



Executive Director - Refugee Legal Support

Salary: £55,000 - £65,000 negotiable

Location: Central London, hybrid working arrangements available

Contract: Full-time, compressed hours or part time arrangements available

Who We're Looking For and why join us

At Refugee Legal Support (RLS), we seek a visionary and compassionate leader to become our first Executive Director. This pivotal role offers the opportunity to shape the future of a values-driven legal organisation that stands in solidarity with people on the move.

With our current strategy concluding in 2025, we're looking for a leader who can build on our strong foundations and guide the development of our next strategic plan, ensuring organisational cohesion at every step of this journey. You will bring strategic vision, expertise, and a collaborative approach to drive RLS's future direction, strengthen anti-racist practices and accountability whilst empowering teams across Greece, the UK, and Northern France.

This role uniquely combines strategic oversight with hands-on work, bridging urgent client needs with long-term systemic change. For a leader passionate about migrant justice and equity, this is a career-defining opportunity to sustain and grow RLS's mission while shaping its future.

About Refugee Legal Support (RLS)

Our structure

Refugee Legal Support (RLS) operates as a registered organisation in both the UK and Greece, reflecting our international scope and impact. Our governance structure includes a dedicated Board of Trustees and specialised subcommittees that provide oversight and strategic direction. We are supported by a dynamic management team and dedicated, expert project teams who deliver our mission across Greece, the UK, and Northern France.

What we do

Refugee Legal Support is an international legal support organisation, with operations in Greece, the UK and Northern France. We are committed to ensuring access to justice through the provision of expert legal information and advice to people seeking safety and

family reunification. Our casework is a tool to tackle individual and systemic injustice in immigration systems.

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.

We are specialised and use our expertise for strategic impact. We strive to be thorough and aim for precision and accuracy in all of our work. In a fast changing environment we use our experience and expertise to move quickly to meet needs, but to also think beyond the immediate context and push for positive systemic change.

We continuously think and challenge ourselves in how we develop our anti-racist practice and empower refugee leadership. We recognise that climate justice and migrant struggles are interconnected and view our work through this lens.

To get a fuller picture of our financial health and impact, have a look at our [most recent accounts](#) on the charity commission website. (Refugee Legal Support, Charity number: 1191680)

Our ethos

We have a strong commitment to consultative decision making and strive to be non hierarchical. We are rooted in our foundational values of solidarity, anti-racism, independence, openness and transparency. Our colleagues play a central role in shaping our work and how we respond to need. They are dedicated to our mission and have the best interests of our clients at heart. We enable each other to fulfil our individual and collective potential in a work environment of mutual trust and respect.

Working at RLS:

The wellbeing of our colleagues is of paramount importance. We foster a friendly, supportive and collegiate working environment, and we practise consultative ways of working. We work flexibly and prioritise effective recuperation.

Some of our benefits include:

- Generous annual leave: 28 days (pro rata for part time employees) plus bank holidays;
- Flexible working schemes, compressed hours and remote working are available;
- Pension scheme with ethical pension provider;
- Wellbeing offering: access to specialist individual counselling, group clinical supervision or alternative means of wellbeing support (body and mind classes of choice);
- Enhanced maternity and partner leave;

- Enhanced sick leave and pay;
- Wellbeing leave;
- Learning & Development: each member of staff has access to training resources and courses and shadowing opportunities;
- Working groups: RLS has dedicated working groups on Refugee Leadership & Anti-Racism and Climate & Ecological Emergency;
- We work from within a fully equipped office shared with a like-minded organisation near Aldgate station.
- Ethical bank and pension provider. If you would like more information about who we bank with and who our pension provider is, please get in touch.

Role Overview: Executive Director

The Executive Director is a new role for RLS. The successful candidate will lead RLS through its next phase of development, providing strategic leadership, promoting organisational cohesion and accountability whilst driving the fulfilment of our mission. As a representative and advocate for RLS, the Executive Director will oversee key areas such as organisational development, strategic planning, fundraising, robust financial planning, risk management, staff well-being, and external relations.

