

ASAP

ASYLUM
SUPPORT
APPEALS
PROJECT

DEFENDING ASYLUM SEEKERS

LEGAL RIGHTS TO FOOD AND SHELTER

ASAP is looking for a new Management Committee Chair

The Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP) is a small national charity. We reduce destitution amongst people seeking asylum in the UK by defending peoples' legal rights to food and shelter.

Most people who have had to leave their countries due to war or conflict are not allowed to work when they claim asylum in the UK. The only option is to apply to the Home Office for basic housing and a low level of financial support. The Home Office often gets decisions wrong, refusing or withdrawing support even where people meet the criteria. People can appeal to the Asylum Support Tribunal, but there is no legal aid available outside Scotland, so it is hard to find a solicitor.

- We offer free legal representation for people who are appealing a refusal of housing/ financial support, at the Asylum Support Tribunal. Last year we represented over 250 people, enabling 70% of appellants to access accommodation and support.
- We build other organisations' skills in asylum support law through training, an advice line, and an online network of advisors, to increase access to high quality advice on asylum support across the UK. Last year we trained over 1500 advisors across the UK.
- We influence Home Office policy and practice on housing and financial support so that it better meets people's needs, through advocacy work and strategic litigation.

Currently, ASAP employs 11 staff and is supported by around 40 solicitors and barristers who volunteer on our pro bono legal representation scheme at the Tribunal.

ASAP's work and strategy is overseen by a voluntary Management Committee (trustees). The Committee has a broad range of skills and experience, including expertise in law, finance, HR, communications and charity management. A number of our trustees also have experience of living on asylum support in the UK. We are looking for a new Chair with charity governance experience to lead our trustee board.

ASAP is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. We welcome applications regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy/ maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation. We particularly encourage applicants with lived experience of seeking asylum and/or asylum support.

To apply, please complete the application form and return to kat@asaproject.org.uk by midnight on **Sunday 21st April 2024**. For an informal discussion, please contact ASAP Director Kat Lorenz: kat@asaproject.org.uk

Interviews will be held by zoom in the week of 13th May 2024. Reasonable expenses for attending the interview (eg data costs) and any other MC meetings in future, will be reimbursed.

ASAP has a strategic awayday on 23rd May. We will ask the new Chair to attend if possible.

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Chair of Management Committee Role Description and Person Specification

Role Description

1. MC members will be required to provide strategic oversight of:
 - ASAP's compliance with its Articles of Association, policies, and law;
 - ASAP's compliance with all funding conditions and contracts;
 - Whether ASAP is best using its resources to meet its objectives;
 - The effective and efficient administration of ASAP;
 - Monitoring and reporting of financial information;
 - ASAP's funding and expenditure situation; and
 - Implementation of ASAP's Equal Opportunities Policy in employment and service delivery.

MC members also:

2. Contribute actively to the MC by giving strategic direction, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and monitoring and evaluating performance against targets;
3. Attend and prepare for MC meetings;
4. Appoint MC members and officers;
5. Approve accounts;
6. Ensure that ASAP and the MC safeguard ASAP's values and reputation; and
7. Provide any other assistance the MC or ASAP may require, as appropriate, particularly utilising any specialist skills or experience they may have.

In addition to the usual role of a Management Committee Member, the Chair must:

8. Ensure the proper management of MC meetings, including setting agendas in consultation with the Director, chairing meetings, facilitating discussions and decision;
9. Oversee the administration and coordination of sub-committees;
10. Monitor implementation of MC and sub-committee decisions;
11. Take "Chair's action" between meetings, where an immediate decision is required;
12. Serve as line-manager to the Director, conducting regular supervision and appraisal;
13. Represent ASAP as required to the public or external parties such as funders and government;
14. Keep other officers fully informed so that they can deputise if necessary.

NB MC meetings are currently mostly virtual/hybrid – remote attendance is possible.

Person Specification – please explain how you meet these criteria in your application form.

Essential

1. Experience of governance of a charity;
2. Ability to fulfil the job description;
3. A commitment to ASAP's values;
4. An awareness of issues affecting ASAP or willingness to learn about them;
5. A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to prepare for and attend regular MC meetings for at least 3 years;
6. Integrity;
7. Strategic vision and an ability to stay focused on strategic objectives;
8. Good independent judgement;
9. Willingness to take part in MC discussions, contribute constructively and listen to others;
10. Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties and liabilities of trustees of a charitable company;
11. Ability to work effectively as a member of a team;
12. Ability to maintain confidentiality;
13. Understanding and acceptance of the Equity, Diversion and Inclusion Policy; and
14. Willingness to take undertake training required on trustee duties.

Desirable

15. Experience of coming to the UK as a refugee/ living on asylum support in the UK;
16. Experience of asylum support law and appeals and
17. Five years' experience in one or more of:
 - Working with asylum seekers and refugee community organisations;
 - Other work with the asylum sector;
 - Other work in the legal and advice sector;
 - Charitable fundraising;
 - Voluntary sector issues, such as trends for charities and partnership/network formation;
 - Organisational development, growth or change;
 - Human resources;
 - Financial management/accountancy;
 - IT;
 - Communications in relation to social justice or social policy;
 - Lobbying, advocacy and campaigning regarding social justice or social policy;
 - Legal, sociological or other research relevant to ASAP's work; or
 - Management and administration of a charity, for example as a director or trustee.