



REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1191680

Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 September 2022
For
Refugee Legal Support

Faiz & Co. Limited
Chartered Accountants
8B Accommodation Road
London
NW11 8ED



Refugee
Legal
Support

Refugee Legal Support

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for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

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Trustees Annual Report

October 2021 - September 2022

1. Introduction - a year at a glance

People on the move have been at the centre of the political gaze for decades. It has not been easy. 2022, however, has been a particularly dark year which saw a whole host of new draconian, inhumane laws and policies being implemented both in the UK and across Europe.

In Greece, pushbacks at sea and land borders have intensified and so has the criminalisation of those on the move and individuals and organisations who assist them. In the UK, latest legal developments have shown the Government's disdain for human rights and refugee protection. Perhaps the starkest (although not the only) example is the new 'Migration Partnership' aimed at removing high numbers of people seeking asylum to Rwanda. Globally unprecedented, with a few exceptions, this arrangement represents a wholesale abdication of the UK's responsibility under the Refugee Convention.

Our teams in Athens and Lesbos have continued to work tirelessly to assist those on the frontiers of Europe secure refugee protection and reunite with family elsewhere. In a first step to increase our capacity in Greece and target litigation towards improving the asylum process in Greece and obstacles to justice, we increased our Greek lawyer's working hours from part-time to full-time and are hoping to expand our team further in the coming months. Our presence in Athens and the Aegean Sea allowed us to monitor and advocate against border violence and externalisation policies putting human rights at risk.

With the rising number of small boat crossings across the Channel and the UK, Government's intense targeting of asylum seekers entering the UK via boat or lorry, we have formalised our work in Calais. We have recently been able to hire a coordinator enabling us to deliver more training and outreach in Northern France.

In the UK, we launched the Afghan Pro Bono Initiative (APBI) alongside Safe Passage International and 14 commercial firms providing pro bono support. Despite numerous challenges – including the very narrow scope of the immigration routes available to Afghans and the severe delays in the system – the team continues to fight for those in and around Afghanistan seeking to come to the UK for safety or to be reunited with family members here. At the time of writing the introduction to this report, the work of the APBI has been recognised with the LawWorks 2022 Award for the "Most Effective Pro Bono Partnership".

Our Family Reunion From Europe (FRFE) project, borne out of the legal changes resulting from Brexit at the end of 2020 and the end of the Dublin regime for the UK, is going from strength to strength. The post-Brexit provisions are dire. While the Government prides itself on providing 'safe and legal' routes, these hardly exist in practice. Even with the highest quality of legal assistance, accessing safe migration and family reunion routes is enormously challenging. Their extremely narrow scope, the many practical obstacles and the severe delays in the asylum system render them extremely difficult to access.



In support of our legal work and in recognition of the need for a fundamental rethink of the narratives surrounding people on the move, RLS has developed its Arts Project which seeks to use artistic representation as a means to influence perceptions and understanding of the migration experience.

Organisationally, 2022 has been a transformative year for RLS. Thanks to the hard work of our expanded staff team and the newly formed management team, RLS has been able to transition from a largely trustee-led organisation to an employee-led organisation achieving greater long-term stability and sustainability. The Trustees are grateful to RLS's highly qualified, hard-working and extremely dedicated team who day in and day out engage in the fight to defend the rights of those on the move despite the backdrop of extreme hostility. The RLS Trustees continue to play a vital leadership role in the governance and strategic direction of the charity, and have been key in delivering its growth, championing our values and mission and keeping the best interests of our clients at the forefront of what RLS does.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Refugee Legal Support operates in accordance with its governing document, the constitution, signed on 6.10.2020 by its Trustees in the UK. The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and is regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Refugee Legal Support became a registered charity on 7.10.2020. The charity holds its funds in two bank accounts: one in the UK (Triodos Bank) and one in Greece (Alpha Bank). The transactions of both bank accounts are reported in the annexed accounts.

Refugee Legal Support is also incorporated in Greece as a civil non-profit organisation ("AMKE") under Greek law (General Commercial Registry No: 155695901000) with the name Refugee Legal Support Greece and the trading name RLS-Greece. RLS-Greece's registered office is at 14 Alexandras Str. Athens, postal code 106 82, Greece and is overseen by Annette Elder (trustee of the UK charity), Eva Maria Doerr (trustee of the UK charity) and Tobias Hautekiet. RLS-Greece is governed by its constitution which can be found on the charity website at <https://www.refugeelegalsupport.org/>

Thanks to funding from trusts and foundations, crowdfunding, and our pro bono partners, we grew our team with the recruitment of our first Legal Director and four new members of staff. Our board of Trustees grew, welcoming four new Trustees, Esther Jones Russell, Vidya Ramachandran, Chris Randall and Naima Musse Farah. Chris Randall took over the role of the Chair of the board in September 2022 from Vidya Ramachandran who held the post for 6 months prior to Chris's appointment.

