



Executive Director Job Pack

Asylum Matters is looking for a dynamic leader passionately committed to upholding the rights of people seeking asylum in the UK. Asylum Matters is a small, specialist team of campaign professionals based around the UK, working with an extensive network of frontline partners to advocate for progressive change in the asylum and immigration system.

About Asylum Matters

Since it was established 2016, Asylum Matters has played a significant role in bringing about positive change for refugees and people seeking sanctuary in the UK. We co-lead the award-winning [Lift the Ban](#) coalition campaign, that brings together over 300 organisations, from charities and think tanks to trade unions and local authorities, calling for the right to work for people seeking asylum. Together with high-profile national campaigning organisations, we work with front-line organisations to expose and address a range of issues that affect the rights and wellbeing of people in the asylum system, such as housing standards and asylum support.

We are a catalyst and convenor of collaboration and joint action. Our work helps strengthen collective advocacy on asylum reform and bridges the gap between policy and the reality on the ground. We have ambitious plans for the coming years as we seek to maximise the potential of our collaborative campaigning model and identify opportunities for change at local, regional and national levels, in a challenging external environment.

Our vision

People seeking asylum are protected, treated fairly and can rebuild their lives in our communities.

Our mission

Campaigning collaboratively, locally and nationally, to transform asylum in the UK.

Our values

We will always act with integrity. For us, this means living by these values:

- Collaboration
- Solidarity
- Impact
- Anti-racism
- Trust

About you

Asylum Matters is looking for a dynamic and driven Executive Director to lead the organisation through a period of growth and change. We are seeking an emotionally intelligent leader with a passion for tackling social injustice.

You will have excellent leadership, financial, fundraising and communication skills, with a drive to campaign and advocate for the positive reform of the asylum system. You will provide strong and inspiring leadership and work with the team to create campaigns for change. You will represent Asylum Matters within the refugee sector and beyond.

You will build strong and effective relationships with key stakeholders, such as the Home Office ensuring we deliver against our strategic goals and that our charitable objectives are met.



Contract details

Term: Permanent

Reporting to: Chair of the Board of Trustees/ Board of Trustees

Responsible for the management of: the Deputy Director (flexible location, post currently vacant), Campaign Managers based in Birmingham (covering the West Midlands), Swansea (covering Wales), Leeds (covering Yorkshire and Humber), Manchester (covering the North West), and Sunderland (covering the North East) and Finance and Administration Officer.

Role and hours: 28 or 35 hours per week – we welcome job share applications

Start date: Ideally April 2024

Location: Flexible with travel across the UK

Salary: £55,000 per year

Annual Leave: 28 days and statutory public holidays

Probation period: 6 months

Notice: 2 weeks during probation, 3 months following successful completion of probation

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Overview

The Executive Director is the most senior role in Asylum Matters with ultimate responsibility for setting and delivering the organisation's strategic objectives. We have a high performing team who the Executive Director will support, coach and inspire. It is important to us that wellbeing is at the heart of our work and that safeguarding is prioritised.

The Executive Director will be a strategic thinker with strong political insight, able to guide the team of campaigners in devising engaging and impactful campaigns in a challenging external context. Our work relies on strong relationships across the refugee sector, the Executive Director has to be a good listener as well as an effective communicator. Experience of building broad-based coalitions and managing a partnership network is important as Asylum Matters exists to strengthen collaborative efforts across the sector.

Asylum Matters seeks to ensure the meaningful participation of people in the asylum system in influencing efforts. A commitment to enabling people with lived experience to take part in campaigning for positive change is necessary.

As well as leading external efforts to improve policies and systems, the Executive Director is responsible for fundraising and financial sustainability; maintaining effective systems to ensure the smooth-running of the organisation and good governance.

