

A. Project Overview

The *Seeking Refuge Project* aims to assist residents in the Geelong area who are seeking asylum in Australia, to prepare their applications for a Temporary Protection Visa (TPV). Due to severely limited provision of Government-funded legal assistance to Asylum Seekers, Bellarine for Refugees partnered with the Ross Trust, the Wesley Centre for Life Enrichment, and Refugee Legal (previously Refugee & Immigration Legal Centre (RILC)), to develop a free legal assistance service in Geelong.

The *Seeking Refuge Project* will engage Volunteer Lawyers (willing to register as Migration Agents), Migration Agents and Administrative Volunteers to carry out this much-needed work. All volunteers will be trained by Refugee Legal, supported and covered by volunteer worker and professional indemnity insurance. Refugee Legal is an independent community legal centre specialising in refugee and immigration law, policy and practice. Refugee Legal has been assisting Asylum Seekers, Refugees and disadvantaged migrants in the community and in detention for over 26 years and has substantial casework experience and expertise. Refugee Legal's work involves provision of key legal assistance to those who could not otherwise obtain it due to financial or other forms of distinct disadvantage often related to their cultural or linguistically diverse backgrounds or experiences of torture or trauma. Each year Refugee Legal assists over 5,000 people. Refugee Legal also conducts extensive law reform, advocacy and education programs.

B. Duties and Responsibilities

Seeking Refuge Project Administration Volunteers come from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds. Administration volunteers provide assistance to Volunteer Lawyers and Migration Agent volunteers.

Responsibilities include:

1. Conduct detailed research to provide specific country information as requested;
2. Attending day, evening and/or weekend clinics in Geelong in order to staff the intake of clients, complete paperwork, undertake photocopying and supervise reception areas;

3. Providing administrative support to volunteer Migration Agent volunteers (e.g. photocopying, filing, data entry, pre-filling visa applications, answering phones, other administrative duties, etc);
4. Send correspondence to organisations and clients;
5. Meet in person with clients and interpreters to confirm application details;
6. Migrate and manage data between application forms and versions of forms;
7. Read through existing client files and identify information that may be relevant to the application forms;
8. Read previous statements to clients and collect any further information;
9. File, photocopy and update relevant spreadsheets;
10. Keep detailed file summaries and maintain files in reverse chronological order.

C. Selection Criteria

Please note you are not required to answer the key selection criteria.

Essential attributes:

1. A strong interest in social justice and human rights, particularly Refugee and Asylum Seeker rights;
2. Solid research, analytical and organisation skills;
3. Ability to write clearly and express complex ideas succinctly;
4. Good command of the English language, written and verbal;
5. Capacity to pay close attention to detail whilst working in a fast-paced environment and juggling multiple tasks;
6. Ability to follow instructions and complete tasks to deadlines;
7. A basic understanding of administration and administrative processes including word processing;
8. Great organisational skills;
9. Basic computer skills;
10. Familiarity with data collection;
11. Sensitivity to clients from a variety of backgrounds;
12. Good listening skills and a willingness to communicate openly with clients;
13. A flexible attitude and a willingness to take on new tasks when requested;
14. A willingness to work with interpreters.

Personal Attributes

1. Capacity to work under supervision, use initiative, set priorities, organise and manage workloads.
2. High level of energy and enthusiasm.

D. Accountabilities

All Administration Volunteers are responsible for:

1. Completing any research requests efficiently and autonomously;
2. Communicating availability to the Project Worker in a timely manner;
3. Attending day, evening and/or weekend clinics when rostered to do so;
4. Attending an induction session and required training prior to acceptance as an Administration Volunteer;
5. Accepting and responding to feedback and complying with all directions regarding the performance of the volunteer role;
6. Working collaboratively with the Migration Agent/s during clinics;
7. Maintaining confidentiality of client information and all other information relevant to volunteering with the *Seeking Refuge Project* as per the Refugee Legal Confidentiality Agreement;
8. Declaring any perceived or actual conflict of interest related to current or past employment or volunteer roles. This will be reviewed by the Project Worker in conjunction with a senior manager at Refugee Legal, and decisions will be made on an individual basis;
9. Complying with relevant Barwon Community Legal Service and Refugee Legal policies as set out in the Barwon Community Legal Service Volunteer Policy, Volunteer Agreement and Code of Conduct, Refugee Legal Volunteer Handbook (including all volunteer policies, equal opportunity, internal complaints, Occupational Health and Safety and accident and incident management);
10. Other administrative tasks relevant to the project as required;
11. Acceptance of a volunteer into the *Seeking Refuge Project* is subject to a professional reference check;
12. Volunteers are required to disclose any criminal charges or findings of guilt that arise while volunteering and to submit to regular Police Checks if required;
13. A minimum 6 month commitment from all volunteers is required.
14. Support and debriefing will be provided to all volunteers as part of the project.

E. Training, supervision and clinics

All volunteers will be trained by Refugee Legal. Training is to take place in Geelong, however, some travel to Refugee Legal (Collingwood) for training may be required.

All volunteer work will be supervised by Migration Agents and RILC staff.

All clinics will be based in Geelong.

F. How to apply

Thank you for expressing your interest in volunteering as an Administrative Assistant with the *Seeking Refugee Project* (Geelong) and Refugee Legal.

Please return your completed application form (if you have not already done so) and a copy of your current CV via one of the methods listed below. Please note that we have a strong preference to receive applications via email.

Please note you are not required to answer the key selection criteria.

Email: marijana.graljuk@barwoncls.org.au
Post: Marijana Graljuk (Project Worker)
Seeking Refuge Project
Barwon Community Legal Service
73 Pakington Street
Geelong West VIC 3218

The Seeking Refuge Project Worker will contact you to acknowledge receipt of your application. You will then be contacted to attend an information and/or training session. Following this, a selection interview will take place and acceptance into the program will be determined.

For more information regarding the *Seeking Refuge Project*, please contact Marijana on 1300 430 599 or 0468 763 052.

This Position Description may be subject to change throughout the SRP. We will notify you if this occurs.