

Job Description



Research Officer

Responsible to: Insight Hub Manager

Location: Any Refugee Action Office – London, Birmingham, Bradford or Manchester with flexibility for fully home-based working

Hours: 3 days per week (21 hours)

Duration: Fixed term 12-month contract

Background

About Refugee Action

Refugee Action is a national charity with over 40 years' experience empowering people who've survived some of the world's worst regimes to secure the protection and support that they need to live with dignity and respect and build a new life in the UK. We do this by providing expert advice and casework, building the capacity of partner organisations, and working with allies to change government policy.

Our vision for a welcoming UK has never been more important. Last year almost 80 million people were displaced, the biggest refugee crisis since WWII. Add to this the most hostile Government we have ever faced, now's the time to stand up for the rights of refugees.

It's a crucial time to be part of Refugee Action as we come to the end of our current strategy (2019-22) and embark on our next strategic period with a fantastic new CEO who has worked in the charity for 19 years. We will do this through securing systemic change through our campaigns to change government policies, our direct services, and our work to strengthen and connect other service delivery organisations. You can [read more about what we do here](#).

We will also continue with our commitment in our strategy to do far more to learn from and shift power to refugees and people seeking asylum. We are also striving to be an actively anti-racist organisation. Both of these commitments are a top priority for our new CEO as set out in his first public statement [on Twitter here](#).

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About the Good Practice & Partnerships Team at Refugee Action

Since its inception in 2016, [Refugee Action's Good Practice and Partnership \(GPP\)](#) team has built a community of more than 300 frontline refugee and migration organisations and worked directly with over 150 organisations to build capacity and co-design solutions to the challenges they face. The team has built strong, trusting relationships with organisations who recognise the strategic value of increasing their capability.

The team collaborates with others to develop and scale innovative practice to overcome the issues limiting their practice - disconnected, overwhelmed, reactive services - and to address the causes rather than the symptoms of beneficiaries' needs. The function uses an agile approach to project delivery, including how they tackle research, design and development tasks.

About the Insight Hub

The Insight Hub, formerly the [Information and Data Hub](#), was established as part of the Respond and Adapt Programme (RAP), a sector wide initiative which supported organisations across the UK to cope with the Covid 19 pandemic. The Hub was set up to gather and share data on current needs across the sector, to inform service design and adaptation and to bring people together to discuss their experiences.

Since it began in April 2020, we have produced 12 Bulletins on a range of key issues through the Hub and convened a series of sector wide calls to discuss the findings. The Hub has now expanded into a community of over 400 people, including over **280 organisations** and multiple funders, campaigners and statutory organisations. It has established itself as an effective mechanism for collecting data to monitor the changing needs of people in the immigration system and the organisations supporting them as this crisis evolves.

Having secured further funding to continue, the Information and Data Hub is transitioning into the **Insight Hub** as of September 2021. As part of this, we have planned for the research function to be an internal role within the GPP team rather than outsourcing this capacity to external consultants.

This newly created role of Research Officer will lead on the collection, analysis and distribution of Hub survey data. It will also play a leading role in strengthening Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) activities across the GPP team. This will

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mainly be through supporting team members to capture the data required to measure impact, as reflected in our MEL framework.

Purpose of the role and key relationships

This role sits within the Good Practice & Partnerships Team at Refugee Action. The overall purpose of the Research Officer is to:

1. **Develop** – In collaboration with sector organisations, co-develop research topics and questions for exploration through the Insight Hub surveys
2. **Collaborate** – Build connections with individuals and teams in Refugee Action and with organisations engaged in the Hub
3. **Amplify** – Work with the Hub Advisory Group and other Experts by Experience forums to ensure an inclusive approach to data collection and sharing

Main duties and responsibilities

- Lead the design, production, analysis and development of the Hub survey and bulletin, ensuring to involve relevant stakeholders at all stages
- Keep abreast of new research, key policy issues and developments and link with Bulletins where needed
- Develop and maintain a monitoring framework to measure the engagement of organisations with the Insight Hub surveys and calls
- Work with the Insight Hub Manager to plan for and deliver presentations at regular Hub calls
- Take part in the Hub Advisory Group which will be established to shape the strategy and approach of the work
- Participate in discussions on Refugee Action's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework as and when required
- Liaise with GPP team members to ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to capture the required MEL data, in collaboration with the Apricot Manager
- Work towards the incorporation of anti-racist practices in the work that we do to maximise the shift in power to people with lived experience.

