



## Volunteer Befriender Role Description

Friends of Refugees London (FoRL) supports refugees, migrants and asylum seekers living in London. Our befriending volunteers aim to make refugees feel welcome and part of our community; sharing their time, resources, social activities and networks to help people find their feet in a new home, give them a social network, and empower them to help themselves and others.

### Purpose of the role

- Develop a welcoming and supportive relationship with a refugee based on friendship, respect and equality
- Provide ongoing support and be a point of contact, helping newcomers get to know the local area and everything it has to offer
- Help refugees to practise their English where required, learn more about life in London and in the UK, and feel part of their new community

### Role description

Befriending is a unique role that is shaped by the individuals in the relationship. You may agree to do anything from sharing a cup of tea and a walk in the park, to helping with everyday life, to attending important appointments with clients. Activities may include:

- Practising conversation English in an informal setting
- Researching local events, activities and facilities and helping your partner access them
- Accompanying your partner to local amenities such as the library, shops, community groups, baby groups, parks, playgrounds etc.
- Helping with everyday life - for example, helping to read important correspondence, helping with online bookings and shopping, directions to the GP, helping them to source household items etc
- Regularly reporting back to FoRL with updates and issues

### Training

FoRL is committed to supporting you with regular training. Upon signing up, you will be required to attend a full induction session. We will also run regular training sessions to support and enhance your befriending experience.

### Commitment

Befrienders build strong, supportive relationships with their partners, so we ask that you commit to a minimum of 6 months of volunteering. Typically we expect befrienders to commit to spending at least two hours per

week with their client. After the initial meeting, you and your partner will agree when and where is best to meet, and we recommend trying to maintain the same time slot each week in order to offer some stability.

If at any point your circumstances change and you are unable to maintain this commitment, it's crucial you let us know as soon as possible so that we can continue supporting your partner.

## Our Values

Our values are at the core of the services that we deliver to our clients, and we expect volunteers to adhere to these values at all times.

**Refugees and other migrants are at the centre of our work:** We are committed to listening to and understanding the needs of refugees and other migrants to ensure our work delivers real value.

**Human rights:** We take a rights-based approach to our work, grounded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and by the Refugee Convention and Protocol. We seek to advance national laws that promote human rights for refugees, asylum-seekers, and vulnerable migrants.

**Open partnership and collaboration:** We believe that the principles of open partnership and collaboration are critical to delivering our vision, so we are committed to working in partnership with individuals, organisations, and communities.

**Continuous learning:** We are dedicated to monitoring our impact for accountability and to learn how best to improve our services for our clients.

**Equality and non-discrimination:** We are committed to providing a service to all refugees, asylum-seekers and vulnerable migrants in our community. All clients are treated equally and we do not discriminate based on gender, race, religion, disability, age, sexuality etc.

**Transparent governance:** We are transparent in how we govern and manage Friend of Refugees London and welcome suggestions on how we can improve.

## How do I apply?

Simply [complete the application form](#). Once the information has been submitted, someone from the FoRL team will contact you to discuss your application.

We also ask you to commit to reading the befriending guide which has a lot of information on seeking asylum in the UK, the problems many asylum seekers and refugees encounter, how the system works, best practice guidance for befriending, boundaries, signposting to specialist support services etc.