



Director

Candidate brief 

January 2025



Voices in Exile

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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Voices in Exile.

Voices in Exile works with refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants with no recourse to public funds in Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex. We offer both practical and legal support including generalist advice, support to people on resettlement programmes and specialist immigration casework for those who would otherwise be unable to access justice.



As an organisation we are committed to encouraging people to find positive ways to address their own needs, build skills and resilience, and work towards integration in the UK. Our vision is of social justice, positive wellbeing and improved quality of life for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants at risk.

In what has been an extremely challenging time, we have continued to support refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants. We have been able to do so because of our committed staff and volunteers, and the support from our funders and donors. As a charity we have grown organically since our inception twenty years ago. In that time we have supported thousands of people in the community of Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex with our vital services and have also been a prominent voice for change within the field in which we work.

We have now reached a critical growth point, and our work over the past few years has led us to a point where we want to consolidate, reflect and plan strategically for a sustainable future.

After eight successful years of growing the charity, our director Mel Steel is stepping down from brilliantly steering our organisation. We are now looking for a new leader, who can join our amazing team of staff and volunteers and nurture the organisation so that it continues to thrive. This is a brilliant opportunity for someone to build on this success and our achievements, including working closely



I can't even begin to say how helpful the advisers were. They have walked the journey with me right by side step by step, I am more than grateful of the service, the support I had is unimaginable, unbelievable, they kept my mental health in check they have picked me up from my lowest.

with Brighton & Hove City Council. There is still much to do: one thing we know for sure is that demand on our services is not going to decrease anytime soon. We are looking for our next Director to build upon our existing achievements including influencing our funders and our community and partner organisations to push forward our agenda for positive change.

As a Board we are committed to continuing to work in partnership with others to build a fairer and more caring society. We are extremely proud of Voices' work as the only provider of free, regulated, out-of-scope immigration advice in the region. There is an effective and enthusiastic team in place, which a new leader will have the scope to develop as they assist in shaping the next phase of our strategic direction. The Director we are looking for will share our values of human rights and an approach that is collaborative, empowering, pragmatic and committed.

We believe passionately in individuals telling their own stories to achieve social change. We particularly welcome applications from individuals with a refugee background or with lived experience of the issues we're tackling.

If you think you could be the new leader of Voices in Exile, please get in touch. I look forward to receiving your application.

Nicholas Scott-Flynn

Chair of the Board of Trustees



About Voices in Exile

Voices in Exile is a registered charity that works with refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants with no recourse to public funds in Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex.

We offer both practical and legal support including generalist advice, support to people on resettlement programmes and specialist immigration casework for those who would otherwise be unable to access justice.

As part of our holistic approach, we also advocate for, accompany and enable people to access services, build community, and develop their own potential through a programme of learning and creative activities. We are working towards becoming an organisation better informed by lived experience.

Voices has held the contract for resettlement work in the city since 2016, and we are contracted by Brighton and Hove City Council to continue this work until at least the end of September 2027.

“ Service provision from ViE has been excellent and has been adaptable and flexible to the ever and sudden evolvment of new government resettlement programmes, starting with the VPRS, then the UK resettlement scheme and the recent ARAP and ACRS.

Brighton & Hove Equalities, Community Safety & Human Rights Committee October 2023



I better understand my rights and entitlements; I am sleeping better; I feel better able to make decisions; I am eating better; I feel better able to access local services; I am more interested in doing other activities; I feel less worried; I feel safer.

Our vision and mission

Our vision

Our vision is of social justice, positive wellbeing and improved quality of life for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants at risk.

Our mission

Our mission is to improve access to justice, housing, healthcare, education, employment and other services and entitlements through the exercise of rights, advocacy and social inclusion.



I am eternally grateful for the assistance I received from Voices in Exile. Their efforts have enabled me to work. They make every effort to ensure that everyone is at the very least adequately cared for.

Our values

Our work – both what we do and how we do it – is rooted in our core values. These include:

Respect – We aim to treat all those with whom we work, whether clients, colleagues or partners, with respect, compassion and dignity.

