



Resources and Administration Manager
Recruitment Briefing Note
January 2012

Asylum Aid is a singular NGO that combines the provision of expert legal advice and representation, with influential advocacy of the need for a fair asylum system in the UK and Europe.

We are presently recruiting to the post of **Resources and Administration Manager (RAM)**.

These notes are intended to give an overview of what makes Asylum Aid stand out, together with an outline of the post, a guide to the skills and experience we are seeking from applicants, and a summary of our terms and conditions of employment.

Please read these notes and all the other written material relating to this post before completing your application form. We also advise that you visit our website (www.asylumaid.org.uk) and read our most recent annual report to get a sense of the scope of the work and structure of the charity.

About Asylum Aid

Asylum Aid is highly regarded within the asylum and refugee field for the effectiveness of our legal services and the impact of our policy and campaigning work. We operate at the heart of the asylum and refugee system, upholding refugee rights and advocating vigorously for an asylum determination process that genuinely meets the needs of people seeking protection from persecution and human rights abuses. We are committed to working co-operatively with our peer NGOs in the UK and Europe, and to engaging constructively, though not uncritically, with Government.

Though we are a relatively small organisation with 18 staff, Asylum Aid exerts a significant influence on a broad range of asylum law, policy and practice issues. This is, in large part, because everything we say in our policy and campaign work is grounded in our experience of delivering high quality legal services and the findings generated by our original research.

Our uniqueness as a legal service provider is reflected both in the consistently high rate of successful outcomes generated by our legal work, and in our mixed funding base. This success is borne of an abiding commitment to working empathetically and sensitively at all times with our vulnerable clients, an approach made possible because the income we generate from our Legal Services Commission contract is supplemented by grants and donations from a range of charitable trusts and individual supporters.

The charity is solvent and has a good relationship with its funders and supporters. It is led by an able management team, and supported by a strong and committed Trustee Board.

Asylum Aid provides a positive, friendly, flexible and mutually supportive working environment. We are keen that our staff derive personal satisfaction from their work and, in return for carrying significant responsibilities, enjoy the opportunity to develop their particular interests and skills.

Resources and Administration Manager

The Resources and Administration Manager (R&AM) is a pivotal member of the Asylum Aid management team, with a primary responsibility of ensuring that our Legal Team and those staff members responsible for our policy development, research, advocacy, communications and fundraising work, are supported at all times by a strong and responsive organisational infrastructure. Reporting to the Director, and as a member of the Management Team, the R&AM will take primary responsibility for overseeing and co-ordinating the core business functions of the charity on a day-to-day basis, ensuring that the charity benefits from being exceptionally well organised and efficient in the use of its resources.

In particular, the R&AM will be responsible for providing our Legal Team with comprehensive 'practice management' support, and it is for this reason that we are seeking to attract candidates with relevant experience in a legal practice or advice service setting.

The key areas of responsibility of the R&AM are:

Legal Service Practice Management

As the scope and remit of our legal services have grown, so have the demands on the organisation to ensure that this critical, client-facing, area of our work is supported, proactively and professionally, with resource management and administrative support of the higher calibre. Responsible for two full time Administrators, the R&AM will work closely with our Supervising Solicitors to ensure that our busy and productive Legal Team is enabled to achieve the highest client care standards and to further sharpen the cutting edge of the legal representation and litigation we undertake. The R&AM will be responsible for a range of practice management functions, including the co-ordination and provision of secretarial and administrative support, liaison with regulators, dealing with client enquiries, etc

Financial Administration and Reporting

Asylum Aid contracts out its bookkeeping and accountancy functions to a specialist firm, JS2, and its payroll preparation to its auditors, HW Fisher. The R&AM will manage these critical relationships, ensuring that our internal finance administration systems dovetail effectively with those of JS2 and HWF. The R&AM will report directly to the Director on the financial affairs of the charity and will be expected to attend and service meetings of the Finance Committee of the Board, providing regular variance reports and informed income/expenditure projections, and ensuring that all aspects of our work are supported by accurate financial information and robust financial administration systems and procedures. The R&AM will also be responsible for overseeing our banking, insurance and pension arrangements.

HR Systems

Asylum Aid is supported by a specialist HR contractor who provides the charity with expert advice on HR matters and who undertakes a regular review of our policies and procedures to ensure that they continue to reflect best practice. The R&AM will manage the link with the HR contractor and with other related suppliers, including our Occupational Health Adviser, and will ensure that the charity collects robust HR monitoring data. Working with the Director, the R&AM will also support the work of the Staffing & HR committee of the Board.

Premises and Facilities Management

The R&AM will be responsible for managing the relationship with our landlord, and for ensuring that the charity is supported by robust and effective IT and telecoms systems. S/he will be responsible for our IT and telecoms strategy and will maintain good links with our IT maintenance and our telecoms contractors. The R&AM is also responsible for managing the fixed assets of the charity, for overseeing our archiving, and for leading on all health and safety matters, ensuring we provide a safe and comfortable environment for our staff, volunteers and visitors.

Administration

The R&AM will oversee the work of two fulltime Administrators, one of whom works exclusively in support of the Legal Team, with the other providing general office reception and telephone cover and taking responsibility for post, stationery, petty cash, IT back-ups, invoicing and payments administration. Working closely with the two Administrators, the R&AM will ensure seamless administrative support which will also include recruitment, liaison with suppliers and arranging temporary staff, as and when required.

Governance and Regulation

The R&AM will work closely with the Director to ensure that effective governance arrangements are in place, in line with Asylum Aid's legal and constitutional obligations, and that the charity meets all its legal and regulatory obligations. This will require regular liaison with the Charity Commission and Companies House, and the R&AM will also be involved in the recruitment and induction of new Trustees and committee members.

The Candidate

The post of R&AM is an exceptional opportunity for someone who is keen to work at the heart of the asylum and refugee movement, who is excited by the challenge of taking a senior role in one of the leading asylum NGOs in the UK and Europe, and who understands how a strong, stable, organisational infrastructure is an essential prerequisite for the provision of high quality and client focused legal services.

We are looking for someone who relishes the daily challenge of operating across a diverse range of core business functions, who can demonstrate the ability to work both strategically and as a responsive problem solver, and who can build effective working relationships internally and externally. The right candidate will be someone who has resource and administration management experience obtained in a legal or advice environment, and who is familiar with the dynamics and requirements of a busy and productive legal practice. S/He will be well organised, have a good understanding of finance, IT and HR, and will have extensive and varied administrative experience.

S/He will appreciate the need to balance the operational needs of the charity with its strategic priorities, and will be able to demonstrate understanding of the plight of our clients and beneficiaries.

Terms and Conditions of Employment – a summary

Our standard working week is 35 hours, though we are willing to consider flexible working arrangements, subject to the needs of the organisation and the responsibilities of the post.

The comparability of our salaries is reviewed periodically and, subject to the financial position of the organisation, all staff members receive an annual cost-of-living award. All staff members also receive up to four annual pay increments and Asylum Aid offers an employer pension contribution of 4% of salary, payable into the Asylum Aid stakeholders' pension scheme, for which no employee contribution is required.

The other terms and conditions we offer are comparable with those of NGOs of a similar scale. The annual leave entitlement starts at 25 days per year, plus an additional day for every year of service up to a maximum of 30 days. We offer interest-free season ticket or bike purchase loans.

The charity recognises Unite as the union with which it negotiates and we encourage all staff to join either Unite or a trade union of their choice.

Asylum Aid's offices are on Highbury Corner in Islington NI, convenient for public transport and the facilities of Upper St and Highbury Fields.

Asylum Aid
January 2012