* Being an authoritative voice on issues that affect the refugee and migrant community in the region.

Our turnover is over £500,000 per year. We employ a team of 14 core staff plus over 100 sessional interpreters, tutors and others. We also utilize the vital contribution of approximately 50 volunteers and placement students at any one time.

We intend that all of our work is delivered within the framework of our values, which are –

* **Development**: Investing in the professional growth of all members, staff and volunteers through sharing experience and knowledge, training and peer networking.
* **Empowerment:** Empowering individuals, families and communities to become self-sufficient and contributing members of the society.
* **Inclusion:** Ensuring that our services are culturally and linguistically inclusive and secular and that refugees are key stakeholders in our organisation.
* **Partnership:** Working in partnership with communities and with agencies of all sectors in order to maximise the impact of our work.
* **Quality:** Being a performance-based organization; taking personal responsibility, having pride in work, identifying customer needs, responding quickly and working towards continuous improvement.
* **Respect:** Treating all people with dignity; capitalizing on the wealth of viewpoints that reside in our multi-faceted community; all contributions are valued.
* **Sustainability:** Striving for long term viability and sustainability in order to continue to meet our aims.

**ABOUT THE TRUSTEE POSITIONS**

NERS is a charity registered with the Charities Commission and a company registered with Companies House. Members of the Board are charity trustees and company directors. Their role is to be individual members of the legal entity which is NERS and to ensure that NERS is accountable, operates within the law and that as a business it is effectively run. The Board has the overall legal responsibility for NERS, and Trustees play a critical role in governing the charity and directing how it is managed and run.

**To strengthen our board, we now wish to recruit 5 to 6 new trustees.** Appointments are expected to be for an initial term of three years, renewable for up to two further terms of three years.

**This is a voluntary role and there is no remuneration.** Reasonable expenses incurred in the role will be reimbursed in line with the organisation’s expenses policy.

Board Meetings are currently held online (Zoom). Prior to the pandemic, meetings were held at the NERS office in Newcastle. Meetings are usually held on a Wednesday at 5pm, with a meeting currently taking place once a month, which Trustees are expected to attend.

**TRUSTEE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All Trustees are expected to undertake the following responsibilities:

* Determining the overall direction and development of NERS through the formulation and regular review of its strategic aims and plans.

* Ensuring effective and efficient governance of NERS and its resources within the legal and financial requirements of a UK charitable organization.
* Ensuring that the policy and practices of NERS are in keeping with its aims.
* Dedicating the time required to be an effective trustee, including preparing for meetings, and contributing to debate at meetings.
* Providing constructive challenge to the Director and senior staff.
* Acting at all times as a positive advocate and ambassador for NERS, building contacts and relationships.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

We want to attract people who are motivated to serve refugees and the wider community by putting their knowledge and skills to work in this field. **Applications from candidates with a refugee background are strongly encouraged.**

We expect our trustees to operate as advocates and ambassadors for NERS so that people with extensive networks within the community will be especially welcome.

We are seeking people with **one or more** of the following skills and experience:

1. Knowledge of the refugee sector – particularly in Teesside and/ or Wearside
2. Service delivery management, including tendering
3. Working in networks and building alliances
4. Advocacy, policy development and research
5. Political environment, government and civil service
6. Media and communications
7. Fundraising
8. Legal issues – both those impacting refugees and charities
9. Human resource management

**All Trustees will require**

1. A commitment to NERS, its vision, mission and values
2. Good independent judgement
3. Commitment to work effectively as a member of a team
4. Consensus building skills
5. Tact and diplomacy
6. Good communication and interpersonal skills
7. Willingness to undertake DBS (criminal records) check if required
8. Availability to commit time to NERS.

**APPLICATIONS**

We are running an ongoing recruitment process which will end when all vacant positions are filled.

To apply for this position, please forward a cover letter (not more than 2 sides A4) demonstrating your motivation for this role and how your skills and experience meet our requirements above, together with a CV, to [recruitment@refugee.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@refugee.org.uk)

Please mark your email TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT

***NERS practices safer recruitment:*** *NERS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Background checks and a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) will be required.*

***NERS is an equal opportunities employer****: we are determined to ensure that no applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, disability, religion, belief, sexual orientation, marital status, or race, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. Our equal opportunities policy can be accessed via this link:* <https://refugee.org.uk/policies/>