Justice – We believe in access to justice for all and will strive to secure it and to challenge injustice with and on behalf of our clients wherever we can.

Inclusivity – We want our services, activities, staffing and organisational culture to reflect the lived experience, views and voices of our clients and service users.

Openness – We want to build a work ethos and environment that is welcoming, transparent, reflective, and that models the world we want to see.

Solidarity – We stand in solidarity with all those who have been subject to the UK immigration system and hostile environment.

Professionalism – We believe in the importance of working to the standards of best practice and integrity at all times.



Our 2022-2026 strategy

Support people to access and exercise their basic legal rights and entitlements

We will support people to:

- Feel respected and listened to;
- Work towards long-term secure immigration status;
- Have their basic needs met, including access to appropriate food, housing, financial support and healthcare;
- Secure and improve their knowledge of rights and entitlements.

Support people to access services, build community, develop their own agency and fulfil their own potential

We will support people to:

- Improve their English language and communication skills;
- Increase their knowledge, understanding and take up of local services;
- Build friendships and improve community support networks;
- Be digitally equipped and literate;
- Make progress towards personal goals and opportunities including employment, education and learning new skills.

Support local organisations to develop more inclusive policy and practice

We will work with local statutory and voluntary sector partners to:

- Increase knowledge and awareness of needs of people from refugee, asylum seeker and migrant communities and backgrounds;
- Increase awareness of and support for policy and practice changes that would make their organisations more inclusive;
- Recognise and respect the strengths of diverse communities and cultures and their contributions to creating a more inclusive city and region.



Develop local knowledge and partnerships to identify key issues and advocate for change

We will:

- Use our casework to build a strong evidence base;
- Share our learning and knowledge with key partners;
- Influence and effect changes and improvements in law, policy and practice.

Become an organisation that is robust, responsive and sustainable

We will become an organisation that:

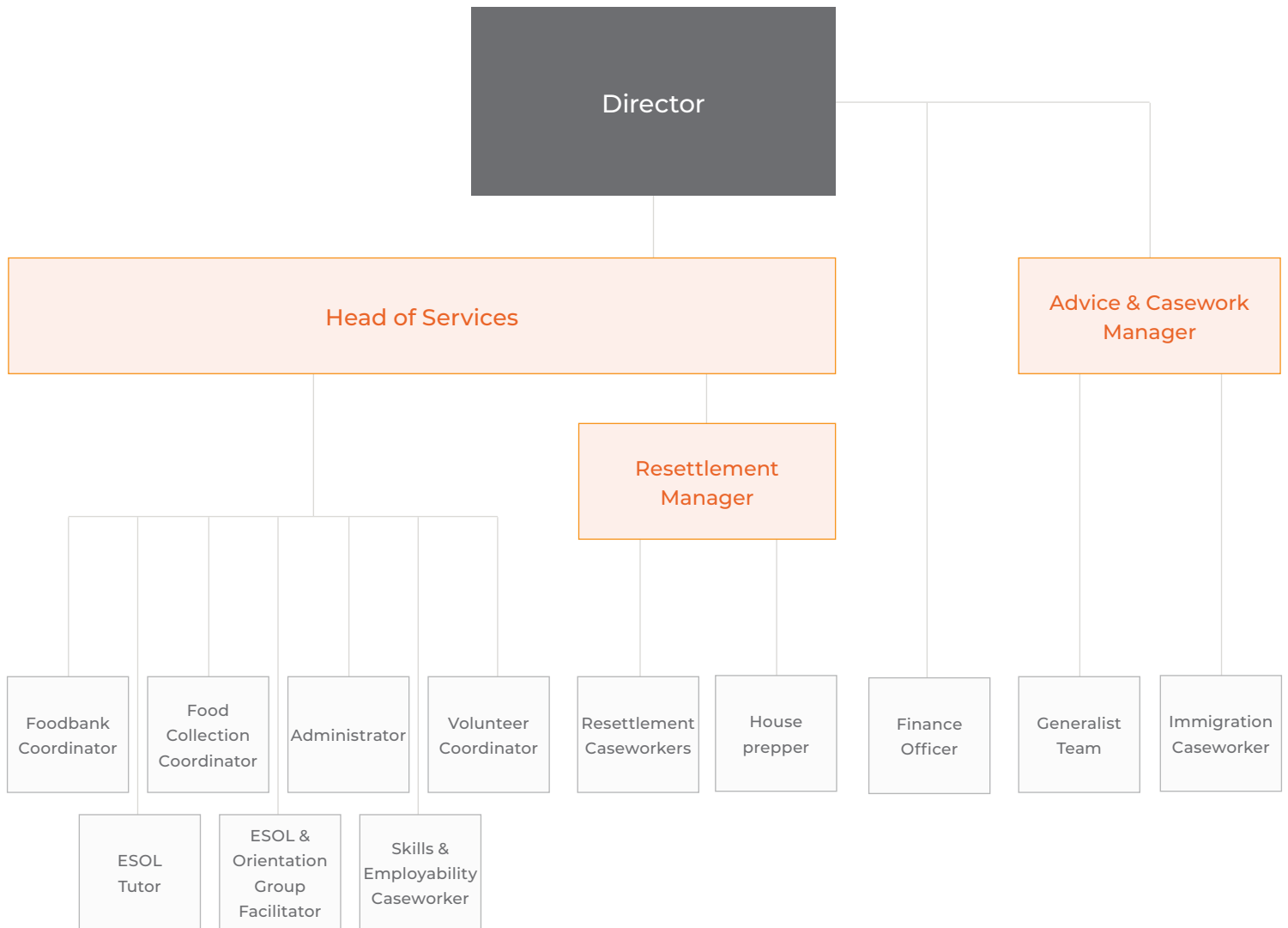
- Has in place services, infrastructure and governance that are robust, fit for purpose and that meet the standards of best practice at all times;
- Has a clearly articulated strategic vision and realistic operational plan;
- Is recognised by funders as a charity worth investing in;
- Prioritises and makes time for learning, reflection and wellbeing;
- Manages growth responsibly, so that we can remain agile, flexible and able to adapt and respond quickly to changing circumstances without compromising our core services and values.