Registered Charity Number 1191680

Principal Address Second Floor
Norvin House
45-55 Commercial Street
London
E1 6BD

Trustees who served during the year ending September 2022

Vidya Ramachandran (*appointed 06.12.2021*)
Served as chair from February 2022 - August 2022

Esther Jones Russell (*appointed 06.12.2021*)

Naima Musse Farah (*appointed 06.12.2021*)

Christopher Walter Randall (*appointed 06.12.2021*)
Serves as chair since August 2022

Joseph William Sinclair (*appointed 24.06.2021*)

Rebecca Chapman (*appointed 7.10.2020*)

Annette Elder (*appointed 7.10.2020*)

Eva Maria Doerr (*appointed 7.10.2020*)

Management team

Isaac Shaffer, Legal Director (*in post since 11.04.2022*)

Nick Pilkington, Fundraising Lead

Efi Stathopoulou, Programmes Manager

Independent Examiner

Jamal M Chaudhry
FCCA
Faiz & Co. Limited
8B Accommodation Road
London
NW11 8ED

3. Financial Review

The total incoming resources amounted to £361,013 of which £215,726 was for restricted purposes. The resources expended totalled £314,938 including £208,505 spent out of the restricted funds. £254,106 of this expenditure related to staff costs involved in support services to the charitable activities. The total amount of unrestricted funds at the yearend amounted to £118,119 of which £562 relates to fixed assets.

The Reserves Funds (total of £90,000) comprise the funds available to the charity that the Trustees have agreed to use in the event that the charity had to close to ensure that costs related to redundancy and winding down are covered and that all legal casework delivered by the charity is responsibly handed over.

This policy ensures adequate working capital and financial resilience for the charity. For Refugee Legal Support to meet the objectives of this policy, the Trustees agreed that the charity should aim for free reserves of £90,000 (around three months' current expenditure).

When deciding an appropriate reserves level for the charity, the Trustees considered the following:

- the maintenance of essential services for beneficiaries;
- the risks of unplanned closure associated with the charity's business model;
- spending commitments;
- potential liabilities and;
- financial forecasts and responsibilities in relation to responsibly closing or referring its cases (main activity being legal support).

The Trustees will review the policy for maintaining reserves, taking into account all risks faced by the charity, their potential impact on income and planned expenditure, and an assessment of the ways to mitigate such risks. The frequency of reviewing the reserves policy will vary depending on the level of change in monthly expenditure as new projects are undertaken by the charity to pursue its objectives.

4. Investment policy

Any surplus funds are placed on short term deposit accounts.

5. Objectives, Mission, Values and Activities

5.1. Charitable objectives as per the charity's constitution

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The charity's objectives as per its constitution are:

- To relieve poverty, sickness, and distress of persons who are internally displaced or in migration or who are asylum seekers or refugees fleeing situations including (but not limited to) war, persecution, and climate change and their families and any dependants who are in conditions of need, hardship and distress;
- To advance education including the education and training of the Beneficiaries;
- To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of the Beneficiaries including but not limited to protecting the rights of the Beneficiaries; and
- To advance the education of the public in general about the issues relating to refugees and those seeking asylum.

5.2. Our mission and values

Our mission

Refugee Legal Support works in solidarity with people who migrate. We advocate for the promotion and protection of people's rights throughout the migration process.



We advance safe migration through legal support, casework, strategic litigation, outreach, training and partnerships. We strive to develop inclusive, sustainable and regenerative ways of working which are directly informed by those with lived migration experience.

We support the global movement that fights entrenched inequalities, racism and other forms of discrimination that force people to migrate.

In doing so we recognise that immigration systems are weighted against those forced to migrate and stand in opposition to hostile policies, along with all forms of violence against people compelled to migrate.

Our Values

These are the core principles of RLS. They're key to decision-making. They help us to decide not just what work we do and why, but also how we do it and how we work together.

- We believe that the lack of available financial resources should not hinder access to justice;
- We are anti-racist and denounce any form of oppression;
- We work in solidarity with those who migrate and those who support them;
- We work with people, not for them. We stand alongside and respect the inherent dignity and humanity of people who migrate;
- We are specialised and use our expertise for strategic impact;
- We respect and support the wellbeing and expertise of our colleagues;
- We're proud to be independent.

5.3. Activities

5.3.1. Legal support

In the year end September 2022, through our work, together with our project partners, we have provided legal support in the form of information, advice and direct legal representation to **871 people** across our services in Greece and the UK.

