

Company number: **07448744**

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YOUNGROOTS

Young Roots Chief Executive Candidate Brief

May 2023



Welcome Letter from Grace Capel, Chair of Trustees

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chief Executive of Young Roots. We have an exciting opportunity for a dynamic and skilled Chief Executive, with a strong commitment to the rights of young asylum-seekers and refugees, to lead the organisation and its enthusiastic team into the next chapter of our development.



Young Roots' work is more important than ever in this challenging time for the young people we work with. The increasingly hostile government rhetoric and regressive laws and policies have had a detrimental effect on the lives of young people, many of whom are separated from their family and experience social isolation, as well as poor mental health arising from past trauma.

Young Roots has a strong track record of responding to what is needed and providing expert support to young people, and we are committed to developing our work in response to the current context in our next strategic period (2024 – 2027). Our innovative Advice and Support Hub model involves our youth activities being run alongside our Casework, with expert partners providing psychological support, counselling, and legal advice. We also provide vital mental health and wellbeing support to newly arrived young asylum-seekers in Home Office 'contingency accommodation' through our Youth Welfare project and have a thriving Youth Development programme.

As Chief Executive, you will have the courage and tenacity to lead the organisation through uncertain and complex situations, especially in the current macro-environment. You will provide strategic direction and leadership to our team, oversee day-to-day operations, and work collaboratively with the trustees and senior leadership to ensure effective governance and sound financial, operational, risk and people management. You will ensure that Diversity Equity and Inclusion is prioritised across all aspects of our work and maintain a focus on staff wellbeing. Above all, you will be committed to making a positive impact on the lives of the young people we work with, ensuring their participation is valued and they play a meaningful role at all levels of the organisation.

Young Roots is well-positioned to amplify the voices of young asylum-seekers and refugees on the issues that matter to them. Together with our Policy and Campaigns Manager, you will develop and implement a strategy for our policy and campaigning work, with the aim of making positive change for young asylum-seekers and refugees. We are looking for a Chief Executive who is excited to develop this new area of our work and will embrace an externally facing role.

Young Roots is an organisation with strong values and a collaborative approach. As a trustee since 2012, and now as Chair, I am continually impressed by the skill and dedication of our staff and the strength and resilience of the young people we work with. If you share our values and have the skills and experience that we are looking for, I hope that you will feel inspired to apply. We are committed to ensuring that we better represent the young people we work with and encourage applications from minoritized applicants and those with lived experience of the asylum system.



Letter from the outgoing Chief Executive

Leading Young Roots, and collaborating with our wonderful leadership, staff and trustee teams to build the impact and sustainability of the charity, with the support of fantastic partners, has been an absolute privilege over the last seven years.

Young Roots is celebrated for the quality of our delivery and approach to working with young people. The hostility of the external environment and government policies is more harmful and alarming than I've ever experienced before. As we look to our new strategic period the charity is focused on ensuring the transformational impact of our work with young people, and developing our campaigning and influencing work in response to this context. The time is right for a new Chief Executive to lead this work with passion and renewed vigour. The timing of my decision to step down will allow the new Chief Executive to build on the initial stages of our 2024 – 2027 strategy development and work with the trustees, senior leadership and staff teams to define the direction of Young Roots over the next period.



It has been a real journey: when I started in 2016, we were a small team of 9 staff with a moderate income. Informed by the needs and wishes of young people, we established our vital Casework service, launched our flagship Advice & Support Hubs and responded to the support and wellbeing needs of those placed in contingency accommodation. Thanks to a dedicated and expert staff team, now grown to 28, we are able to holistically support many more young people to rebuild their lives and look to the future. Alongside this, we have successfully developed our core functions and grown our fundraising to £1.6m.

The new post holder will come to an organisation with high calibre senior colleagues, Chair of Trustees and trustee team, a wonderful staff team, and in a sustainable position. I will look forward to seeing the development and increased impact of Young Roots over the years to come and as an active, committed supporter. This is a wonderful and vital role for the right person.

Jo Cobley

About us

Founded in 2004, Young Roots supports young refugees and asylum seekers aged 11-25, from across London, to improve their wellbeing and fulfil their potential.

