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## **Job description: Detention Outreach Manager**

### **JRS Mission**

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation at work in over 50 countries with a mission to accompany, serve and advocate on behalf of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. JRS in the UK has a special ministry to those who are made destitute during the asylum process, and those detained for the administration of immigration procedures.

### **About JRS UK**

JRS UK runs a Day Centre, creative and therapeutic activities, a small hosting scheme (*At Home*) and a specialist legal advice service for destitute asylum seekers; we also run a Detention Outreach service to Heathrow IRC, including a weekly welfare drop-in support and a befriending service, as well as a peer support group for people who have experienced detention and are released in the London area. JRS UK undertakes research for advocacy to policy makers, alongside communications and outreach to the Catholic community, to raise awareness of the real situation facing asylum seekers and to argue for a change in policies that undermine their dignity and a just society.

JRS' distinctive ethos of accompaniment radically alters the beneficiary-service provider relationship and affects all that we do: we place a high value on coming to know refugees as people with gifts and personalities, not only defined by their situation in immigration law. Through our services, we seek to offer specialist intervention and respond to practical needs, but also to create spaces of hospitality, community, friendship and participation, which enable refugees to heal and shape their own future. Our advocacy, communications and outreach are similarly rooted in accompaniment, beginning with listening to the experience of refugees, bringing opportunities for their experiences and voices to be heard, understood and create change.

JRS UK is based in the Hurtado Jesuit Centre in Wapping. It currently has 19 full and part-time staff and around 100 volunteers, drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds and nationalities, generations and beliefs, including refugees, young graduates and vowed members of religious congregations; this diversity of perspectives and experience is a source of particular strength for our mission. We work collaboratively with JRS offices around the world, Jesuit works in the UK and many others in the Church and secular refugee sector.

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

### **JRS Values**

JRS is grounded in Catholic social teaching and draws on the charism and principles of Ignatian spirituality. Our work is based on hospitality, carried out in a spirit of compassion and solidarity, encouraging participation and community, aiming to kindle hope, secure justice and affirm the dignity of refugees and forced migrants. Reconciliation, rooted in justice and sought in dialogue, is a theme of JRS work around the world. As a work of the Jesuits, participative discernment and reflective practice are part of our ethos.

## Detention Outreach Manager

The Detention Outreach Manager is a full-time senior post, leading JRS UK's accompaniment, service and advocacy on behalf of those who are detained in the Heathrow Immigration Removal Centre (Harmondsworth and Colnbrook).

Detention outreach is a core strategic priority for JRS UK and is a common theme of work for JRS country offices across Europe. This busy and varied role combines face-to-face pastoral accompaniment of people in detention with management of a volunteer visitor network, liaison with chaplaincy services and IRC management, informal casework, referral to specialist agencies, and collaborative working with other NGOs on advocacy. The Detention Outreach Manager will line manage the Detention Outreach Officer who is responsible for developing a new post-detention support project, including a small post-detention peer support group.

Since the start of the COVID pandemic, detention visiting in person has been suspended all staff have been working from home and our support for detainees has been via phone only. As we prepare to return to visiting detention in person, and reopen some face-to-face services in our office, the Detention Outreach Manager will lead on the development of new protocols in accordance with the latest public health guidance, working closely with the Director and other stakeholders. Revitalising the JRS volunteer network will also be an early priority for the new postholder.

The Detention Outreach Manager will need highly developed listening skills, personal resilience and emotional maturity to respond to the emotional and spiritual needs of detainees, accompany them and support staff and volunteers to do the same. They will need outstanding interpersonal skills to navigate complex relationships with stakeholders, including managers within the detention facility, Home Office staff, other NGOs and JRS staff across Europe, as well as managing the varied network of volunteers they manage (many of whom are drawn from religious orders). JRS UK encourages highly collaborative forms of working, which they will need to model both in forming fruitful relationships with staff in other teams inside JRS UK and with other NGOs in the sector.

The Detention Outreach Manager needs to maintain up-to-date knowledge of the immigration and asylum policy context, particularly as relates to immigration detention and the specialist work of other NGOs, and must be able to apply that to situations affecting individuals in practice. Highly developed organisational and administrative skills are essential to manage staff and volunteers, databases and case-notes. They will also be expected to represent JRS in external meetings, including via short talks in Catholic parishes, schools and at sector conferences.