Accountabilities

Governance and Organisational Management

- Drive forward the organisation through strategic development supported by operational planning and fundraising;
- Lead fundraising, forge relationships with funders and produce compelling reports;
- Manage the annual budget and ensure oversight of spending in line with the budget;
- Carry out effective monitoring of Asylum Matters' work and approach and manage evaluations where needed, ensuring learning is embedded into ways of working;
- Convene and administer regular meetings of the Asylum Matters' Board of Trustees;
- Ensure Asylum Matters fulfils its legal, statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

Line Management

- Maintain a healthy culture where the staff team are actively encouraged to share feedback and contribute to organisational development and decisions;
- Support the team in delivery of local and regional campaigns plans, including travelling to regional bases to support events, activities and meetings;
- Support staff in their development, including setting objectives, conducting annual performance reviews and identifying training needs.

Advocacy and Influencing

- Engage with national stakeholders to ensure good coordination and maximise the impact of joint actions to achieve Asylum Matters' goals;
- Coordinate and facilitate national campaigns, bringing together expertise and resources from different organisations in order to secure policy change;
- Maintain and strengthen Asylum Matters' existing network of contacts, including by acting as a resource for partners, providing regular policy and campaign updates and convening meetings, as appropriate;
- Seek to influence the development of asylum policy, including through regular engagement with key decision makers (e.g. relevant Ministers, MPs Home Office officials, etc.);

External Representation

- Build the reputation of Asylum Matters as a credible source of expertise through representation in key external forums;

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- Lead the strategic expansion of Asylum Matters' relationships with civil servants, parliamentarians and others, having oversight of relationships with policy experts and influencers;
- Act as the main contact point for all enquiries regarding Asylum Matters.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

- Exhibit a passion for leadership, inspiring others to excel and contributing to a dynamic and forward-thinking organisational environment;
- Lead and inspire a high-performing team through effective communication, mentorship, and fostering a positive work culture;
- Develop and implement strategic initiatives that align with the organisation's vision, mission, and goals;
- Drive innovation and change by identifying opportunities for improvement and implementing solutions to enhance operational efficiency;
- Financial confidence gained through managing budgets and overseeing spending in line with budgets;
- Prioritise fundraising, reporting on grants, and building productive relationships with funders;
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation celebrates success and impact;
- Advocacy and campaigning expert with an understanding of Government decision making processes, particularly as they relate to asylum; bonus points for understanding the complexities of the asylum system;
- Resource mobiliser with knowledge of co-production, co-design and coalition building
- Persuasive communicator.

Desirable

- Lived experience of the asylum system;
- Direct experience of supporting people who are seeking asylum to engage with policy and advocacy initiatives;
- Experience of managing a small charity and/ or knowledge or experience of the legal and regulatory responsibilities of charities;
- Understanding of communication techniques including digital and media.

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APPLICATION PROCESS

We know we are asking a lot from our new Executive Director, if you meet some of the essential criteria, we'd encourage you to apply. If you would like to find out more about the role, we are holding an information session on Wednesday 31 January 1300 -1400 to give an overview of Asylum Matters and answer any questions you might have. Sign up here: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUvdO6vrTouHtB0ek3heCKd_zkzcWf89VyN

Deadline for application: **By 9.00am Monday 05 February 2024**

Please send a **CV** and **covering letter of no more than two sides** to trustees@asylummatters.org. The covering letter should describe your skills, knowledge and experiences and address how you meet the person specification.

Selection process

We will shortlist the applicants we would like to meet for an interview. Our short listers – a group made up of staff and Trustees - will be looking for you to have done the following:

- Sent us the required information before the deadline.
- Given us examples of how you meet the points in the 'Person Specification' section above.

We will offer interviews to the applicants who have met these requirements most strongly.

All applicants will receive a response from us to confirm whether or not they have been selected for an interview.

Interviews will be held initially online via a video call using Zoom with three Trustees the week commencing **12 February 2024**. We will send you the interview questions the day before. We will let you know if there is anything in particular that we need you to prepare in advance.

There will be second round of interviews during the week commencing **19 February 2024** including a panel interview with the staff and partners and another interview with Trustees.

All applicants who attend an interview will be offered feedback, however, it is not possible for us to give individual feedback if you have not been selected for an interview.

Equal Opportunities

Asylum Matters celebrates and promotes diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

We will interview all candidates with lived experience of the asylum system who meet the essential Person Specification criteria.

Thank you very much for your interest in this role. We look forward to hearing from you.