Our aims are to support young refugees and asylum seekers to understand and access their rights and entitlements; reduce social isolation and loneliness; improve their mental health and wellbeing; and improve their confidence, communication and leadership skills.

Young Roots has particular expertise in supporting the transition of young refugees from childhood to adulthood, enabling them to understand and navigate their changing rights and entitlements, as well as supporting their emotional development during these crucial years.

From 2023, we will be using our grassroots knowledge and expertise to contribute to wider systems and policy change for young refugees and asylum seekers, by seeking to positively influence and change the systems that are meant to support and protect them. This work will launch imminently with the recent appointment of our Policy & Campaigns Manager.

Equally, we are focused on progressing our work on staff wellbeing and diversity, equity and inclusion in the coming period as we strive to be the best organisation that we can be, and work hard to address the inherent discrimination in our society.



Our vision, mission and values

Our Vision

A world where all young refugees and asylum seekers realise their rights and fulfil their potential.

Our Mission

To work alongside young people and support them to improve their wellbeing and life chances.

Our Values

Young Roots will involve young refugees and asylum seekers, and others who are **'experts by their experience'**, at all levels of the organisation. We will have a human rights and asset-based approach, and prioritise youth participation and leadership.


Young Roots will develop their approach to **diversity, equity and inclusion** throughout the organisation, consciously recognising and working to rectify inherent inequity within our society and how this manifests itself at Young Roots. We will particularly work to ensure representation amongst staff, trustees, volunteers and facilitators.

Young Roots welcomes all young refugees and asylum seekers from anywhere in the world, irrespective of religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender, race, religion and belief. We **strive to address inequity faced by young people** based on their identity.

Young Roots promotes **collaboration and working in partnership** with relevant organisations in order to provide the best possible services, activities and projects.

Young Roots aims for excellence and best quality in all that we do, valuing **responsiveness, understanding, respect, responsibility, creativity, knowledge, participation and kindness**.

Young Roots values **staff and volunteer wellbeing** and strives to provide a working environment that will allow the development of a diverse team to deliver their best work.



"Being listened to by the staff has helped me a lot. There were so many times, I felt so overwhelmed and needed to someone just to listen to me."

- Young person



Current context

In 2022 we worked with 873 young people from 45 countries, through:

- our Youth Development programme incorporating weekly youth clubs, women-only groups, sporting activities, English-language learning programmes, work-readiness and youth leadership, an annual programme of trips and residentials, and one-to-one youth work support;
- our one-to-one Casework service providing expert support, advice and advocacy to young people facing complex challenges, enabling them to access high-quality legal advice, welfare and housing support, mental and physical healthcare and education;
- our holistic Advice & Support Hub model, integrating our established youth and sporting activities and English-language programmes, with our one-to-one Casework service and access to specialist therapeutic support and legal advice;
- our Youth Welfare project addressing the mental health and wellbeing needs of young refugees placed in contingency accommodation ('hotels'). Building on the learnings from our pilot Wembley project, we are now replicating this successful model, combining our youth work and Casework approach, in Croydon and Kings Cross.

[You can view our current strategy for 2021 – 2024 here.](#)

[You can view our impact here.](#)

Case study of a young woman accessing our weekly Hub and Casework service

When I first arrived in the UK, I was overwhelmed with anxiety. I could not communicate with others and had no understanding of the systems in place. I felt a strong sense of hopelessness and isolation. Compared to when I first arrived in the UK, things are very different now. I have recently been granted refugee status – a month before giving birth to my new-born daughter! I no longer fear returning to my country of origin and can focus on building a future here in the UK. The asylum process has been lengthy and difficult, however, attending university and working to provide for myself and my daughter now seems achievable.

Attending the Hub also greatly improved my confidence in my language skills, as all the activities and workshops are in English, and I felt encouraged to practice my English with other young people and staff. I was also appointed as a Young Leader, a role which involved raising awareness on the issues that matter to asylum seekers and advising on the activities that should be run at the Hub.