JRS offices around Europe have taken a leading role in arguing against the use of detention, highlighting its harmful impact on individuals, families and communities. The Detention Outreach Manager will need to ensure that the experiences of detainees accompanied by JRS are represented in advocacy work, both by JRS and via NGO networks, and they will work closely with other JRS staff to facilitate opportunities for detainees and former detainees to share their experiences themselves.

Prior experience of working in a small faith-based organisation would be helpful but sympathy for the motivation of those whose life is grounded in faith is essential. The Detention Outreach Manager will need to be willing to learn about and integrate aspects of the distinctive Jesuit approach into their role, particularly in facilitating support for staff and volunteers. JRS' distinctive person-centred mission extends to the way we seek to support and develop staff and volunteers for example, and we place a high priority on reflection on practice. If the successful candidate is not familiar with the Ignatian charism of the Jesuits, there will be the opportunity to develop it through training, workshops and days of retreat. The postholder will also need sensitivity to respond to the needs of detainees with varied faith backgrounds, serving all without proselytising and without discrimination or favour.

## Specific responsibilities

### Accompaniment and service of people in detention

- Regularly visit those in immigration detention and respond to needs through ongoing accompaniment and befriending.
- Organise and supervise regular volunteer visitors to accompany individuals in detention.
- Offer informal casework support, including through liaising with solicitors and making referrals to specialist agencies.
- Liaise with a range of staff and stakeholders at Heathrow IRC to enable JRS UK to provide services in the centre, including:
  - Arranging and maintaining access for volunteers.
  - Advertising JRS services to detainees, with a particular focus on reaching out to those who are most vulnerable.
  - Working collaboratively with the chaplaincy to respond to detainees' spiritual needs.
- Oversee the delivery of post-detention support, including the peer support group.

### People management

- Line manage the Detention Outreach Officer and the existing network of volunteers, offering managerial supervision and psychosocial support to enable them to continue to provide the highest standard of service to those detained.
- Develop a strategy for recruiting, managing, supporting and retaining volunteers and lead a recruitment drive to revitalise the existing network.
- Work with other service managers within JRS UK to identify training and development needs across service projects and oversee its delivery.
- Organise and facilitate regular volunteer meetings and mornings of sharing and reflection, creating opportunities for volunteers to support one another and reflect together on their experience of accompaniment, service and advocacy in an Ignatian way.

### Communications, outreach, fundraising and advocacy

- Work closely with staff in the JRS UK Communications and Development team to develop a strategy and resources to ensure that the experiences and the voices of those who are in detention are included in JRS' communications, enabling detainees and former detainees to share their experience, where appropriate.
- Actively monitor conditions in detention centres to identify systemic issues and work collaboratively with others to develop advocacy lines and strategies, with a special focus on monitoring the situation of particularly vulnerable groups (such as survivors of torture and trafficking).
- Work closely with the Policy Officer to identify issues affecting those who experience detention which should be brought to the attention of the Catholic community, policy makers and opinion formers.
- Represent JRS UK in NGO fora and networks, particularly relating to befriending activities and detention issues.
- Collaborate with other JRS offices, including the JRS Europe Regional office, to share practice and experience.
- Oversee the monthly reflection resource, *Praying with detainees*, and organise other awareness-raising activities (such as the yearly Christmas card initiative) as needed.
- Contribute to JRS UK's communications by drafting articles and speaking at external events, when 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 UK Director to develop strategy for future work.

## Personal growth and development

- Engage with opportunities for training and development and reflect regularly on practice, including:
  - Attending non-managerial supervision and psychological support to sustain self-care.
  - Actively participating in team reflection mornings.
  - Attending formation and training about Ignatian approaches.

## 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 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.
- Experience of working with people from diverse backgrounds, including working alongside those from refugee backgrounds, members of religious orders and others.
- 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.
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills, including confidence to make short speeches in public.
- Computer literacy and experience of maintaining databases.
- Ability to work flexibly as part of a small team.
- Creativity to develop future work.

### Desirable

- Prior experience of working in a detention or prison setting.
- Detailed knowledge of the immigration and asylum system.
- Familiarity with Ignatian spirituality.

**Duration:** Permanent contract  
**Location:** JRS UK office, Hurtado Jesuit Centre, London, UK; with regular travel to Heathrow IRC  
**Salary:** £ 30-35k pa; full-time  
**Pension:** Additional 10% of salary of employer's contribution.

**The person must be permitted to work in the UK (JRS UK is not able to obtain a work visa for this post). All staff and volunteers in the JRS UK Detention Outreach team are required to undergo a DBS check.**