- **78 people** were advised and represented by our team throughout the asylum and family reunification process in Athens, Greece;
- **180 people** received individual information on their rights and entitlements in Athens, Greece;



- **469 people** received legal advice on their right to claim asylum and family reunification on Lesbos, Greece, through our partnership with Legal Centre Lesbos;¹
- **54 separated families** divided while seeking safety received legal advice and representation through our *Family Reunion from Europe* team in London;
- **90 people** fleeing Afghanistan received vital legal advice and representation on relocation and family reunion routes in the UK through our *Afghan Pro Bono Initiative* team in London.

We are proud to have been able to help double the number of people we reached last year, but there remains a huge number of people who aren't getting the legal support they need. Our services are in higher demand than ever. We still could not offer legal support to over 1,000 individuals that asked for our help. The dearth of capacity in the legal aid sector in the UK and in Greece has a disproportionate impact on people on the move. Wherever we couldn't help people directly we signposted to other providers who could offer support and provided information in the form of info sheets and self-help resources.

¹ The figure reflects the number of individuals supported by the RLS Islands coordinator embedded within the Legal Centre Lesbos, supported and supervised by the legal team there.

5.3.2. Outreach and access to legal information



In the last year, our team has worked hard to ensure that people who migrate were able to access legal information:

- Our Athens team delivered **8 outreach sessions** to people who migrate. During these sessions vital legal information was disseminated to more than **60 people** who wouldn't otherwise have access to it;
- Our Afghan Pro Bono Initiative team delivered **4 online and in-person information sessions** where **265 people** received accurate, specialised legal information on safe routes to the UK for people fleeing Afghanistan;
- We launched our newsletter to provide **up-to-date legal information on safe routes to the UK from Afghanistan and the surrounding region**. **500 people** have subscribed to our mailing list and we provided 5 updates;
- Our Calais outreach team has delivered **11 in-person information sessions** on the right to claim asylum and family reunification in the UK. **260 people** in Calais have attended our sessions to date.

5.3.3. Advocacy & challenging unlawful practice

Challenging unlawful practice in Greece

This year, the focus of our challenges to unlawful practice in Greece was largely on access to the asylum process. We filed complaints on behalf of our clients to the European Commission and the Greek Ombudsman, whilst working directly on their cases to bring successful outcomes. Cases involved particularly vulnerable clients who could not register their asylum claim after months of trying and a survivor of a violent pushback at sea who has now finally been granted refugee status in Greece.

Advocacy

Alongside those active in the fight against hostile migration policies in Greece and the UK, we have advocated for dignified living conditions, a fair immigration system and access to safety for people on the move. We have co-signed 13 open letters to policy-makers and have drafted statements demanding fair treatment, safe migration routes and access to justice for people who migrate to Europe and the UK.



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We spoke openly about the deficiencies of the UK immigration rules and their failure to address the needs of separated families post-Brexit. In our report [Family reunion from Europe post-Brexit: No light at the end of the tunnel](#), separated families shared their experience of trying to reunite in the UK and we spoke about what the new Nationality and Borders Act will bring for them.



By amplifying the voices of people with expertise on migration policies through their own lived experience, RLS provided a platform for people fleeing conflict to [express their opposition to the new Immigration and Borders Act](#).

In January 2022 we marked the 10th anniversary of the Hostile Environment by convening a panel to talk about what the hostile environment has meant in the UK and how this links to the situation in Greece and across Europe.



Refugee Legal Support presents:
10 Years of the Hostile Environment
12.30-13.30 UK time, 26th January

Join our panel as we discuss what the last decade has meant for migrants and refugees across Europe, what's coming next and what we can do to secure a more humane system.
[To secure your place, email nick.pilkington@refugeelegalsupport.org](mailto:nick.pilkington@refugeelegalsupport.org)



Photo credit: Sarah Booker

5.3.4. Training

- Our UK teams delivered **4 training sessions** to more than 200 volunteer lawyers on the law around family reunion and relocation schemes for people fleeing Afghanistan.
- Our Athens team delivered **10 training sessions** to more than 156 students and local groups supporting migrants in Greece on refugee protection laws.



5.3.5. Challenging narratives

In November 2021, we launched our Arts Project. We sought to provide a platform for people on the move and use arts to influence perceptions and understanding of the migration experience. Focusing on family reunion, the experiences of people on the move in the process of reuniting with family members in the UK were platformed through our zine: "[Family Reunion: Torn Apart](#)".

Partnering with people on the move and Refocus Media Labs, Sarah Booker, our Arts Project Developer and founding member of RLS, will discuss photography as evidence and visualising words through workshops in Athens in November 2022.



6. Achievements, impact and performance

This year has been an important year organisationally and in many ways we end the year in a stronger position than ever. With the support of our colleagues, partners and funders, we've managed to drastically increase our capacity to achieve our charitable objectives and build resilience for the future. We have moved to new offices in Athens and in London, securing a friendly space to meet clients and work together as a team after the seismic changes of the pandemic. We have made changes to our internal structures, centering wellbeing and caring for each other to better support us and the people we work with. We have invested time and energy on improving our communications, fundraising processes, governance and decision-making.

