

# VACANCY

## Rural Refugee Network Head of Operations



Rural Refugee Network (RRN) is a small local charity in East Hampshire, Havant and Portsmouth, working alongside refugees and people seeking asylum through the work of six board members, thirty operational volunteers, one part-time permanent employee and a small bank of project staff and contractors. The charity is widely recognised by stakeholders and the local community for sensitively and effectively addressing the many challenges people arriving in the UK face as they strive to resettle and thrive in our community.

RRN is seeking an experienced Head of Operations to lead its support for refugees and people seeking asylum. This is an exciting opportunity to lead a small charity through a period of significant change, with overall operational responsibility for the charity, including partnerships, funding, coordination of delivery, safeguarding and compliance.

Working directly with a range of stakeholders and beneficiaries, the ideal candidate for this complex and high trust role will be self-reliant, adaptable, and able to engage and influence through excellent face-to-face and online communication skills. This is a genuinely flexible role, with significant autonomy over when and where work is undertaken. There will be regular opportunities for in-person team management and relationship-building, alongside substantial flexibility in how the wider working week is structured and where work is carried out. We are looking for someone who is confident working independently, manages their own time effectively and values the trust and responsibility that come with this level of autonomy.

A candidate who is energised by working flexibly and sensitively with a small team will thrive in this role, which offers the opportunity to make a direct and meaningful impact on people's lives.

Experience in the refugee sector is desirable.

Deadline: **5pm, Monday 21 September 2026**

To apply, please send your CV and a supporting statement of not more than 2 sides, explaining your motivation, reflecting on how you would approach being RRN's only core employed leader, and demonstrating your fit against the specification below, to [hello@ruralrefugeenetwork.org](mailto:hello@ruralrefugeenetwork.org). Please use the email subject heading "Head of Operations Application". Unfortunately, we are unable to respond to all applications.

## Job Description

**Title:** Rural Refugee Network Head of Operations

**Reports to:** Board of Trustees

**Hours:** Part-time (0.5 FTE, negotiable). Permanent contract.

**Salary range:** £40,000 - £45,000 FTE depending on experience.

**Benefits:** 25 days plus bank holidays (pro rata to hours agreed). 3% employer pension contribution.

**Location and expectations:** Flexible hybrid working with frequent travel to projects, events and stakeholder meetings in Portsmouth, Havant, Petersfield and the wider Hampshire area. Occasional evening and weekend in-person working required.

**Purpose:** To lead the day-to-day operation, development and sustainability of Rural Refugee Network, working with trustees, volunteers, funders and partner organisations to ensure refugees and asylum seekers receive practical support and RRN maintains compliance and operational sustainability.

## About the role

In this small charity, the Head of Operations combines operational coordination, programme oversight, partnership development and income generation, with delivery shared across volunteers, trustees and contracted staff. The role offers a high degree of autonomy and flexibility, alongside the opportunity to shape how the organisation works and develops. It requires strong judgement in balancing opportunities, risks and priorities within limited capacity, and the confidence to work independently while bringing others with you.

RRN is volunteer-led, and the Head of Operations is the organisation's only permanent employee, holding overall coordination and accountability for day-to-day operations. This is therefore a broad, high-trust role: rather than delivering everything directly, you will enable and coordinate others, working closely with trustees, volunteers and contractors who deliver significant elements of the activity you lead.

The role will suit someone who enjoys variety, autonomy and a flexible working pattern, and who is comfortable taking ownership while knowing when to collaborate, delegate or seek support.

## Key responsibilities

### Leadership, coordination and partnerships

- Deliver agreed strategic objectives and support trustees in developing future priorities.
- Prepare quarterly Board reports.
- Coordinate relationships with statutory, voluntary and community partners.

- With the support of trustees, represent the charity in local forums, develop opportunities for collaboration and promote RRN in the local community.

#### Programme and volunteer coordination

- Provide oversight of funded and core programmes.
- Recruit, train and manage project staff (currently two youth workers) and contracted/sessional staff.
- Recruit, train, support and retain volunteers.
- Oversee referral pathways and access.
- Support volunteer-led communications activity including website, newsletters, social media, impact reports and case studies.

#### Income development and funding

- Write grant applications and manage reporting requirements (with volunteer/trustee input).
- Maintain and develop funding pipeline and actively develop new funding streams.
- Support relationship-building with donors and community supporters.

#### Finance and compliance

- Monitor programme budgets, working with the Treasurer.
- Support trustees in governance, reporting and compliance responsibilities.
- Maintain organisational policies and procedures.
- Lead safeguarding practice and reporting, acting as Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensuring policies are implemented by staff, volunteers, and contractors.
- Maintain oversight of organisational risk, compliance with Charity Commission, data protection, employment requirements and insurance arrangements.
- Ensure appropriate administrative systems are in place and followed, including maintaining up-to-date records in the CRM, Lamplight.

## Person Specification

#### Essential

- Substantial experience managing programmes or services in the charity/social impact sector, including line management, budgeting and financial oversight, and grant compliance/reporting.
- Strong partnership-building and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Experience leading and recruiting volunteer teams.
- Deep understanding of safeguarding and compliance and recent experience leading safeguarding practice and decision-making. Up to date on requirements and best practice.
- Ability to work independently, exercising sound judgement about what trustees need to know and when, and to prioritise effectively within limited capacity and competing demands.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, IT proficiency.

## Desirable

- Experience working with refugees, asylum seekers or other vulnerable groups.
- Understanding of immigration, integration or resettlement issues.
- Successful fundraising and bid-writing experience.
- Experience of local authority commissioning or grant funding.
- Comfort and experience in IT, data and/or CRMs.

RRN is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. Appointment is subject to an enhanced DBS check, including a check of the relevant barred list, two satisfactory references, including your most recent employer, and safer recruitment practice including verification of employment history and a right to work check. RRN is unable to sponsor work visas, so applicants must already have the right to work in the UK.

# RURAL REFUGEE NETWORK

