



# The Across Borders Summit

## Towards a refugee-led sector

Athens | 8th - 10th November 2023

# INVESTING IN EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS

Donors and organisations invest in capacity-building, education, admin, legal and mental health support (in both recruitment and development pathways) so that every person has access to employment and opportunities for progression, recognising that these are steps towards a refugee-led sector.

## WHAT WE NEED TO DO

### Improve recruitment processes by

1. Including people with lived experience in job design and recruitment processes.
2. Shortlisting all people with lived experience who meet most of the criteria.
3. Explicitly encouraging people with lived experience to apply.
4. Actively disseminating job openings to people with lived experience.
5. Offering information sessions and sharing in advance interview questions.
6. Giving points in the weighting to people with lived experience.
7. Including people with lived experience on job interview panels.
8. Drafting interview questions together with people with lived experience.
9. Providing legal and admin support to ensure job take-up.

### Facilitate professional development by

1. Advertising job opportunities to people internally.
2. Offering meaningful inductions and hands-on training with sufficient time according to personal circumstances.
3. Offering a development period and job protection, instead of probation period, with safe spaces for discussion and development.
4. Providing cultural sensitivity training for all staff.
5. Designing and resourcing for personal development plans and mentorship for individuals
6. Including training and mentoring throughout the development period
7. Providing time and space for people to prepare for internal and external job positions.
8. Offering individualised mental health and wellbeing support.
9. Conducting self-evaluation forms every 6 months.
10. Offering flexible working, leave and part-time work.

### Secure funding needs by

1. Getting more funding for organisations for capacity-building.
2. Providing funding for individuals to pursue development opportunities.
3. Providing funding specifically for refugee-led organisations.
4. Ensuring funders do advocacy to other funders for this.

# CATALYSING REFUGEE LEADERSHIP

Strategy #2

Through capacity-building, internal policy reform and advocacy for legislative change, we commit to create opportunities for people with lived experience to lead at every level across the sector to address power imbalances.

## WHAT WE NEED TO DO

- 1) Organisations expand their recruitment and provide ongoing support to staff through supervision, mentoring, and training based on individual needs and interests. This includes seeking and hiring those who already have skills, to be flexible, and to cast a wider net for recruitment.
- 2) Funders and organisations allocate funding and resources to provide capacity-building and training.
- 3) Organisations evaluate leadership structures on a yearly basis, taking account for power dynamics, decision-making and organisation structure and policies. Organisations can do this by holding themselves accountable by asking key questions including:
  1. Does your organisation centre migrant leadership in its current work at both staff and governance levels and your long-term planning strategy?
  2. How inclusive and representative are your recruitment processes and pathways to leadership (e.g. adapt policies for higher positions that require more qualifications and certifications)?
  3. How and by whom are decisions made in your organisation?

# **BUILDING A PEOPLE-CENTRED, TRAUMA AND IDENTITY-INFORMED MOVEMENT**

Actors within the migrant justice sector commit to building safe and equitable environments through a movement that is people-centred, trauma and identity-informed.

## **WHAT WE NEED TO DO**

- 1) Organisations and funders co-design their structure and programmes with communities with lived experience. This includes getting training in co-design, committing time for co-design, ensuring transparent processes, remunerating people with lived experience for their time, and creating equitable decision-making processes.
- 2) Organisations and funders commit to allocating budget and time for training in 1) trauma and identity-informed approaches, 2) Equality, Diversity and Inclusions, and 3) safeguarding.
- 3) Organisations and funders provide person-centred support including a wellbeing strategy and initiatives, flexible working conditions, skill-mapping and development, and accessibility.
- 4) Organisations conduct reflection sessions across all organisational activities with a commitment to ongoing review and change.

# ENSHRINING MEANINGFUL INCLUSION AND MODELLING THIS TO THE WIDER SECTOR

We as the migrant justice sector, in recognition of the power dynamics and collective responsibilities, invest time and effort to create meaningful inclusion as defined by the individual and supported by the organisation and model this approach to other sectors.

## WHAT WE NEED TO DO

### Create safer spaces for individuals by

1. Co-creating opportunities for people with lived experience to safely express themselves, such as needs, salary expectations and promotion.
2. Establishing safe reporting and feedback mechanisms facilitated internally or by a third party.
3. Providing a protected period of development (instead of a probation period) striving to offer job security.
4. Encouraging people to learn from their mistakes and not punish them.

### Budget sufficient time and funds by

1. Allocating funds to support the needs of employees with lived experience, including covering visa fees, additional travel, mental health support and training.
2. Allocating time for substantive mentorship and training programmes.
3. Allocating time and funds towards more accessible recruitment practices to reach a wider audience.

### Practice mutual cultural exchange by

1. Tailoring working practices around individuals with lived experience and making accommodations informed by cultural understanding, such as switching holiday days and allowing time to visit family.
2. Recognising the individual as a human being and a professional - rather than reducing them to their story.
3. Recognising international credentials .
4. Conducting ongoing reflection and reworking of organisational structures to maximise adaption.

### Model for wider society by

1. Evaluating the impact to showcase the importance of meaningful inclusion
2. Sharing this practice, lessons learned and its benefits to wider society.
3. Advocating for the codification of these policies into international labour law.
4. Collaborating as an international labour sector to form a unified front to influence and advocate.

# DRIVING FUNDING TO MIGRANT-LED ORGANISATIONS

Funders engage meaningfully and inclusively to provide migrant-led organisations with accessible, sustainable and flexible funding without burdening them.

## WHAT WE NEED TO DO

- 1) Funders do collective donor advocacy (to peer donors) on the value of sustainable, long-term, flexible funding and relational grant-making as well as measuring success.
- 2) Funders support and share success and failures around funding practice, including participatory grant-making and grassroots funding, within and beyond the sector (with concrete examples and with honesty).
- 3) More established groups within the movement create space to support, sponsor and mentor grassroots/unregistered groups around accessing and managing funding (e.g. creating organisational buddy schemes).

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## WHAT ELSE WE'LL DO

1. Funders will better communicate why grants are more restrictive, shorter-term.
2. Funders must take grantee/partner feedback on board and be more relational, including their target communities.
3. Groups better articulate and do story-telling around impact of flexible, longer-term funding.
4. Larger groups support smaller, emerging migrant-led groups to fundraise themselves.
5. Funders recruit diverse staff with lived experience to shape priorities and decisions.
6. Funders will commit to less burdensome applications and reporting.
7. Funders will commit to shifting the balance of funding between the the usual established/influential groups and grassroots, emerging groups.