Job description:
Emergency Response Team Coordinator

JRS mission and work
The Jesuit Refugee Service has projects all over the world. In the UK we are a small organisation based in East London, supporting people who have been made destitute by the asylum process and those held in immigration detention. We are a Catholic organisation, but we serve people of all faiths and none. Our staff and volunteers are drawn from very diverse backgrounds and many are refugees themselves.

Our mission and purpose is to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of refugees. To accompany means literally to ‘be with’. We stick with people, regardless of how difficult things get, and we try to create spaces for friendships and community to develop. Because of the importance of friendship to us, we refer to those we support as refugee friends, not clients or beneficiaries.

JRS UK runs a Day Centre, activities, a legal advice service and hosting scheme (At Home) for destitute asylum seekers, detention outreach services to Heathrow IRC and support to people who have been released from immigration detention. We work to raise awareness of the situation facing refugees we accompany and serve by enabling their story to be heard.

JRS UK is a project of the British Jesuits’ Charitable Trust (TRCP) and shares the same charity number.

Service changes
Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have had to make temporary changes to our services. The people we support have precarious housing arrangements and are unable to work or claim benefits as a result of the asylum process. The food shortage brought about by the coronavirus outbreak is dire for some refugee friends, and the suspension of most day centres supporting destitute migrants (including our own) has left people with no source of support. In response, JRS UK has set up a new Emergency Response Team to distribute food parcels and hygiene packs to the most vulnerable of the destitute asylum seekers we support, including those recently released from immigration detention. We are also providing mobile phone top-ups and rolling out new prepaid Mastercards to enable us to provide refugee friends with hardship funds.

Emergency Response Team Coordinator
The Emergency Response Team Coordinator is a full-time (or 4 day a week) role leading JRS UK’s emergency response during the COVID-19 outbreak. The post is available either on short-term contract for 3 months, or for an experienced volunteer (with expenses) and might suit someone whose role is currently furloughed who would like to use their skills to help others during this crisis.

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) was set up to respond to the crisis situation facing refugee friends during this coronavirus pandemic. The ERT organises distribution of essential basic provisions like food and toiletries, mobile phone top ups and discretionary hardship grants to the most vulnerable of the destitute asylum seekers we support, including those recently released from immigration detention. The ERT Coordinator will oversee the work of a small staff team and manage a network of volunteers collecting key information from refugees (such as addresses or phone networks) and carrying out deliveries of food parcels and hygiene packs.
The ERT Coordinator will need highly developed organisational skills, personal resilience and emotional maturity to respond to the emotional needs of refugees in this time of crisis, accompany them and support staff and volunteers to do the same. They will need to be extremely flexible and capable of quickly adapting to change while working in a fast-paced and ever-evolving environment. They will also need outstanding interpersonal skills to manage multiple complex relationships with stakeholders, including other NGOs, work collaboratively with other JRS UK staff and engage positively with the varied network of volunteers they manage, many of whom are approaching JRS for the first time.

**Specific responsibilities**

**ERT Coordination**
- Forward plan acquisition of necessary supplies for food and hygiene parcels, liaising with other team members to ensure items are purchased, donated by individuals, parishes or from the Food Bank as appropriate.
- Review and maintain systems for data collection and monitoring.
- Maintain existing protocols for deliveries and telephone support up-to-date, and creating new ones when the need arises.
- Work closely with other ERT staff to organise physical deliveries.
- Coordinate volunteer deliverers, organising a weekly rota and providing them with all necessary support and information.
- Work closely with the JRS UK Destitution Services team to assess and respond to the most urgent needs.
- Work closely with the JRS UK Detention Outreach Officer to ensure that those receiving post-detention support are included in delivery rounds.

**People management**
- Implement existing volunteer recruitment, training and support systems, adapting them when necessary due to the ever-changing situation.
- Organise inductions for volunteer deliverers, ensuring they receive all necessary information before setting out on their first delivery, with a special focus on the JRS UK delivery protocol and infection prevention measures.
- Receive reports from deliverers and respond to any issues arising.

**Communications, outreach, fundraising and advocacy**
- Work closely with staff in the JRS UK Communications and Development team to ensure that the work of the ERT is included in JRS’ communications.
- Regularly review needs for physical donations and liaise with the JRS UK Communications and Development team to ensure these are shared through the appropriate channels.
- Contribute to JRS UK’s communications by drafting articles and providing statistics or other information, as needed.

**Administration and strategy**
- Ensure that paper and electronic records are kept up-to-date and maintained in accordance with data protection legislation.
- Draft and manage the service budget and resources, in close collaboration with the Operations team.
- Work with the JRS Country Director to develop strategy for future work.

**Other**
- Undertake other duties and responsibilities as requested; JRS UK is a small team and all staff are sometimes called on to support the work of others.
Person specification

Essential

- Sympathy and congruence with the values of JRS and deep commitment to JRS’ mission to accompaniment, service and advocacy for refugees and those who have been forcibly displaced.
- Highly developed organisational skills, computer skills and experience of maintaining databases.
- Highly developed interpersonal skills, empathy and sensitivity for one-on-one work with vulnerable individuals.
- High levels of personal resilience and emotional maturity to navigate healthy boundaries and support others to do so.
- High levels of personal integrity, discretion and tact.
- Experience of managing staff and volunteers.
- Respect and curiosity for different perspectives, backgrounds and beliefs; ability to foster this openness of approach within the team.
- Prior experience of working with refugees or vulnerable migrants.
- Prior experience of working in an area governed by complex policies and regulations.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to work flexibly as part of a small team.

Desirable

- Experience of working with people from diverse backgrounds, including working alongside those from refugee backgrounds, members of religious orders and others.
- Detailed knowledge of the immigration and asylum system.
- Creativity to develop future work.
- Ability to reflect on experience and support others to do likewise.
- Some experience of working in a faith-based context.

Duration: Temporary contract for 3 months initially, potentially renewable

Hours: Full time 37.5 hours a week or 4 days a week. Flexible working is required, for which TOIL will be given

Location: Working from home, but with ability to attend JRS UK office occasionally as needed, based at Hurtado Jesuit Centre, Wapping, London, UK

Salary: Volunteer (for furloughed staff) or salaried on pro rata £28-32kpa equivalent

To apply: Please send a CV and covering letter to Sarah Teather, Director, on email to sarah.teather@jrs.net

The person must be permitted to work in the UK (JRS UK is not able to obtain a work visa for this post).