For further information about Voices in Exile please visit the following links:

- [Organisation's website](#)
- [Annual report](#)
- [Strategic plan 2022-2026](#)



Organogram





Job description

Job title	Director
Responsible to	Board of Trustees
Responsible for	Staff and volunteers
Contract	Permanent
Hours	Full-time – 35 hours per week
Salary	c. £55,000 – £60,000
Holiday entitlement	25 days per annum pro rata, with one additional day per annum for every completed year of service at 1st April, up to a maximum of 30 days
Flexible working	We offer hybrid and flexible working as far as possible within the operational needs of the role; but envisage that for this post you would need to be in the office at least 50% of the time
Benefits	3% employee pension, 5% employer's pension; access to professional mentoring; cycle-to-work scheme

Postholders will need to have the right to work in the UK.



Job purpose

We are looking for a collaborative and values-driven Director who can provide the vision and strategic leadership needed to take Voices through the next stage of its development.

You will:

- Lead the work of Voices, working with our trustees, staff, volunteers and clients to implement our vision of social justice and improved quality of life for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants at risk in East and West Sussex;
- Be responsible for implementing and co-devising our strategic plan and for the overall operational management, administration, finance and fundraising of the organisation;
- Lead on building our relationships with external stakeholders and developing our influencing and advocacy work;
- Together with the Chair, enable the Board of Trustees to fulfil its duties and responsibilities for good governance of the charity, ensuring that it receives appropriate advice and information on all relevant matters.

Scope of role

Leadership and strategic planning

- Develop and implement Voices' current strategic plan and work with trustees, staff, volunteers and clients to begin the iteration of a new strategic plan from 2026;
- Ensure that the values of the organisation are upheld and role-modelled throughout every aspect of the organisation, including a culture of respect, positivity and passion for high standards;
- Manage and lead the senior management team and whole staff team to ensure that colleagues are valued, empowered, and engaged to deliver our mission, and that performance against our goals is recognised;
- Ensure effective operational and financial management of the organisation and of its resources and staff;
- Ensure the development of the organisation's monitoring and evaluation requirements in response to the needs of funders, the organisation and clients;
- Ensure that the organisation is accountable to our Board and stakeholders and the voices of all those we work with are heard in developing plans and strategy.