Collaboration with others

- Contribute to developing Refugee Action's longer-term strategy for good practice support for asylum and migrant support organisations;

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- Play an active role in the wider work of the Good Practice & Partnerships team with a particular focus on digital design, prevention and de-escalation principles and the team's overall anti-racism strategy;
- Work closely with the Apricot Database Manager and with key GPP team members to ensure data collection, storage and analysis mechanisms are streamlined across the team.
- Build strong relationships with the Campaigns Team, particular the Policy & Research Manager and Policy & Research Officer, to help develop connections between the Insight Hub and wider campaigning work;
- Safeguard at all times confidentiality of information relating to staff and clients;
- Carry out the above in accordance with the aims, values and policies of Refugee Action.

Person Specification

All experience may be paid or voluntary, full, or part-time, in the UK or overseas.

Candidates will be short-listed on the following specifications:

Essential knowledge, attitudes, skills, abilities

- Experience using/understanding of monitoring and evaluation practices
- Experience developing and delivering high quality research projects
- Analytical skills, with the ability to understand complex information and summarise key points in a strategic way
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to write in accessible ways for a range of audiences
- Excellent planning and organisational skills
- Ability to work with competing priorities and meet deadlines
- Insight into the needs, hopes and experiences of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK, and the organisations providing services to them

Desirable experience, knowledge, abilities and skills

- Those with lived experience as a refugee are encouraged to apply
- Understanding of the principles of data and how evidence can support policy and influencing work
- Use of analytical software for data analysis
- Using a range of approaches including qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Understanding and/or experience in participating in Human Centred Design projects

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- Solid interpersonal skills, with the ability to build positive, collaborative relationships with colleagues, external stakeholders and experts by experience
- Experience of managing collaborative projects and/or partnerships
- Excellent networking and partnership-building skills, with the ability to build and maintain effective relationships;

In addition to the above, candidates will be interviewed on the following if they are short-listed.

- Experience of, and commitment to understanding the importance of cultural diversity, anti-racism and equality and inclusion;
- Ability to plan and manage own workload;
- Open and reflective attitude to own work and experience;
- Ability to use Information Technology to the required standard;
- Understanding of the strengths and challenges of front line organisations;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, accuracy and attention to detail, and ability to produce research reports based on survey data;
- Understanding of the development needs of voluntary sector organisations and those supporting people in the immigration system.

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Terms and Conditions of Employment

This post is offered on a temporary contract for 12 months. The role will be for 3 days per week. Refugee Action has a Flexible Working Policy and for this post would be open to considering a flexible working pattern.

The following conditions of service will apply:

Salary	£30,451 to £32,910 pro rata per annum. All new employees will normally start at the bottom of the band.
Location	Office based in either London, Manchester, Birmingham or Bradford. Under Covid-19 restrictions, this role is currently fully home based. Refugee Action's Flexible Working policy supports a wide variety of working patterns including compressed and part time hours.
Annual increments	Increments of one point per annum to the maximum of the band are paid on 1 April. To qualify the post holder must be confirmed in post and employed since the first of the previous October.
Pension	Refugee Action will contribute 8% of gross basic salary plus £50 per month (pro rata for part time posts) into a pension plan.
Holidays	24 days per year plus public holidays (pro rata for part-time post). Holiday entitlement increases to a maximum of 31 days per year, reached within five years of employment (pro rata for part-time posts).
Hours of Work	21 hours per week (excluding lunch breaks). Some evening and weekend work may be required for which time off in lieu should be claimed.
Probation	This post will have a probationary period of six months.
Notice	One month's notice of termination of employment on either side.
Disability	We are committed to making every reasonable adjustment to the workplace or working arrangements to accommodate people with disabilities.
Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)	All Refugee Action staff are subscribed to use a 24-hour confidential support line. Face to face counselling can also be arranged with the EAP's trained counsellors if appropriate.