In 2022, we continued supporting our clients under the most adverse political circumstances in Greece, the UK and in France. In a year of constant political turmoil in the UK and globally, the communities we work with are disproportionately affected. With the legal aid sector in the UK at critically low capacity, the world still recovering from the pandemic, the people we work with remind us why we need to keep fighting.

"I will never forget what you have done for us. Now we can live our life"²

6.1. Keeping routes open for people fleeing Afghanistan

In March 2022, with our NGO partner, Safe Passage International, together with 14 leading commercial law firms,³ we launched one of the most ambitious pro bono partnerships that has been seen in the UK: the *Afghan Pro Bono Initiative* ("APBI").

**Afghan
Pro Bono
Initiative**

Hosted by **Refugee Legal Support**
and **Safe Passage International**

We launched the project as an urgent response to the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan. We've responded to the critical unmet need for information, advice, legal representation and training for people located in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries seeking legal routes to safety and reunion with family in the UK following the conclusion of the Operation Pitting evacuation.

From the outset, demand outstripped the capacity of the project. Consequently the focus has been on providing assistance to people seeking reunification with family in the UK and for

² Quote from one of our family reunification clients, Martha (her name is changed to protect her identity)

³ Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, Allen & Overy, Ashurst, Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton, Clyde & Co, Debevoise & Plimpton, Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, Eversheds Sutherland, Hogan Lovells, Mayer Brown, Orrick, Reed Smith, Ropes & Gray, and Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom (UK) LLP



those who previously worked with or alongside the UK forces in Afghanistan. We specialise in access to the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme, and information on the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Our ambition has been to make the concerns and priorities of the Afghan community central to shaping the progress of the project. To support this, our project team includes a Community Engagement and Research Lead, herself an Afghan refugee.

In addition to this role, the APBI team comprises two specialist lawyers and a coordinator. Between them they provide the supervision and management of the volunteer pro bono lawyers. Each of the 14 commercial law firm partners have now confirmed funding for year 2 of the project.

The project has had an impact both domestically and internationally. has been domestic and international:

- Since March 2022, **7 Afghan people have been successfully resettled** in the UK with help from our project and **1 young person** will soon be joining his brother in the UK;
- 56 volunteers from the 14 participating firms have provided pro bono legal advice and representation to **90 Afghan people** and their families;
- Of these, 57% received support to join family members in the UK ;
- 43% received advice on applications to the ARAP scheme, including challenging refusals;
- 42 volunteers have provided initial advice and assistance to approximately 180 Afghan nationals;
- In total, 98 pro bono lawyers have dedicated over **3,500 hours** providing advice and assistance to vulnerable Afghan nationals seeking relocation and family reunion in the UK;
- In addition to providing legal advice and assistance to individuals and families, APBI has **kept 500 individual subscribers up-to-date** through monthly newsletters.
- 5 online newsletters have been issued, with 1,150 unique opens.
- APBI has also provided information about safe routes to the UK through organising regular community engagement events, including **4 online and in-person sessions informing a total of 265 attendees.**
- More than 80% of the attendees found the information sessions very useful and 100% of them said they are interested in attending similar sessions in the future.
- To acknowledge the contributions of the project, the APBI **won this year's LawWorks awards** in the category "Most effective pro bono partnership". Winners were announced on the 6th of December.

6.2. Access to reunification for migrant families separated post Brexit

The *Family Reunion from Europe* project (“FRFE”) was created in February 2021 to address the legal and procedural hurdles created by Brexit for people in Europe wishing to reunite with loved ones in the UK. Family reunion is a more complicated process now. As one client put it, following Brexit: *“to apply to the UK now is so much more difficult. You need so much paperwork and many more documents.”*⁴

FRFE started life as a partnership between RLS and 5 commercial law firms providing pro bono hours. The aim was to address this increase in complexity and the lack of available information on the UK immigration rules for separated families in Europe.



Following a successful first year, in February 2022 with a refined delivery model including our partner Coram Children’s Legal Centre (“CCLC”), the project’s geographical remit was extended to include Turkey and Libya, often routes into Europe and transit regions for FRFE clients. The number of commercial law firm partners increased to 8 and CCLC.⁵

The FRFE team comprises an Immigration Caseworker/Coordinator, who supervises and manages the volunteer pro bono lawyers, and a lawyer embedded with CCLC who provides

⁴ Interview with F., *Family reunion from Europe post-Brexit: No light at the end of the tunnel*, p. 29, April 2022

⁵ Simmons and Simmons LLP, Norton Rose Fulbright LLP, Kirkland & Ellis International LLP, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, White & Case LLP, Ashurst LLP, Allen & Overy LLP, and Reed Smith LLP

direct casework and represents clients in making complex entry clearance applications and appeals under legal aid. Clients of the project look to reunite with partners, siblings, children, parents, aunts and uncles, and more. Many clients are unaccompanied children, often in Turkey and Greece and some as young as 12, who have had to make dangerous journeys alone after facing persecution at home. Some sponsors trying to bring their loved ones to the UK are also children, or were children when they arrived in the UK, and have the responsibility of sponsoring an application for their family to join them.