I feel there is hope for me and my children. Voices in Exile have showed me and done it for me; they listened, cared for me and my children, having them by my side gave me strength and hope to keep going.

Management

- Work with trustees, staff, volunteers and clients to identify and promote best practice and foster a shared working ethos of respect, openness and responsiveness within which people can flourish individually and collectively, have opportunities to learn, and be part of a supportive, inclusive, and high-performing team;
- Lead the staff and senior management teams and directly line-manage senior managers, supporting them with regular supervision and appraisals to facilitate their development and enable them effectively to support and manage frontline staff, including through appropriate training, collective care and wellbeing, and access to clinical supervision;
- Ensure that the structure of the organisation is effective to support Voices' growth and develop policies and systems as needed to ensure effective and accountable management of the organisation;
- Maintain own training and development and model good practice in managing own wellbeing and work/life balance.

Governance and accountability

- Provide the Board of Trustees, funders and other stakeholders with timely, clear and comprehensive reports so they can monitor and evaluate Voices' performance and governance;
- Accountable for the overall safe operation of the charity, including compliance with all relevant legal duties and best practice relating to e.g. health & safety, equalities, information & data processing and safeguarding;



- Ensure that the roles of staff and trustee safeguarding leads within the organisation are filled and are properly resourced and supported, and a culture of safeguarding established throughout the organisation;
- Ensure compliance with relevant regulatory bodies including the Charity Commission, Immigration Advice Authority (formerly Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner), the Fundraising Regulator and Companies House;
- Undertake other duties as agreed with the Chair and the Board of Trustees.

Legal and casework

- Support our advice & casework manager and generalist and immigration caseworkers to maintain the high legal and advice standards and holistic approach for which Voices is known;
- Ensure that we remain compliant with relevant regulatory frameworks including the OISC Code of Standards.

Finance

- Oversee the management of Voices' finances together with the treasurer and the finance officer, including management and annual accounts and financial reporting, to ensure that Voices remains financially healthy and complies with its legal obligations and good practice;
- Ensure that income and expenditure is controlled in line with budgets, making sure that potential risks are identified and managed.

Fundraising and communications

- Develop and lead on the delivery of our fundraising strategy, including attracting funding from grant-making trusts, donors and supporters;
- Together with our head of services, actively identify and apply for relevant grants from trusts and foundations;
- Together with our head of services, develop and lead on key relationships with funders and donors, including regular reporting and ensuring that donors are kept informed;
- Together with our head of services, develop and deliver our communications strategy and ensure that our internal and external comms are consistent and effective.



Advocacy and influencing

- Act as a key ambassador and spokesperson for Voices and represent Voices and our clients to the media, decision makers and other influencers;
- Ensure that our advocacy and influencing work is based on the voices of those with lived experience and that our advocacy work is informed by our clients at every level;
- Identify emerging needs and trends and the most effective ways to effect policy change where needed, whether through local advocacy or strategic litigation;
- Collaborate with local, regional and national partners to amplify the voices of those with lived experience and drive systemic change;
- Ensure that the organisation remains abreast and well-informed of developments in the external policy environment;
- Ensure that Voices both learns from and shares best practice with other organisations.



Person specification

To succeed in this role you'll need to demonstrate most of the following experiences and skills – but please don't be put off from applying if you haven't done everything listed here. If you can meet most of these points, and think this is the job for you, please do consider applying.

