Westminster Advice Services Partnership (WASP) Volunteer

Ideal time commitment: 1-2 days per week (Monday on site plus Tuesdays or Wednesdays remote) 6-months minimum

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator/Advice Supervisor

Location: Asylum Aid WASP Info Hub, Westminster

# About Asylum Aid and WASP

Asylum Aid (previously merged with Migrants Resource Centre under Consonant) is, and has long been, a leader in the Immigration and NGO sector: providing high-level legal support to ensure the protection of vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. Now, in its 30th year of providing high quality legal and welfare support - our services are needed more than ever.

Through our Westminster Advice Services Partnership (WASP), with Westminster Citizens Advice and Age UK Westminster, we are able to provide vital support for the most vulnerable people living in Westminster who are struggling to meet their needs. This partnership allows us to provide important support to those for whom English is not their first language. These individuals often find themselves destitute with money problems, no employment, problems with immigration and housing. The focus of Asylum Aid’s welfare advice team is on migrant and vulnerable communities. Our assistance can be transformative for individuals and we are determined to do more to reach and support vulnerable people seeking safety.

# About the role

Asylum Aid runs a drop-in information hub every Monday, as well as an advice phoneline on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, where Westminster residents can get support and advice in a range of areas, such as employment, housing and immigration. We are looking for volunteers who speak one of our community languages (Arabic, Kurdish, Bengali, Tigrinya, Farsi) to support us at this information hub, as interpreters and/or administrative volunteers. There we will also be the opportunity to receive training to become an Adviser or Assessor (this requires longer than the usual 6-month minimum commitment). **We particularly encourage Westminster residents to apply.**

Volunteers will be trained on the job and will have to opportunity to attend thematic training, as well as receiving on-going support and supervision.

# Main tasks and activities

* Interpreting:
  + Interpreting for advisers and clients as required, depending on language skills
* Administration:
  + Responding to client queries
  + Answering the telephone
  + Assisting and registering clients who come into reception.
  + Taking messages for advisers.
  + Printing outlook timetable and Advice pro appointments for the day.
  + Inputting data in excel and Advice pro.
  + Helping advisers with general administrative tasks such as typing letters, photocopying bundles, and telephoning clients, keeping client files or local information up to date, amending stocks of leaflets, etc.
* Gateway Assessor Role/General Advice Role
  + Conducting initial client assessments.
  + Conducting client interviews (by telephone and in person) to understand client problems and identify key information such as time limits.
  + Signposting/Referral; Referring and signposting clients appropriately (both internally and externally) following agreed protocols, including making appointments and informing clients of what they can expect.
  + Input data in excel and Advice pro.
  + Assisting clients with general form filling, making phone call to agencies to resolve simple problems with benefit, housing, employers, council, etc.
* Case Recording:
  + All clients’ cases are recorded for quality assurance purposes, and to ensure that the client can be offered an efficient service if the client requires further advice or the case becomes more complex. Your supervisor will discuss case recording with you.

# Skills and experience needed

* Ability to speak fluently in English and a community language (Arabic, Kurdish, Bengali, Tigrinya, Farsi)
* Strong Teamwork and ability to communicate effectively in writing, in person and over the telephone
* Ability to manage time effectively
* Ability to research, analyse and explain complex information
* Basic numeracy skills and ability to use IT to carry out basic keyboard and data entry work
* Confident when dealing with people
* Friendly and approachable
* Remain calm in stressful situations
* Sensitive to the needs of others
* Open minded and non-judgmental
* Punctuality and regular attendance
* Willingness to develop, learn new skills and embrace change
* You must be willing to develop a clear understanding of, and commitment to, Equality and Diversity, incorporating this into all aspects of your work
* **Westminster residents are particularly encouraged to apply.**

For any queries relating to this role, please contact: [sylvia.velasquez@asylumaid.org.uk](mailto:sylvia.velasquez@asylumaid.org.uk)

**To apply for this opportunity, please send your cover letter to** [**volunteering@helenbamber.org**](mailto:volunteering@helenbamber.org) **along with your CV, if you have one. Please include the following information in your cover letter: which community language/s you speak, which borough you live in, and which of the above roles (interpreter, administrator, adviser/assessor) you are interested in.**

Please see our website for more information on the WASP advice hub: <https://www.asylumaid.org.uk/what-we-do/welfare-and-advice>

# Equal Opportunities

We are committed to attracting and recruiting diverse candidates as we are keen to make sure that our staff, trustees, volunteers and ambassadors reflect the communities we serve and the wider community we work in at every level within the organisation. We particularly welcome applications from those with experience of the UK asylum system.