The FRFE is going from strength to strength, supporting people who would otherwise be left unrepresented and with no access to basic legal advice. This year, the FRFE team has advised and represented **54 separated families** to make family reunion applications.

In recognition of the project's achievements, the FRFE project received a **commendation in the Lawyer Awards 2022** for its successful 2nd year of supporting refugees in Europe, Turkey and Libya.

6.3. Upholding refugee rights in Greece

As the first place that many people seeking protection arrive in Europe and with onward movement severely restricted, there is huge demand for legal support in Greece. The situation is often desperate. There are a number of contributing factors :

- Externalisation: Greece attempts to restrict access to asylum through dangerous and often deadly physical pushbacks. They have also extended the “admissibility procedure”, that allows the authorities to return people from Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Syria to Turkey and other countries before substantively examining their asylum claim.
- A hostile system: the Greek system is often designed to make life as difficult as possible. For example, our team spent August preparing clients for urgent asylum interviews, often with less than a day's notice.
- Appalling conditions: migrants are forced to struggle with little or no support, in precarious and or unsafe living conditions and terrible employment prospects. A lot of the people we work with were left with no documents after having applied for asylum or even after having been granted refugee status. The lack of documentation means they have no access to basic rights.

The RLS team in Athens comprises a Greek lawyer, and two UK qualified immigration caseworkers who share the legal and project coordination. One of our colleagues, a European lawyer, was based on Lesbos, increasing capacity within the Legal Centre Lesbos and providing an Eastern Aegean hub for information and advice on UK procedures, particularly family reunion.

Our biggest achievements:

- **Supporting people with asylum claims**, including representation, gathering and presenting relevant evidence, asylum interview preparation and appeals; **and**
- **Providing high quality legal information, signposting and other legal assistance:**
 - **164 people** were signposted to appropriate services to receive additional support;
 - 180 people received vital information on how to access their rights and entitlements;
 - **78 people** received legal representation in Athens;
 - **469 people** received legal advice on Lesbos, in partnership with Legal Centre Lesbos;
 - **88.9%** of the clients we represented received a positive outcome on their asylum application;⁶
 - **87.5%** of the clients we represented have received a positive decision on their family reunification application.⁷
- **205 people** from local migrant communities and organisations attended our group sessions and received legal training and information;
- **1,844 signatories** supported the campaign we launched with colleagues calling on Greek authorities to stop externalisation: [Greece must revoke the decision to consider Turkey a safe country.](#)

During the reporting period, our team in Greece has also handled cases of subsequent asylum claims and has supported our clients through the appeals process as well as other administrative matters.

6.4. Vital legal information in Calais

Building on our work straddling borders, since November 2021 RLS has facilitated monthly in person outreach sessions in Calais predominantly undertaken by volunteer lawyers. We work in partnership with the Secours Catholique day centre and the Calais Migrant Solidarity Collective. We focus on information provision and training. We recently secured funding to enable the recruitment of a dedicated caseworker with experience in both the French and UK asylum procedures. Together with the monthly visits to Calais by UK asylum law specialists, the project also includes a monthly online forum for practitioners, volunteers and activists working with people on the move in Northern France and the UK. We also provide training and content to dedicated digital information providers which are translated into different languages.

Access to current, expert and reliable information is essential for people located in Northern France and those working with them, especially given the ongoing litigation in relation to the

⁶ Percentage calculated on the basis of the decisions received in our Athens office

⁷ Percentage calculated on the basis of the decisions received in our Athens office

Rwanda policy and other major changes to refugee law in the UK, following the Nationality and Border Acts 2022.

Thus far, **260 people** have received up-to-date legal information and **cases of separated families** have been referred to our Family Reunion from Europe project to receive further legal advice on their application to join their loved ones in the UK.



© Sarah Booker

6.5. RLS Arts

RLS remains committed to shifting the perception of and narratives surrounding migrants and migration through arts. Desperately needed in the current climate in which criminalisation, demonisation and othering are the norm, we continue to seek ways to provide a platform for the voices of individuals, supporting their expression in their own terms, free from stereotypes and victimhood. Led by Sarah Booker, a founding member of RLS, photographer and activist, the RLS Arts Project has laid the foundation for further development in the coming years.

