



Volunteer Role Description: Asylum Support Volunteer

Responsible to: Asylum Support Project Worker

Volunteer Role Purpose:

As an asylum support volunteer, you will be helping the Asylum Support Project Worker(s) to ensure that all asylum seekers are registered with our project, after which they can receive a weekly food parcel and are eligible for consideration for housing or hosting.

Role Context:

Open Door North East is a Christian charity based on Teesside whose mission is to relieve destitution and poverty while empowering and providing opportunities for those seeking sanctuary in the UK. This is expressed through providing sign posting and practical support, including accommodation for asylum seekers with no recourse to public funding as well as providing; drop services, information, advice and guidance; refugee move on; housing and employment support services to refugees.

At Open Door we have volunteers from many different faith backgrounds and none. As an Open Door volunteer, you will be expected to respect the Christian ethos of the charity and adhere to our volunteering and equal opportunities policy.

Typical volunteering tasks may include:

- Staffing the reception at Melbourne House or in other locations where Asylum Support Project Worker(s) are working with clients.
- Welcoming clients, talking to them, offering them refreshments and helping them to fill in the sign in sheet or project application forms.
- If you speak the clients language helping with translation.
- Ringing other agencies to book appointments for clients.
- Helping clients to use the computers in the drop in the access the internet.
- Filing of client records and updating of project files and spreadsheets using excel.
- Putting together the weekly food parcels and distributiong these to clients.
- Accompanying clients to appointments or when they are due to sign.
- Photocopying and scanning of documents.
- Answering the telephone and taking messages.
- Organising the pool table and other games during the drop in.
- Helping with the serving of the communal meal, clearing away and washing the dishes/loading the dish washer afterwards.
- Spending time one to one with clients allowing them to have a friendly face to talk to.

What we are looking for in our volunteers?

You will be warm, friendly, have good communication skills, and be willing to work as part of a team. You also need to be:

- Aged 18 years or over
- Be able to speak English (to Entry level 3) and ideally have a second language spoken by the refugee community.
- Be reliable. If you sign up to be a volunteer we are looking for commitment, good timekeeping and for you to be here regularly.
- To have good cultural awareness and an awareness of the issues facing asylum seekers and refugees.
- To have empathy with how people might be feeling as they face difficult and stressful circumstances.
- To have good people and communication skills.
- To be non-judgemental and have an understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities & diversity.
- To be able to respect client confidentiality.
- Personally resilient, and able to deal with difficult situations.
- To be willing to attend supervision and training sessions.
- Supportive of the Christian ethos of the organisation.
- To take reasonable care of your own and other people's health and safety.
- Understand the need to maintain safe working boundaries when working with clients, & to work in accordance with policies & procedures.

Desirable

- Experience of working with refugees & asylum seekers.
- An awareness of the issues facing asylum seekers and refugees.
- Experience of working with vulnerable people; paid or voluntary.
- A knowledge of the UK asylum system.

Updated 8th March 2016