My Caseworker has provided me with both practical and emotional support since working with them, and I sometimes wonder what I would have done without them. I find it difficult sharing my story with others, but with gentle encouragement I have been able to access mental health support, which has helped me to feel calmer and happier in the UK. My Caseworker has advocated on my behalf to ensure that I am provided with appropriate accommodation, assisted in immigration delays, accessing health care, education, and is now supporting me with my move-on plan since being granted status. My Caseworker always ensures that I understand what is happening in my case, and as a result I am more aware of my rights and how to navigate specific systems. What I am most grateful for, however, is our conversations and the way in which they make me feel heard, supported, and cared for.



Job Description – Chief Executive

Salary:	c.£65,000 per annum, depending on experience
Contract:	Permanent contract
Hours:	Full-time (35 hours per week), flexible working considered
Location:	Croydon office, with 1-2 days per week in Brent (hybrid, subject to discussion)
Accountable to:	Board of Trustees
Responsible for:	Whole staff team, Volunteers, Associates, Consultants, Freelancers

To lead and develop Young Roots in a way that ensures continuity and growth in response to changing needs, as well as upholding its vision, mission and values.

To lead Young Roots' senior leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve its mission of supporting young refugees and asylum-seekers.

Key Responsibilities:

Strategic planning

- Work closely and collaboratively with the Board of Trustees, senior colleagues and the staff team, to develop a strategic plan for the organisation.
- Participate as a key member of the Finance and Audit, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Wellbeing sub-committees of the Trustee Board; and attend all Trustee Board meetings, providing clear, relevant papers as required.
- Plan and lead weekly Senior Leadership Team meetings.
- Develop and deploy annual delivery plans to implement the organisational strategy within budget.

Leadership and organisation management

- Develop a strategy for Diversity Equity and Inclusion across the organisation and lead on the implementation of this strategy.
- Foster an open, collaborative and positive organisational culture that values diversity, equity, and inclusion, and staff wellbeing.
- Maintain strong team morale whilst responding flexibly to changes in the external environment.
- Develop and maintain strong and collaborative relationships with partners in the sector.

Governance, Operations and Safeguarding

- Lead the charity's operations, including programme development, budgeting, and staff management, working together with the Head of Finance and Internal Operations.
- Oversee and be responsible for the effective financial administration of the charity, ensuring that budgets are set and followed and carefully monitored.
- Be the Designated Safeguarding lead and ensure the successful implementation of our safeguarding strategy and process.

- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure that the organisation's resources are used effectively and efficiently.
- Work with the Head of Programmes and Quality to ensure high quality delivery and implementation of the charity's programmes.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the charity's programs together with the Head of Fundraising and Development.

Campaigning, Advocacy and External Relations

- Advocate for and champion the rights of children and young people who are seeking asylum or are refugees in the UK.
- Develop and implement a policy and campaigns strategy, together with the Policy and Campaigns Manager, that advances the charity's mission.
- Lead the charity's advocacy efforts, working with the Policy and Campaigns Manager to execute campaigns that bring about positive and meaningful change and engage the public in our work.
- Represent the organisation to the public, media, and government officials.
- Build and maintain relationships with key partners and stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations and funders.

Income Generation

- Together with the Head of Fundraising and Development, develop a fundraising strategy and oversee diverse fundraising efforts to ensure the financial sustainability of the organisation.

Other

- Develop and implement a digital transformation strategy, embedded within the organisational strategy, ensuring strong digital leadership and purposeful digital adaptation.

General Duties

This job description sets out duties that exist at the moment so may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level or scope of responsibility.

"I had a dream about coming to the UK - a dream for a better life and future. But it has been a struggle for the years that I have been here. I have had some terrible experiences. Young Roots have helped me get over some of those experiences and to look forward."

- Young person

Person Specification – Chief Executive

Essential Knowledge

- Knowledge of the UK immigration and asylum legal and policy landscape.
- Understanding of and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of organisational work.
- Solid financial acumen as it relates to the running of an organisation.
- Developed understanding of raising funds in a charity context.
- Understanding of and commitment to digital transformation to ensure the charity's effectiveness and sustainability.
- Knowledge of legal and regulatory requirements for charities.

Desirable knowledge

- Knowledge of the UK immigration and asylum policy landscape and its impact on young asylum-seekers and refugees.
- Knowledge and understanding of how to develop impactful advocacy and campaigning messages.