Launched during Refugee Week 2022, our zine "[Family Reunion: Torn Apart](#)", moved the dialogue beyond expectations, evoked emotions and challenged our thinking.

"This zine is a fundamental piece of evidence, which has the merit both of presenting and preserving the irreparable harm inflicted to third-country nationals by the 'developed' countries."



"This is brilliant, heart-rending - and educative, even if you think you know a lot about what refugees are going through."



Between 14 and 18 November 2022, 5 days of photography workshops will be delivered by Sarah Booker for RLS in collaboration with Douglas Herman, founder of Refocus Media Labs, at their Athens studio, to refugees and asylum seekers from six migrant communities in Athens. Through critical discussion, participants will look at how stories about migration are framed and use mobile phone photography to produce alternative visual narratives from the perspective of their own lived experience.

A vertical poster for a photography workshop. The background is black. At the top, the text "Telling the truth with photography" is written in a white, handwritten-style font. Below this, the word "Analyse" is written in large yellow letters, with "Photographic Messaging" in smaller white text underneath. To the right, the word "Develop" is written in large yellow letters, with "New Ideas & stories" in smaller white text underneath. In the center, there is a photograph of two people standing on a pier, each holding a large cluster of colorful balloons (red, yellow, blue, green, purple). Below the photo, the word "Create" is written in large yellow letters, with "Photography series" in smaller white text underneath. The dates "14 - 18 Nov" are written in large yellow letters, with "Day & Evening Sessions" and "11:00 - 14:00/ 17:30 - 20:30" in smaller white text below. At the bottom left, there is a QR code. To its right, the word "Register" is written in large yellow letters, followed by "Refocus Athens Lab", "Feron 6 (Near Victoria)", and "+30 699 514 8503" in white text. Below the contact information is the website "www.tinyurl.com/RLS - RMLphoto". At the very bottom, there is a yellow banner with the Refugee Legal Support logo on the left, the text "SPECIAL COLLABORATION" in the center, and the Refocus Media Labs logo on the right.

6.6. Funding

Without our funders, none of the work described above would be possible. Beyond the funds provided which permit our service delivery, we draw considerable support from their sharing of and commitment to our vision and values, and the consistent and ongoing concern for the RLS client group. Over the course of this year, messages of encouragement, faith in, and enthusiasm for RLS, have kept us all focussed and moving forward, particularly when the politicised landscape in which we operate has felt particularly bleak.

*Supporters' messages displayed on one of our public CrowdJustice campaigns: <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/help-people-put-at-risk-by-uk-government/>.

♥ Charmian pledged £50

Match Charmian's pledge of £50 >

Please continue your excellent work

♥ Anne pledged £10

Match Anne's pledge of £10 >

We're with you, completely.

♥ Edeltraud pledged £5

Match Edeltraud's pledge of £5 >

Nobody who leaves their country because they fear for their lives should be turned away where they plead for asylum, be it because of war or hunger. People should be allowed to live and work wherever they want

We are most grateful for the support over this year from each of the following Trusts & Foundations:

AB Charitable Trust	Lush charity pot	Simmons & Simmons
Allen & Overy Foundation	London Legal Support	Charitable Foundation
Blue Moon Trust	Trust	Travers Smith Foundation
Chalk Cliff Trust	HumanRights360	
	Paul Hamlyn Foundation	

Thanks to our corporate partners, who have enabled us to grow with their financial, in kind and pro bono support:

Allen & Overy	Ropes & Gray	Kirkland & Ellis
Ashurst	Orrick	White & Case
Reed Smith	Debevoise & Plimpton	Simmons & Simmons
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom (UK)	Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld	Clyde & Co
LLP	Eversheds Sutherland	Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton
Hogan Lovells	Gibson Dunn & Crutcher	Oliver Wyman
Mayer Brown	Norton Rose Fulbright	

While it would be impossible to continue without our core institutional funders above, a special mention is due to the many hundreds of named, and often unnamed, individuals who give to our regular CrowdJustice campaigns, the London Legal Walk and other fundraising calls. A special thank you to Johanna Bezzano, Robin Adams, John Hamilton, Mike Lanchin, and Tristan Wood for their support this year. We draw strength from their generosity and messages of concern and solidarity. Last but not least, we are very grateful to our staff teams for supporting our fundraising efforts and, Isaac Shaffer, for running at the Royal Parks Half Marathon to raise funds for our vital services.



7. Future plans

In an ever changing and hostile environment for migration, the communities we work with face increased injustice and even fewer routes to sanctuary in Europe and the UK. Externalisation, border violence, racism and criminalisation are just a few facets of the hostility facing people on the move in 2022 in the global North.

