
Job Description: Detention Outreach Officer

About JRS

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) accompanies, serves and advocates alongside and for the rights of refugees and forcibly displaced people. JRS in the UK supports people made destitute by the asylum process through advice and casework, practical support, emotional befriending and accompaniment, a programme of creative and therapeutic activities, accommodation, and specialist legal advice. JRS UK also runs a detention outreach service supporting people detained for the administration of immigration procedures at Harmondsworth and Colnbrook, including befriending, social visiting, and casework support. JRS UK undertakes research for advocacy to policy makers, alongside communications and community outreach, 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 UK is based in the Hurtado Jesuit Centre in Wapping, East London. JRS UK currently has 29 full and part-time staff and around 100 volunteers, drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds, nationalities and generations; people of all faiths and none; including refugees, young graduates and vowed members of religious congregations. This diversity of perspectives and experience is a source of particular strength for JRS' work. We work collaboratively with JRS offices around the world, other Jesuit projects in the UK and many others in the Church and wider refugee sector.

A Global Mission

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation with a shared global mission to accompany, serve and advocate alongside and for the rights of refugees and forcibly displaced people. JRS' 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.

JRS' values and ways of working are rooted in Catholic Social Teaching and Jesuit (Ignatian) spirituality: JRS actively encourages reflective practice and participative decision-making at all levels of the organisation, as well as investment in, and care for our staff and volunteer teams.

Detention Outreach Officer

The Detention Outreach Officer is a full-time post, joining a small team at the JRS UK offices in Wapping.

The JRS UK Detention Outreach project supports individuals who are detained in the Heathrow Immigration Removal Centres (Harmondsworth and Colnbrook), and those who continue to be affected by their experience of detention following their release. This busy and varied role focuses on providing holistic casework support to those in immigration detention, especially those who are most vulnerable and struggle to self-advocate. Combining pastoral accompaniment, practical support and advice, the Detention Outreach Officer will encounter a wide range of immigration cases and provide appropriate and tailored advice to each individual they support.

The Detention Outreach Officer will also support individuals who are released from, but continue to be affected by immigration detention. Through relationships built across the NGO sector, the Detention Outreach Officer will refer individuals to local organisations who can most appropriately assist with reintegration into the community. They will provide in-depth and pro-

active support to high-need individuals supported in detention who continue to require long-term accompaniment on release. The Detention Outreach Officer will be responsible for managing their own caseload and will be required to work closely with the Detention Team and volunteers.

The post-holder should have a good understanding and empathy of the issues and challenges faced by asylum-seekers and refugees, with particular focus on immigration detention. They will need highly developed listening skills, personal resilience and emotional maturity to respond to the emotional and practical needs of asylum seekers, accompany them and support them to positively progress with their lives. They need to have, and maintain, an up-to-date knowledge of the immigration and asylum context as it relates to our work in immigration detention and be able to apply that to situations affecting individuals in practice.

The Detention Outreach Officer will be happy to work in a small faith-based organisation and have a willingness to integrate JRS UK's ethos of accompaniment in their approach whilst also demonstrating sensitivity in responding to the needs of destitute and detained individuals.

JRS UK is committed to providing opportunities to individuals who may otherwise face obstacles in accessing salaried work in the asylum and refugee sector. This position is a good opportunity for someone who is looking to gain experience and develop in a supportive environment in order to have a long and positive impact within the sector.

Equal Opportunities

JRS is committed to encouraging and recruiting candidates from refugee and migrant backgrounds to ensure that we reflect those we serve. We particularly welcome applications from people with lived experience of detention and the UK asylum system.

Key duties and responsibilities

Accompaniment and service of people in detention

- Regularly visit and accompany those in immigration detention as part of JRS UK's weekly welfare drop-in
- Provide pastoral, emotional and practical support to those in immigration detention
- Organise and support regular volunteer visitors to accompany individuals in detention
- Collaborate with other JRS UK staff and volunteers to ensure refugees are supported holistically and in line with the JRS ethos of accompaniment.

Advice and Casework

Detention Outreach

- Provide one-off support and advice to individuals attending JRS UK's weekly Welfare Drop In
- Identify and prioritise individuals requiring emotional and casework support and assess their needs
- Provide casework and advice for individuals requiring ongoing accompaniment from JRS
- Facilitate access to experienced immigration solicitors, public law solicitors and specialist organisations where appropriate
- Identify common problems and issues arising from detention
- Keep abreast of relevant developments in asylum/immigration law and procedures

Post-Detention Support

- Identify and provide in-depth support to individuals who qualify for JRS UK's Post Detention Support
- Provide initial re-integration support for individuals released back into the community
- Provide onward referrals to immigration solicitors, other legal specialists and agencies to ensure access to essential services

General

- Actively support colleagues, volunteers and collaborate across teams and networks
- Identify opportunities for individuals to share their experiences and contribute to JRS UK's advocacy and communications work
- Provide regular reports on casework
- Contribute to briefings and witness statements
- Continually update the data and case-management system
- Actively contribute to organisational development
- Undertake other related activities to support JRS's work
- Comply with JRS policies and procedures

Personal growth and development

- Engage with opportunities for training and development and reflect regularly on practice, including:
 - Ongoing training in areas such as asylum & immigration system, mental health support/therapeutic care, rights and entitlements of those we serve, etc.
 - Day workshops and trainings relating to JRS' mission and ethos
 - Participation in team reflection mornings.

Person Specification

Essential

- Sympathy and congruence with the values of JRS and commitment to JRS' mission of accompaniment, service and advocacy on behalf of refugees.
- Highly developed listening skills, empathy and sensitivity for one-on-one work with vulnerable individuals
- High level of personal resilience and emotional maturity for working closely with people in distress; the role will be constantly exposed to traumatic accounts within an intense detained environment
- Outstanding interpersonal skills and the ability to build strong relationships with asylum seekers and others within and without the organisation
- Experience of working with refugees, vulnerable migrants or other marginalised groups
- Familiarity of assisting people experiencing mental health problems
- Experience of providing advice and support to vulnerable individuals and maintaining clear and accurate records
- Experience of managing a busy workload with tight deadlines
- Excellent communication skills
- IT literacy and competency with Word, Excel and databases
- Ability to work flexibly and collaboratively as part of a small and varied team
- Ability to work outside normal office hours as required

- Commitment to ongoing personal growth and development
- Detailed knowledge of the immigration and asylum system
- Commitment to principles underlying equal opportunities

Desirable

- Lived experience of the UK immigration system
- Experience of working or volunteering in a faith-based organisation or similar setting
- Experience of working in a detention or prison setting
- Knowledge of an additional language
- Experience of managing and working with volunteers

JRS UK is committed to equal opportunities and race equality. We are keen to receive applications from people with experience of the UK immigration system.

The successful candidate will be offered the job subject to references and an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Please send your CV and covering letter by to Naomi Blackwell, Detention Outreach Manager, naomi.blackwell@jrs.net. We welcome information conversations about this role, please do contact Naomi to arrange a call.

Hours:	Full-time (37.5 hours)
Duration:	18-month fixed term contract; potentially renewable
Location:	JRS UK Office, Hurtado Jesuit Centre, Wapping, London, E1W 2QT and hybrid working
Salary:	£30,000 - £34,000 per annum depending on experience
Pension:	Additional 10% of salary of employer's contribution