Essential Experience

- Demonstrable experience in a senior leadership role within a similar sized charity/not for profit or equivalent, with an understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and positioning of an organisation of our size.
- Demonstrable experience of effective partnership working.
- Demonstrable experience of managing a diverse staff team.
- Experience of maximising income generation from a broad range of fundraising sources.

Desirable Experience

- Lived experience of being a refugee or asylum seeker.
- Senior leadership role with a focus on services for refugees and asylum-seekers, and/or youth work.
- Experience of designing and leading effective campaigns and influencing at a senior level.
- Developing and implementing an effective fundraising strategy.
- Experience of managing complex projects while bringing individuals or groups with different perspectives together to achieve a common goal.
- To have worked closely and collaboratively with a Trustee Board.

Skills and abilities

- Effective collaborator with the ability to develop and maintain relationships and partnerships with non-governmental organisations, funders and other stakeholders.
- Ability and aptitude to adapt to opportunities and challenges, internally and externally.
- Open and consultative leadership style.

- Strong commitment to diversity equity and inclusion and staff wellbeing in all aspects of organisational work.
- Ability to develop effective advocacy strategies.
- Articulate and persuasive communicator, capable of connecting with stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.
- Strong interpersonal skills, a natural relationship builder with influencing and negotiation skills.
- Ability to inspire our team and stakeholders and build morale in a challenging external environment.
- Commitment to staff progression, professional development, and staff retention.
- Ability to travel between UK-based offices as needed and ensure cohesion across delivery sites.

Terms and Conditions

- Auto enrolment pension scheme: Young Roots pays 5% of the mandatory 8% and you pay 3%.
- 25 days holiday a year (with an additional 3 days given when the office closes at Christmas) plus statutory holidays.
- Flexi annual leave, employees have the opportunity to carry forward up to 5 days.
- The longer you work here, the more annual holiday you will be entitled to. This is awarded by 1 day for each complete year achieved as of 1 January each year, up to a maximum of 28 days holiday each year.
- After 5 years of being with Young Roots, you will receive a one-off extra week holiday (pro-rata for part time employees) to be taken within 2 years.
- TOIL policy, meaning time off in lieu. This means extra time worked can be taken back by the employee within our TOIL policy.
- Comprehensive Employee Assistance Package.
- We are committed to the continuous learning and development of all staff to enable people to develop individual skills and realise their full potential. We aim to engage all staff in training and ensure you get the training you need to do your job well.



Young Roots' Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

We want Young Roots' leadership and team to reflect a range of backgrounds and identities, and most importantly represent the people we exist to support. We believe that such increased diversity at organisational leadership level will improve our creativity and decision making.

Therefore, we particularly welcome applications from people from racialised minority backgrounds and those with lived experience of the asylum system. We are also more than happy to discuss the needs of neurodiverse and disabled candidates and will make adjustments to ensure candidates can participate fully in the recruitment process and in carrying out their responsibilities.

Successful candidates must have the right to work in the UK. This post will be subject to an enhanced DBS check with child and adult barred list checks.

How to apply

Young Roots has engaged the services of NFP Consulting for this appointment.

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact our strategic recruitment partner, Carroll Lloyd, Director, NFP Consulting on 07765 001 033 or email carroll.lloyd@nfpconsulting.co.uk

Applications can be made online at www.nfpconsulting.co.uk/youngroots

Application is by way of CV with a Supporting Statement that should set out your motivations for applying for this role and to this charity and how your work experience to date meets the scope of the responsibilities. As a general guide, your Supporting Statement should be around two sides of A4.

Closing date: Midnight Sunday 18th June 2023

Selection process and timescales

Stage 1: Week commencing Monday 26th June 2023

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

Stage 2: Thursday 6th July 2023

Formal interview with members of the board of Trustees via Zoom and is likely to include a presentation. The areas of questioning will be indicated in advance.

Stage 3: Week commencing 10th July 2023

Final interviews in person at either the Croydon or Brent office.

There will also be an opportunity to meet with the current Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership team, and some of the young people we are here to support - this will not form part of the recruitment decision making process but will give candidates the opportunity to ask questions and get to know us.

We are happy to accept written applications in whatever format works best for you. Please contact us and tell us how you would prefer to apply for the role.

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, completing any part of the selection process. Any requests will not be taken into account in the selection process.



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Young Roots

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