Experience

- Significant and effective leadership and management of a small charity at a senior level;
- Significant and demonstrable experience of managing people and teams and getting the best out of staff and volunteers;
- Experience of building relationships with a range of stakeholders;
- Experience of representing an organisation externally and acting as a proactive ambassador for the charity;
- Experience of developing strategic plans, identifying and delivering on key performance indicators and service delivery objectives;
- Experience of successfully developing and managing budgets and effective long term financial planning and management of resources in a frontline organisation;
- Experience of successful fundraising from trusts and foundations or commissioning, as well as delivering and reporting on agreed outcomes and monitoring and evaluating services;
- Experience of advocating for and promoting the voices of marginalised and excluded communities;
- Demonstrable commitment to diversity, inclusion, and anti-racist practice;
- Lived experience of forced migration and/or of the UK immigration system.



It was very comforting to know that there is someone out there who knows and care about your case, when things got on top of that I can actual pick up the phone and express myself without being judged.

Skills and knowledge

- Deep understanding of the issues faced by refugees, asylum seeker, migrants and people with no recourse to public funds in the UK;
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to foster new partnerships, nurture and maintain existing relationships and work collaboratively with trustees, colleagues, clients, funders and other stakeholders;
- Good knowledge of the charity funding landscape and of migration sector funding opportunities and challenges;
- Excellent verbal and written communicator;
- Persuasive speaker, capable of positively influencing a wide range of audiences;
- Ability to work creatively and flexibly in a diverse range of situations and with a wide variety of people and organisations;
- Ability to lead on strategic planning and implementation, and to work closely with a diverse Board of Trustees;
- Ability to manage competing priorities and a challenging workload;
- Ability to develop a culture of respect, openness and learning, where people feel encouraged and supported to work to the best of their ability.



Personal qualities

- Principled, compassionate, values-led, collaborative, supportive, creative, responsive and persuasive;
- A strategic and creative thinker capable of horizon-scanning for threats and opportunities, and identifying ways to achieve positive impact;
- Good political judgement and understanding of political and legal systems;
- Self-motivated, resilient, and able to work independently whilst keeping others informed and being accountable to the Chair and Board of Trustees;
- Ability to manage multiple priorities and pay attention both to detail and to the bigger picture;
- Excellent role model and builder of teams, able to foster an environment of mutual trust and respect;
- Demonstrable and deep commitment to Voices' values, vision and mission including protecting and promoting the rights of refugees and migrants and leading an inclusive, anti-racist organisation.



The staff and volunteers were very welcoming and kind. They were eager to listen to how I was coping with my family situation and offered me hope when I felt hopeless.



Terms and conditions

Hours

Full-time – 35 hours per week

Salary

c. £55,000 – £60,000

Holiday entitlement

25 days per annum pro rata, with one additional day per annum for every completed year of service at 1st April, up to a maximum of 30 days

Flexible working

We offer hybrid and flexible working as far as possible within the operational needs of the role; but envisage that for this post you would need to be in the office at least 50% of the time

Benefits

3% employee pension, 5% employer's pension; access to professional mentoring; cycle-to-work scheme



How to apply

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact our recruitment partner, NFP Consulting:

Carroll Lloyd Director | NFP Consulting
07765 001 033 carroll.lloyd@nfpconsulting.co.uk



Please apply online at: www.nfpconsulting.co.uk/VIE

Application is by way of CV and a supporting statement, which should outline your motivations for wanting to be our Director and clearly address the requirements set out in the person specification. The supporting statement should be no more than two sides of A4.

Voices in Exile is proud of the diversity of its staff, volunteers, the community members who use our services, and our trustees. We welcome applications from individuals with lived experience of forced migration and/or of the UK immigration system.

We value what each person brings. We are determined that people from all backgrounds should feel welcome and comfortable at Voices and that they are able to make full use of the services and opportunities that we have to offer.

Closing date: Midnight Sunday 16th February 2025

Selection process and timescales

Stage 1: Week commencing 24th February 2025

First round of screening interviews conducted by NFP Consulting via Zoom.

Stage 2: Wednesday 12th March

This stage will be an in-person interview with Trustees. There will also be an opportunity to meet key internal staff members as part of the process.



Accessibility

Please let us know if you have any special requirements which we might need to consider in relation to the selection process, e.g. attending interview. Any requests for reasonable adjustments will not influence the decision-making process.

Please let us know if you would like to receive this information in a different format.

