

## ASYLUM AID & JUSTICE TOGETHER INITIATIVE

### **Call for Expressions of Interest: Training and supervision for OISC caseworkers in delivering complex asylum, human rights and trafficking casework (Cohort 3)**

Asylum Aid has partnered with the Justice Together Initiative to provide in depth training for OISC Level 2 advisers who want to deliver casework at OISC Level 2 and 3, particularly in complex asylum, human rights and trafficking cases. We will also assist trainees, managers and organisations to develop processes and procedures to support complex casework in line with the requirements of OISC and the Legal Aid contract.

We are seeking expressions of interest from organisations who want to support their OISC Level 2 advisers to gain confidence and expertise in working in more complex cases as part of our third, and final, programme intake.

#### **Overview**

The programme has already supported two cohorts of advisers (a total of 10 trainees) and we are now seeking to recruit our third cohort of up to 4 advisers.

The programme offers in-depth training, shadowing opportunities, intensive legal supervision, monthly group clinical supervision, and a peer support network. The programme is delivered through a mix of in person and remote methods, offering a chance for trainees to meet with one another, as well as with members of staff at Asylum Aid.

Our vision is that by working in partnership with organisations across England and Wales we can support the development of a more sustainable advice sector, with a greater capacity to provide complex advice and to develop advice services.

#### **What is being offered?**

Each trainee will receive:

- A 3-month intensive training programme in asylum, human rights and trafficking law, practice and procedure. This will include two weeks of in-person training and around 10 remote (online) training sessions, delivered in conjunction with opportunities to shadow experienced immigration and asylum caseworkers at Asylum Aid
- 3 months of intensive supervision including review of all written work and weekly 1:1 supervision meetings (combination of in-person and online) with an Asylum Aid Supervisor
- Ongoing 2<sup>nd</sup> tier support with an Asylum Aid Supervisor accessible by phone and online to discuss tricky cases for a further 6 months
- Training on file management procedures and best practice consistent with requirements of the OISC and a Legal Aid contract
- Access to a network of peers to whom trainees can turn for ongoing support and advice to

- discuss complex cases both during and after completing the programme
- Access to the Refugee Action Frontline Immigration Advice Project online forum to raise queries and share learning with other OISC advisers
- Monthly group clinical supervision (online) for 12 months to reduce risks of vicarious trauma and burnout

We are able to contribute to travel and accommodation expenses for in person training, shadowing, supervision and peer support meetings. The costs of monthly group clinical supervision will also be covered for 12 months for each cohort.

**Managers and partner organisations will benefit from:**

- In addition to trainee benefits, managers at each organisation will receive one capacity-building session each month for 12 months which will cover training on organisational processes, casework systems and document templates, as well as provide a chance to shape trainee experiences through feedback
- Assistance with developing processes and procedures consistent with requirements of the OISC and the Legal Aid contract
- Potential for additional advisers from the organisation to participate in online training sessions
- As trainees grow in confidence and experience, they will be encouraged and supported to share their learning within their organisations, and may bring complex case queries to the Asylum Aid Supervisor on behalf of colleagues
- Trainees will be supported to work with their organisations to develop quality procedures and processes, in line with the requirements of the OISC and/or the Legal Aid contract, to ensure the quality of advice provision across the organisation
- Thematic reflections from group clinical supervision will be shared with managers to enable organisations to learn about how to support staff and avoid burnout and vicarious trauma
- Access to training materials and resources for their organisation through the Frontline Immigration Advice Project (FIAP) and those developed specifically for this training programme by Asylum Aid

**Programme feedback to-date**

*Structure and programme content*

“I’ve been to training before where you’re given the theoretical framework, but this was so grounded in practice. We’d have the theory but then there would be a real practical grounding in what that looked like. No question was too small, we were never made to feel silly for asking anything.” - *Cohort 1 participant*

“I found the format extremely engaging. Having such a small group with a trainer that was really generous and open. This made it probably the most interactive training I’ve attended and as such I think really increased my learning. It was super interesting hearing everyone else’s experiences and seeing the similarities and differences.” - *Cohort 2 participant*

“The group clinical supervision was a new one on me, but I’m surprised that I’ve really enjoyed it. It’s forced or allowed us to think about looking after ourselves. I’m quite a private person but it’s helped me knowing that others are feeling similarly about the pressures. It’s a funny one – I don’t register anything has changed during the session, but a few days later I always feel better.” - *Cohort 1 participant*

“The trainer is so warm and human. Though obviously they have just decades of experience, you always feel

there is no wrong question, no assumptions made. Sometimes solicitors can come across as a bit arrogant, but this training was the antithesis of that. It's been such a constructive learning environment." - *Cohort 1 participant*

#### *What trainees have gained*

"100% this is worth the investment of time. It's changed everything for me as an adviser. I'd encourage anybody to do it who needs more confidence." - *Cohort 1 participant*