Core Responsibilities:

- 1. Organisational Development**
 - Review and enhance RLS's organisational structure and cohesiveness across offices and teams.
 - Implement strategic outcomes to ensure efficient and aligned operations.
- 2. Strategic Planning**
 - Lead on developing and delivering strategic plans in alignment with RLS's values and mission, incorporating regular reviews.
 - Ensure the sustainability of RLS's mission and core programmes.
- 3. Lead the Management Team**
 - Guide and support the Management Team, fostering effective collaboration.
 - Promote project integration, efficient delivery, and cross-team development.
 - Embed and promote robust accountability.
- 4. Governance**
 - Work with and leverage the knowledge of the RLS's Board of Trustees and thematic sub-committees to drive positive change and ensure sustainability.
 - Work with the chair of trustees and relevant subcommittees to maintain, review and improve existing governance structures and delegation schemes to enhance efficiency.
- 5. Regulatory Compliance & Risk Management**
 - Ensure RLS's compliance with relevant regulations and effective risk management across operations in collaboration with managers. This includes SQM, OISC, LAA, employment law and regulations in foreign jurisdictions.
- 6. HR Oversight & Staff Development**

- Oversee HR functions, promote professional growth, and prioritise staff well-being.
 - Foster an inclusive and supportive working environment.
 - 7. Fundraising & Financial Oversight**
 - Deliver robust financial planning and drive RLS's fundraising efforts in collaboration with management team and trustees.
 - Engage with key funders and develop sustainable funding strategies.
 - 8. External Representation & Advocacy**
 - Serve as the public face of RLS, advocating for our mission through media, events, and partnerships. Where considered appropriate, the Executive Director will be deputised by members of staff or management in external communications.
 - Act as a key contact for the Board of Trustees, promoting transparent communication between staff, management and board.
 - 9. Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)**
 - Own, review and implement appropriate MEL frameworks and practices.
 - Implement progressive and compassionate accountability structures to ensure transparency across the organisation.
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Person Specification

Essential:

- Proven leadership in an organisation focused on human rights, migration, or a related sector.
- Strong strategic planning and organisational development experience, ideally in a fast-growing setting.
- Experience of fundraising and financial management within the third sector.
- Experience leading remote, diverse teams and implementing inclusive HR practices.
- Deep understanding of the immigration and asylum landscape in the UK and Europe.
- Exceptional communication skills, with the ability to represent RLS effectively to partners and the public.
- Be responsive
- Culturally sensitive
- Have a strong commitment to advancing migrant justice.
- A dynamic and innovative self-starter.
- Be highly organised.
- Be an active listener and a progressive leader.
- Be objective and apply good judgement in difficult situations.
- Fluent in English.
- The successful candidate will be required to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (we cover the cost). However, a criminal record is not necessarily a barrier to recruitment but should be disclosed on application;
- Have the right to work in the UK.

Desirable:

- Deep understanding and/or experience of working in an international context.
 - A qualified practising or non-practising lawyer in the area of immigration and/ or human rights.
 - Lived experience related to migration, or legal knowledge in immigration and asylum.
 - Language skills relevant to our areas of operation, particularly Greek or French.
 - Experience and understanding of pro bono legal projects.
 - Experience in public speaking, media engagement, or international advocacy.
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Application Process

To apply, please submit the following documents to rebecca.haack@refugeelegalsupport.org stating "Executive Director - YOUR NAME" in the subject line of your email:

1. **Current CV**
2. **Cover Letter** detailing your motivation for applying and how your skills align with the role requirements.

Application Deadline: Monday, 9 am GMT, 6th of January 2025

The first round of interviews will be held the week commencing the 20th of January.

For an informal chat about the role, please contact the chair of the board, Chris Randall at chris.randall@refugeelegalsupport.org .

Reasonable adjustments

Our recruitment process is designed to allow candidates to showcase their experience and potential. We welcome requests for adjustments to enable you to showcase your skills and expertise. If you would like us to make any adjustments to make our recruitment process more accessible, please do reach out to us to request them.

If you do not hear from us within four weeks of the closing date, this will mean that on this occasion your application has now been unsuccessful. Please do feel free to apply again for any future positions which may be of interest. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an in-person interview in Central London.

Privacy note

Any data requested will be used for recruitment purposes only; to screen candidates and judge their suitability to progress to interview. RLS will not share the data with other organisations for marketing or any other purposes. Your personal data will be retained by RLS as long as it is necessary to evaluate your application. All personal data will be treated in confidence and will be deleted 12 months after the conclusion of the recruitment process unless you wish to withdraw your candidacy at an earlier stage and would like us to erase your personal data at the same time. Data collected in the UK is held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and the UK Data Protection Act 2018.

You have the right to request a copy of data we hold on you, to rectify your data and to restrict processing of your data. For any further information on our privacy policy, email privacy@refugeelegalsupport.org .

We value equality and diversity in our organisation, and strive to build a team reflective of the communities we work in. We welcome applications from everyone regardless of age, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, faith, or disability. People with migrant backgrounds are experts by experience and are particularly encouraged to apply.