With all this uncertainty, it is more important than ever that we remain true to our values. Staying focused on our vision for a world where people are valued above borders, laws protecting migrants are upheld and migration routes are safe and accessible to all, is paramount. Often disheartened by delays and the complexity of our legal work, it can sometimes feel that there is no hope. In moments like this, we have promised to hold on to our mission and carry each other in solidarity, with respect and community. Centering the quality and efficiency of our services, we aim to support more people and develop with our colleagues.

All of us at RLS, working together in small and bigger groups, listening to one another, we developed our Strategic Plan for the years 2022-2025. In doing so, we agreed that **we must carry on, do better, and build resilience for the future.**

Our key commitments for the future are that we will:

- Ensure access to free, quality legal support to people who migrate;
- Use our casework as a tool to tackle individual and systemic injustice in the immigration systems;
- Put the communities we work with at the heart of what we do: from design to evaluation;
- Apply anti-racist practices throughout our decision making, actions and delivery planning.
- Acknowledge the current impact of the Climate and Ecological Emergency on people who migrate, and the urgent issues flowing from the intersection of climate breakdown and migration. We will seek to foreground this relationship as well as mitigating our own environmental impact.

In solidarity,

Approved by order of the board of trustees on ...2 March 2023..... And signed on its behalf by:



Mr Christopher Randall – Chair of Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Refugee Legal Support

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Refugee Legal Support

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Refugee Legal Support (the Trust) for the year ended 30 September 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a registered member of FCCA which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.





Jamal M Chaudhry
FCCA
Faiz & Co. Limited
Chartered Accountants
8B Accommodation Road
London
NW11 8ED

Date: 06 March 2023.....

Refugee Legal Support

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

		Unrestricted Total funds £	fund £	Year Ended 30.9.22 Restricted funds £	Period 7.10.20 to 30.9.21 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		145,203	207,816	353,019	175,102
Charitable activities					
Support cost		-	7,910	7,910	1,233
Investment income	2	<u>84</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>33</u>
Total		<u>145,287</u>	<u>215,726</u>	<u>361,013</u>	<u>176,368</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Support cost	3	<u>106,433</u>	<u>208,505</u>	<u>314,938</u>	<u>84,772</u>
NET INCOME		38,854	7,221	46,075	91,596
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>79,265</u>	<u>12,331</u>	<u>91,596</u>	-
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>118,119</u>	<u>19,552</u>	<u>137,671</u>	<u>91,596</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Refugee Legal Support

Balance Sheet
30 September 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Total funds £	fund £	30/9/22 Restricted funds £	30/9/21 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7	562	-	562	750
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	8	-	-	-	724
Cash at bank		<u>117,557</u>	<u>153,863</u>	<u>271,420</u>	<u>131,061</u>
		117,557	153,863	271,420	131,785
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	9	-	(134,311)	(134,311)	(40,939)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>117,557</u>	<u>19,552</u>	<u>137,109</u>	<u>90,846</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>118,119</u>	<u>19,552</u>	<u>137,671</u>	<u>91,596</u>
NET ASSETS		<u><u>118,119</u></u>	<u><u>19,552</u></u>	<u><u>137,671</u></u>	<u><u>91,596</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Refugee Legal Support

Balance Sheet - continued
30 September 2022

FUNDS

11

Unrestricted funds:

General fund	87,602	17,465
Designated Funds	30,517	28,900
Fund Reserves 1	-	12,900
Fund Reserves 2	-	<u>20,000</u>
	<u>118,119</u>	<u>79,265</u>
Restricted funds	<u>19,552</u>	<u>12,331</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>137,671</u>	<u>91,596</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on
2 March 2023
..... and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
Mr Christopher Randall - Chair of Trustees

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Financial reporting standard 102 - reduced disclosure exemptions

The charity has taken advantage of the following disclosure exemptions in preparing these financial statements, as permitted by FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland':

- the requirements of Section 7 Statement of Cash Flows.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Refugee Legal Support

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments.

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Year Ended 30.9.22	Period 7.10.20 to 30.9.21
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>84</u>	<u>33</u>

3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs (see note 4) £	Support costs £	Totals £
Support cost	<u>275,070</u>	<u>39,868</u>	<u>314,938</u>

4. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Direct costs comprised of costs spent on case disbursement of FRFE project and grant paid to SP.

Refugee Legal Support

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

5. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

During the year, one of the trustees, Annette Elder, received self-employed remuneration in the sum of £5,042 (2021: £nil) in return for services providing guidance and formal legal supervision required by the OISC regulation regime, to the charity's newly recruited lawyers within the Afghan Pro Bono and Family Reunion from Europe projects for an interim period pending the charity's newly appointed Legal Director taking up his post in April 2022. This interim solution was necessary and was assessed by the Board of Trustees as the most efficient and effective method of maintaining regulatory compliance and adequate supervision of the charity's legal casework, and to protect the best of its beneficiaries.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 30 September 2022 nor for the period ended 30 September 2021.

6. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Total funds £	fund £	Restricted funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	123,634	51,468	175,102
Charitable activities			
Support cost	1,233	-	1,233
Investment income	<u>33</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33</u>
Total	<u>124,900</u>	<u>51,468</u>	<u>176,368</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Support cost	<u>45,635</u>	<u>39,137</u>	<u>84,772</u>
NET INCOME	<u>79,265</u>	<u>12,331</u>	<u>91,596</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>79,265</u>	<u>12,331</u>	<u>91,596</u>

Refugee Legal Support

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £
COST	
At 1 October 2021 and 30 September 2022	<u>1,000</u>
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 October 2021	<u>250</u>
Charge for year	<u>188</u>
At 30 September 2022	<u>438</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	

8. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30/9/22 £	30/9/21 £
At 30 September 2022		<u>562</u>
At 30 September 2021		<u>750</u>
Other debtors	<u>-</u>	<u>724</u>

8. DE

Refugee Legal Support

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

9. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30/9/22	30/9/21
	£	£
Bank loans and overdrafts (see note 10)	-	843
Trade creditors	(1)	4,011
Taxation and social security	-	212
Other creditors	<u>134,312</u>	<u>35,873</u>
	<u>134,311</u>	<u>40,939</u>

Total creditors consist of deferred income of £133,129 (2021: £35,873) and pension liability of £1,183 (2021: £nil).

10. LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	30/9/22	30/9/21
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Bank overdrafts	<u>-</u>	<u>843</u>

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.10.21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 30.9.22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	17,465	37,237	32,900	87,602
Designated Funds	28,900	1,617	-	30,517
Fund Reserves 1	12,900	-	(12,900)	-
Fund Reserves 2	<u>20,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(20,000)</u>	<u>-</u>
	79,265	38,854	-	118,119
Restricted funds				
Restricted Funds	12,331	7,221	-	19,552
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>91,596</u>	<u>46,075</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>137,671</u>

Refugee Legal Support

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	82,443	(45,206)	37,237
Designated Funds	<u>62,844</u>	<u>(61,227)</u>	<u>1,617</u>
	145,287	(106,433)	38,854
Restricted funds			
Restricted Funds	215,726	(208,505)	7,221
	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>361,013</u>	<u>(314,938)</u>	<u>46,075</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 30.9.21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	79,265	(61,800)	17,465
Designated Funds	-	28,900	28,900
Fund Reserves 1	-	12,900	12,900
Fund Reserves 2	<u>-</u>	<u>20,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>
	79,265	-	79,265
Restricted funds			
Restricted Funds	12,331	-	12,331
	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>91,596</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>91,596</u>

Refugee Legal Support

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	124,900	(45,635)	79,265
Restricted funds			
Restricted Funds	51,468	(39,137)	12,331
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>176,368</u>	<u>(84,772)</u>	<u>91,596</u>

12. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 30 September 2022.

Refugee Legal Support

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

	Year Ended 30.9.22 £	Period 7.10.20 to 30.9.21 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Income from Charitable Act	350,432	175,102
Gift aid	<u>2,587</u>	<u>-</u>
	353,019	175,102
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	84	33
Charitable activities		
Other income	<u>7,910</u>	<u>1,233</u>
Total incoming resources	361,013	176,368
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Wages	220,260	62,577
Social security	28,627	1,232
Pensions	5,219	319
Direct expenses	7,110	3,027
Interpreters' fees	<u>13,854</u>	<u>6,098</u>
	275,070	73,253
Support costs		
Management		
Training cost	4,046	1,264
Rent, Rates and water	13,374	1,198
Insurance	3,099	352
Telephone	871	551
Postage and stationery	182	-
Advertising	<u>3,444</u>	<u>1,736</u>
Carried forward	25,016	5,101

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Refugee Legal Support

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 30 September 2022

	Year Ended 30.9.22 £	Period 7.10.20 to 30.9.21 £
Management		
Brought forward	25,016	5,101
Travelling	2,607	370
Office expenses	1,710	216
IT expenses	<u>351</u>	<u>119</u>
	29,684	5,806
Finance		
Safeguarding	241	-
Sundries	22	-
Bank charges	1,493	313
Health and safety	133	-
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>188</u>	<u>250</u>
	2,077	563
Other 2		
Advertising	475	-
Governance costs		
Legal and professional fees	314	2,381
Accountancy fees	6,136	2,619
Subscription	<u>1,182</u>	<u>150</u>
	7,632	5,150
Total resources expended	<u>314,938</u>	<u>84,772</u>
Net income	<u>46,075</u>	<u>91,596</u>