"I feel that this has been a pivotal moment in my career. It's been a total game changer – it's given me confidence, it's given me a network, I feel like I'm part of something. And obviously it's been demanding but the flexibility shown and the support we've had from everybody has allowed it, and made it so worth it." - *Cohort 1 participant*

"I got a huge amount from this experience, particularly the in-person afternoon I spent at Asylum Aid offices. It was great to sit in on calls to clients and learn about cases, as well as be part of the discussions about cases - I got a good overview of different kinds of cases and the daily work being done on them. I really appreciated being given a task and feedback from [Asylum Aid Supervisor], particularly something I haven't previously done - it challenged me and gave me confidence." - *Cohort 2 participant*

#### **When will the programme happen?**

We are currently delivering intensive supervision to our second cohort of trainees and are looking to onboard the third cohort programme from November 2024. We hope for cohort 3 to commence in-person training from mid-January 2025, with the subsequent training, shadowing and supervision continuing for 6 months until around June 2025. Second-tier support and group clinical supervision will be accessible for 12 months from the start of the programme.

Cohort 3 will be the final cohort of the three-year JTI Project pilot programme.

#### **Who is this programme for?**

- Organisations that meet the following criteria:
  - Not-for-profit
  - OISC registered, providing advice in areas where there is limited specialist provision at OISC Level 2 and above ('advice deserts')
  - Holds, or is taking steps towards obtaining, a Legal Aid contract
- Migrant- and community-led organisations which are either Justice Together Initiative Grant Partners, members of FIAP, or are willing to join FIAP
- Advisers who have obtained OISC Level 2 qualification but want to grow their confidence and expertise to deliver advice at Level 2 and above, especially in more complex asylum, human rights and trafficking cases

#### **Commitment**

##### *Trainees will need to commit to:*

- Fully participate in two 1-week blocks of in-person training, with 4-5 hours of training per day
- Fully participate in remote training and shadowing sessions delivered 1-2 times per week over a 3-month period. This includes engaging with online training, preparing for each shadowing opportunity and discussing with the supervisor afterwards
- Attending all 1:1 supervision sessions, peer support network meetings and clinical supervision
- Sharing their learning and experience, as well as training materials and other resources, with colleagues in their organisation

- Actively participating in the FIAP online forum
- Helping their organisation to develop good practice procedures
- Work with us and our learning partner to evaluate and learn from the pilot

*Managers should be able to commit to:*

- Attending one capacity-building session each month for 12 months, covering training on organisational processes, casework systems and document templates
- Working with Asylum Aid and our learning partner to provide feedback on a monthly basis to help shape trainee experiences and programme evaluation

*Organisations need to be able to commit to:*

- Allowing trainees the time and space to participate in the training, shadowing and supervision programmes, including making arrangements to ensure any ongoing casework can be covered during the training and shadowing periods
- Joining and working with FIAP
- Working with the trainee to develop good practice procedures

## **How to apply**

Please send an Expression of Interest of no more than 2 A4 pages telling us about your organisation, the communities you work with and the proposed trainee's reasons for wanting to participate in the programme, and a copy of their CV. You should also address the following criteria against which your application will be scored:

*Essential criteria:*

- Not-for-profit organisation registered at OISC Level 2 or above by the time that the training starts, and holds (or is taking steps towards obtaining) a Legal Aid contract
- Trainees must be registered at OISC Level 2 or above by the time that the programme starts
- Based in any region of England or Wales

*Other criteria:*

We will use the following criteria to assess your application. You do not have to score highly on every point, but we will use this to prioritise applications:

- Organisational and trainee commitment to ensuring that trainee can commit time and energy to the training programme, and to embedding the good practice and learning from the programme across the advice provision within the organisation
- Organisation led and/or informed by people with lived experience of the UK immigration system and/or community-led
- Based and working in an area where there is limited free specialist immigration advice provision, particularly in relation to asylum, human rights and trafficking work ('advice deserts')
- Commitment to developing provision of end-to-end casework and representation for people making asylum, human rights and/or trafficking claims.

The Expression of Interest must be supported by the Chief Executive Officer or equivalent position at your organisation. They must confirm that the proposed trainee is employed by the organisation and that they will be given the time to attend the training and shadowing and other elements of the programme.

Expressions of interest should be submitted by **Thursday 31 October 2024** via email to Susie France (susie.france@asylumaid.org.uk).

Interviews with prospective trainees and a manager from the organisation will be held online between **Monday 11 and Tuesday 26 November 2024**.

A programme information event for shortlisted candidates will take place in mid-November 2024 via Microsoft Teams for potential trainees and organisations to learn more about the programme, hear feedback from current trainees and ask any questions.

**Selected trainees/organisations will be notified of the offer to participate in the programme by 28 November 2024.**