



Nottingham & Nottinghamshire **REFUGEE FORUM**

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum (NNRF) is seeking Board members.

The Board of NNRF is looking for new members at the AGM in November. Board members (trustees) support our activities by ensuring NNRF has a clear strategy, and that its work and goals are in line with its vision. The Board's role is to be the 'guardians of purpose', making sure that all decisions put the needs of the beneficiaries (clients) first. Board members have the overall legal responsibility for a charity. The Board shares collective responsibility for the decisions it makes. As a trustee you will be able to use your knowledge, skills and experience and have a direct influence over a cause you care about. A trustee serves for three years initially but this period can be renewed on two subsequent occasions following a decision of the membership.

Who can stand for the Board?

Anyone (subject to the Charity Commission's criteria) with the required experience, including lived experience, and skills can stand for election to the Board. All Trustees must become members of NNRF (by being a volunteer at NNRF or a regular donor). Current and former volunteers can stand for election to the Board, but NNRF staff are not eligible.

Who can vote for Board members?

Volunteers and regular donors who are members of NNRF are eligible to nominate and vote people on to the Board.

Main responsibilities of Board members

The roles and responsibilities of Boards of all charities are laid down by the Charity Commission and are explained in considerable detail on their website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>).

- To set the overall policy direction of the organisation and maintain an overview of operations
- To monitor progress against the organisation's aims and objectives
- To obtain sufficient funds and resources (e.g. premises) to enable the organisation to achieve its aims and to monitor expenditure
- To provide accountability to funders, supporters and clients
- To take overall legal responsibility for all staff and volunteers
- To take overall responsibility for the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and members of the public while they are on NNRF premises or undertaking NNRF activities

Knowledge, skills and experience

All Board members must be able to demonstrate values such as honesty and integrity. They should be committed to the charity's aims and values. In addition, there are many different skills, experiences, attributes and areas of knowledge that charities welcome from their trustees:

- Board members need to understand the communities they serve. People with knowledge and experience of the asylum system, the issues facing asylum seekers and refugees make very valuable Board members.
- The 'hard' skills - legal, financial, management and so on - which are necessary to understand some of the complex decisions to be taken.
- The 'soft' skills - Boards of trustees need people who can encourage team working, problem solving, asking difficult questions, decision making and creating a positive atmosphere.

Knowledge of a charity's field of work or good people skills are just as important as professional expertise.

Skills and knowledge sought in new trustees

Lived experience: We are extremely interested in applications from people seeking asylum and from refugees, as their lived experience is invaluable to the Board. We would welcome a conversation if you would like to know more about the role before deciding whether to apply.

What is involved

Being a Board member is a rewarding role, but there are responsibilities, and you will need to be able to offer enough time and commitment. As a minimum we ask you to:

- Attend 6 board meetings a year, at NNRF on the second Monday of every second month at 6pm. To read all the reports and come prepared to the meetings
- Become a member of a sub-committee, working group or task and finish group (sub-groups tend to meet 6 times a year, working groups and task and finish groups are a short series of meetings to complete a task). Currently sub-committees are Human Resources, Finance, Grants, Fund Raising, Health and Safety and Safeguarding as well as tasks that might arise from these meetings
- Attend a day with staff to find out more about the work they do
- Commit to furthering NNRF's strategic aims and objectives
- Commit to the legal responsibilities of being a board member, acting in the best interests of NNRF and ensuring it meets its legal obligations
- Promote and advocate for the work of NNRF

How to apply

If you are interested in standing for the NNRF Board, but would like to discuss it further, please do contact the chair for an informal discussion about the role (chair@nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk). Otherwise contact the Chair for an application form. You need the support of two Forum members to endorse your application. You also need to write no more than 250 words describing the knowledge, experience, skills and qualities you have to offer the Board for the AGM. This summary will be made available to members at the AGM.

Please complete the form and send to Jennie Fleming (chair@nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk) **by 9am on Monday 20th October**.

Members of NNRF will vote in new Board members at the AGM date to be confirmed.