



# TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK

**ISLINGTON CENTRE  
FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS**

# Message from our Board Chair

---



[Board Chair Victoria Rae pictured left with English student pictured right]

I am proud to have been Chair of Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants since March 2022. With my fellow board members, we bring a diverse range of expertise and experience and find inspiration in the work of the Centre and being an important part of this vibrant and hopeful community.

It is an exciting time to join as we have started on our next 3-year strategy (2025-2028). As part of our Board continuity and refresh we are looking to recruit two new trustees, one with specific financial experience to join as a Deputy Treasurer and one with knowledge of the funding environment.

We welcome around 220 clients from across London to our three in-person hubs in Islington plus a full online timetable of activities. I believe our work is more important than ever – to be able to make a difference to people's lives, ensuring the organisation is well-led and resilient in the external challenges of the voluntary sector.

In this pack you will find more about how we work with refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, what we are looking for in new trustees, what you could gain from being a Trustee and how to apply. We would welcome people wanting to take their first trustee position. So please if you have questions and would like an informal chat with either me or one of the Board, please email me at [chair@islingtoncentre.co.uk](mailto:chair@islingtoncentre.co.uk)

Thank you,

**VICTORIA RAE**, Board Chair

# Who We Are

Founded in 1997, the Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants provides a place for refugees, migrants, and people seeking asylum to rebuild their life with support and community. From classes to casework to financial assistance, the Centre has a wide offering available for our community of over 220 people. Our approach is compassionate and human and the support we offer is long term - on average people stay with us around four years.

## Mission

Our mission is to offer people the emotional support, practical tools and sense of community they need to build a happy life in the UK.



## What We Do



### Classes

Classes online and in-person including English, yoga, choir, dance, art, and more with 1,260 classes last year and 11,300 attendances.



### Support Service

One-to-one casework to overcome difficulties accessing housing, healthcare, education, legal support, etc.



### Centre Days

In-person classes, activities, casework appointments, lunch, and community space at our Centre in Islington.



### Support Packages

Financial hardship grants to purchase food and essentials with 2,400+ disbursements to 92 people seeking asylum last year.

# OUR IMPACT

---

We welcome all asylum seekers, refugees and migrants regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality, religion or immigration status. Often, we are the only point of contact destitute asylum seekers have with services. In other cases, we act as a first port of call offering kindness, a friendly face and help to find the right services. Our aim is to provide a space where people can come to ask for the help they need, regain their sense of dignity, feel strong and build decent lives in the UK. See [our latest Annual Report](#).

Across the last year, our community achieved many positive outcomes in their lives through their own hard work and the advocacy, referrals and casework of our Support Service, with:

**81**

people accessed  
**legal support**

**75**

people avoided  
street-sleeping and  
had safe **housing**

**71**

people  
**negotiated the  
asylum system**

**48**

people saw a  
doctor or dentist  
to get **healthcare**

**27**

people accessed  
**food banks**

**26**

people accessed  
**welfare / benefits**

**24**

people accessed  
**new parent support**

**23**

people applied to  
further their  
**education**

**18**

people created  
CVs and sought  
employment

**14**

people **gained  
permission to stay  
in the UK**

**“If you bring any  
problem here, they  
will help you.”**

- Alan

# MEET THE TRUSTEES

---

Our Board of Trustees works closely with our Chief Executive, Andy Ruiz Palma, offering a wealth of knowledge and support through these unprecedented times.

The current board is composed of nine individuals with a broad range of skills. Five board members have personal connection to the experience of being a refugee, one trustee is a former client. Three of our board joined in September 2025.



Victoria  
Rae, Chair



Imran  
Malik



Kathy  
Margerison



Charlotte  
Lilley



Gabrielle  
Samuels



Ghadeer  
Al-Seragi



Margaret  
Lally



Syd  
Zahid



Angelina  
Durgaj

# NEW TRUSTEE ROLES

The current Board brings a wide range of charity and public body experience including strategy, governance, and law. We are looking for skills to both enhance and complement these strengths.

The Centre has a dedicated and talented staff team led by our CEO, Andy Ruiz Palma, who joined in 2000 as an English teacher. In addition to this staff resource we have around 40 volunteers who provide direct support through activities. We also have in place accountancy support to the executive and a dedicated fundraising team.

## WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL YOU MAKE?

- Be at the centre of an organisation making a huge difference to the lives of refugees and asylum seekers.
- A personally fulfilling and professionally valuable role where you use your skills and experience to benefit the community, provide better services for people who need them and contribute to the growth of the Board.
- A great development opportunity where you build new confidence in a range of areas from strategy to management to team working and decision-making which may be different from your previous experience.

**“When I hear the stories of the people who come here, I think: that’s why I’m doing this.”**

- Charlotte Lilley, Trustee



**“What I love about the Centre is that it leads with compassion. I am very proud to be part of that.”**

- Gabrielle Samuels, Trustee

# ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

---

## TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

Charity Trustees play a very important role in making sure that the charity is run in the interests of the people it is there to support. The Charity Commission produces guidance including the Essential Trustee.

At Islington Centre which has been a registered charity since 2010, our Trustees are responsible for the strategic planning of our activities, ensuring that any decisions made are for the benefit of our service users and that we act in a legal and safe manner.

## WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR IN THESE TRUSTEE ROLES

We are looking for someone who can demonstrate a strong empathy with our client group and who understand how to work with organisations rooted in a local community. You will bring excellent people and communication skills and demonstrate good team-working.

You will demonstrate this through your experience working with marginalised communities (either in a frontline operational role, a policymaking role, or on the Board of another organisation) or personal lived experience as a member of a marginalised community.

We are open to applications from people looking for their first Trustee role or who may not have considered being a Trustee before and will provide mentoring to help trustees find their feet.

## SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE SOUGHT

### **Trustee / Deputy Treasurer**

The Deputy Treasurer role will work closely with our Treasurer Imran Malik, who joined the Board in 2023, providing financial advice, guidance and assurance. You will help the board further develop our skills including for those who do not come from financial backgrounds to reach financial decisions, increase our collective understanding and confidence that we are carefully managing risk. We have in place a freelance accountant who works with the CEO on the day-to-day book-keeping and prepares our accounts and an Independent Examiner who reports on our financial statements in our Annual Report & Accounts.

Specifically, we are looking for:

- Good understanding of financial management and reporting
- A recognised accounting, finance or similar qualification
- Ability to analyse and communicate financial information to the wider Board
- Willingness to provide financial advice and support to the management team as needed
- Knowledge and experience of fundraising finance practice in voluntary and community organisations (desirable)

### **Trustee**

We are seeking a Trustee with knowledge of the current funding landscape who can work closely with the Chair to offer strategic advice and support to our fundraising team. This role will help the Centre grow its networks and build new funding relationships.

Specifically, we are looking for:

- Knowledgeable about funding streams
- Well-connected and open to making introductions to corporates and potential donors
- Willing to attend fundraising events
- Ready to act as an ambassador for the Centre, championing our work and helping us build new relationships

## TIME COMMITMENT

- Attend 6 Board Meetings per year and an in-person AGM (November), plus pre-reading time.
- Board meetings are majority online and are held on Monday evenings with one being in-person (January, March, May, July, September, October).
- Contribute to ad-hoc working groups where specific skills might be valuable.
- We encourage Trustees to come to the Centre from time to time and meet with clients, employees and volunteers (as other commitments allow).
- Be accessible, and provide guidance and support to the CEO and staff team as appropriate.
- Be a representative of the Centre at private and public events.

## OTHER INFORMATION

- The position is voluntary but reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed.
- Trustees are appointed to serve for a 3-year term, renewable for a further 3 years.
- For successful applicants Islington Centre will seek an Enhanced DBS certificate.

# HOW TO APPLY

---

Please submit your CV, LinkedIn profile or similar, along with a covering letter (one side of A4) to:

**[chair@islingtoncentre.co.uk](mailto:chair@islingtoncentre.co.uk)**

stating why you would like to apply to become a Trustee of Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants and how your skills and experience would add value to the Board.

If you would prefer to have a chat with our Chair, Victoria Rae, or our Treasurer, Imran Malik, before making an application then please do get in touch via the email address above.

We will be reviewing applications on a rolling basis with a final **deadline to submit applications by Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2026**. Interviews provisionally are scheduled for the weeks of 29<sup>th</sup> June and 13<sup>th</sup> July.

Please contact [chair@islingtoncentre.co.uk](mailto:chair@islingtoncentre.co.uk) with any questions.

Thank you for your  
interest in supporting  
our work through your  
time and skills!

16-18 Cross Street  
London N1 2BG  
Registered charity: 1135205  
Registered as a company limited by  
guarantee: 07076199  
[islingtoncentre.co.uk](http://islingtoncentre.co.uk)